

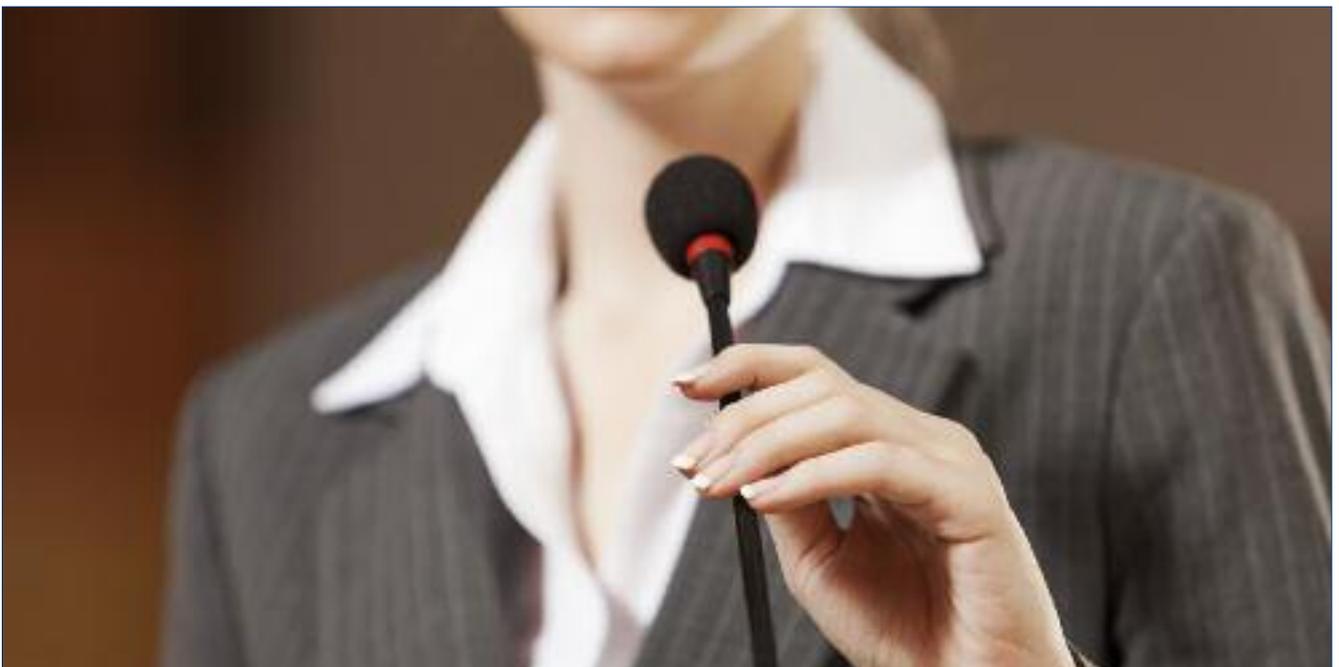


# PROMOTING PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND YOUTH IN THE PALESTINIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

PALESTINE

A. Introduction .....	7
B. Current Status and Obstacles to Change .....	9
C. Important opportunities .....	16
D. Recommendations .....	18
E. References .....	20

Women and youth are absent from decision making positions within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The diagnosis reviewed PLO laws and policies and the internal regulations of several PLO sub-entities (political factions, trade unions...) regarding women and youth leaderships. It also highlights opportunities and provides recommendations to reform the PLO bodies and increase women and youth presence in leadership positions.



The under-representation of women and young people in decision-making positions affects their capacity to play an important role in the development of Palestinian society. © Sergey Nivens / Shutterstock.com



The Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation (EMWF) is a non-profit independent organisation launched in 2014. It is structured as a Network of networks bringing different kinds of gender equality actors in the Euro-Mediterranean area with the aim of:

- Advancing in the common fight for equal rights of women and men to participate in political, economic, civil and social life;
- Eradicating all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls;
- Encouraging a change in attitude and behaviour for gender equality.

#### Founding Members:

Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR)  
French State  
European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)  
Federation of Women's Rights Leagues (FLDF)  
Forum Femmes Méditerranée (FFM)  
Euro-Mediterranean Academic and Scientific Network on Women and Gender (RUSEMEG)

#### Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation

Headquarters: European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)  
C/ Girona, 20 · 08010 Barcelona, Spain  
[www.euromedwomen.foundation](http://www.euromedwomen.foundation)  
<https://www.facebook.com/euromedwomen/>  
<https://twitter.com/euromedwomen>

#### Field diagnosis: Promoting participation of women and youth in the Palestinian political system

Text: the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy - MIFTAH, coordinator of the local cluster of gender equality actors©

Al-Massayef St., Rimawi Bldg., 3rd Floor, Ramallah, Palestine  
Coordination: Josep Ferré, Emilie Vidal  
Proof-reading: Elisa Poch  
Design: Núria Esparza  
November 2017

This field diagnosis is part of the Axis 1 "Strengthening the capacities of equality actors" of the Priority Solidarity Fund "Women for the future in the Mediterranean" funded by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, in the framework of the project "Developing Women's Empowerment" labelled by the Union for the Mediterranean.

#### In partnership with:



The European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), founded in 1989, is a think tank specialised in Mediterranean relationships based on a multidisciplinary and networking approach. The IEMed encourages analysis and cooperation with the aim to foster actions and projects which contribute to mutual understanding, exchange and collaboration between the different Mediterranean countries, societies and cultures, as well as to promote the progressive construction of a space of peace and stability, of prosperity and dialogue in the Mediterranean. Since 2014, the IEMed is the headquarters of the Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation and hosts its secretariat.

#### Consortium formed by:

Government of Catalonia  
Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation  
Barcelona City Council

#### European Institute of the Mediterranean

C/ Girona, 20  
08010 Barcelona, Spain  
[www.iemed.org](http://www.iemed.org)

#### Funded by:



#### Labelled by:



The content of this publication is the sole responsibility of the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy - MIFTAH and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs.

---

# PROMOTING PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND YOUTH IN THE PALESTINIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

PALESTINE

## Local clusters of gender equality actors© mobilized since 2017



- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>A</b> Souss-Massa Region (Morocco)      | <b>D</b> Luxor Governorate (Egypt)                        | <b>F</b> Zarqaa Governorate (Jordan)         |
| <b>B</b> Wilaya of Algiers (Algeria)       | <b>E</b> Ramallah and Al Bireh Governorate<br>(Palestine) | <b>G</b> Eastern suburbs of Beirut (Lebanon) |
| <b>C</b> Douar Hicher Delegation (Tunisia) |   |  |

The Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation sets up local clusters of gender equality actors coordinated by associations every year, in the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia (1 per country).

Each local cluster of gender equality actors© chooses a target territory that can be a region or a province or a metropolitan area of a large city. Subsequently, the local cluster's members define a topic of interest related to gender equality that they consider a priority in this target territory.

Each local cluster is made up of 5 actors working in favour of gender equality in the target territory: associations; research or education institutions; local or regional authorities or ministerial departments in charge of advocating for women's rights; media; enterprises and trade unions. Their mission is to mobilize the gender equality actors through data collection, consultations and exchange of experiences. Thus, they analyse the situation related to the target topic and they follow-up the effectiveness of public policies in this area with a collective and participatory approach.

This bottom-up approach leads to produce a diagnosis of the situation that highlights the main obstacles to achieve gender equality, and to design a collaborative and replicable field project to address those obstacles. To date, local clusters were set in Algiers and Oran (Algeria); Giza and Luxor (Egypt); Irbid and Zarqaa (Jordan); the eastern suburbs of Beirut and Mount Lebanon (Lebanon); Marrakesh-Safi and Souss-Massa (Morocco); Ramallah-Al Bireh, Bethlehem and El Khalil/Hebron Governorates (Palestine); and Douar Hicher, Monastir and Sousse (Tunisia). These clusters focus on women's access to political decision-making and high-level positions, women's economic empowerment and professional inequalities and violence against women. This document presents the diagnosis which was conducted in Ramallah-Al Bireh (it has to be noted that due to the research's objective -political participation at the national level- the diagnosis did not focus only on Ramallah).

## A. INTRODUCTION

This diagnosis was conducted by the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH). Established in Jerusalem in 1998, MIFTAH seeks to promote the principles of democracy and good governance within various components of Palestinian society.

To that end, MIFTAH adopts the mechanisms of an in-depth dialogue as well as local and international networking. MIFTAH's main objectives are: enhancing good governance in Palestine, in particular public policies supportive to women, youth and marginalized groups, and promoting international awareness of the Palestine narrative.

The present diagnosis has been made in collaboration with Khalid al-Nabris, researcher and expert on Palestinian political issues. It is one of the results of the pilot action of gender equality actors which was implemented by MIFTAH in Ramallah from February to May 2017.

MIFTAH was in charge of setting up and coordinating a local cluster of gender equality actors© (steering committee) which was made of members from national political factions and parties: Palestinian Democratic Union - FIDA, Palestinian National Initiative - Al Moubadrah), Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine - DFLP, Palestinian National Liberation Fatah, Palestinian People's Party - PPP, the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front - Alnidah, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - PFLP. Other entities which have been involved are the General Union of Palestinian Women - GUPA, the Political Social Active Youth Network, Palestinian students Councils at universities, the Cultural and Media Department at Palestine Liberation Organization - PLO, women and youth political leaders and activists, and researchers.

The local cluster members were selected based on a pre-set criteria, including their effectiveness and their leading position in their respective political factions, and have the ability and authority to make strategic decisions. A longest and comprehensive version of the diagnosis entitled "Study on the obstacles which hinder the equal representation of women and youth in the various bodies of the PLO and limit their access to decision-making positions" is available in English and Arabic at: <https://www.euromedwomen.foundation/pg/en/documents/view/7109/report-on-obstacles-preventing-unequal-access-of-women-and-youth-to-plo-bodies-and-decisionmaking-positions>

### 1. Objective

This diagnosis is part of MIFTAH's efforts – and those of many women's rights advocacy organisations, NGOs, legal organisations, and political parties – to empower women and youth; encourage their equal engagement in political life; facilitate their access to decision making positions; and remove any obstacles that hinder achieving this objective. MIFTAH and its partners are working on developing an effective strategy and impactful program to advocate for the increased political engagement and greater role in decision-making of women and youth.

The diagnosis aims at analysing obstacles hindering the access of women and youth to equal representation and to decision-making positions in PLO bodies.

### 2. Methodology

This diagnosis relied on various qualitative research methods – especially those encouraging participation – in order to get in depth analyses of the different issues being examined. These methods included:

- Review of PLO documents, systems, policies, regulations, and publications concerning the subject.
- Individual in depth meetings with political, social, feminist, and youth leaders, as well as thinkers and union and syndicate leaders.
- Group meeting with young activists.
- Group interviews with the local cluster of gender equality actors' members, which includes elite political leaders from political factions and parties, unions and syndicates in the PLO, young activists and academics.

In total, more than 40 people have been consulted.

### 3. Key Notions and Terms

- **Executive Committee:** The Executive Committee forms an integral part of the PLO and represents the Organization's executive branch abroad. The PLO's bylaw defines it as the "highest executive

authority for the Organization, and shall convene permanently with its members always available. It shall be responsible for executing the policies, programs, and plans set out by the PNC, to which it shall be accountable.”

- **Palestinian Authority (PA):** it was established through Oslo Accords to govern the Gaza Strip and Areas A and B of the West Bank. Since 2006 its authority has extended only in areas A and B of the West Bank.
- **Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO):** A political organization recognised by the United Nations and the Arab League as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people inside and outside of Palestine. The PLO was established in 1964 following the First Palestinian Arab Congress in Jerusalem held based on a decision of the 1964 Arab League Summit in Cairo. The Organization was formed to represent the Palestinian people in international assemblies, and includes several Palestinian factions such as Fatah, the DFLP, the PFLP, and the PPP.
- **Palestinian National Council (PNC):** The PNC represents the highest authority for the Palestinian people regardless of location. It sets the policies and programs of the PLO with the aim of protecting the people's legitimate rights, namely the right of return, right to sovereignty, and the right to form an independent State with Jerusalem as its capital.
- **Oslo Accord:** Also known as the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, the Oslo I Accord is a peace agreement signed between the PLO and Israel in 1993 that established a time frame for the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- **Women's Quota:** The women's quota is a demand that started gaining strength and legitimacy after the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. The Conference stressed the need to adopt a quota as a positive measure to encourage the participation of women in public life, with the aim of reaching a participation rate of at least 30% by 2005.

## B. CURRENT STATUS AND OBSTACLES TO CHANGE

A review of the PLO's structure since its establishment clearly indicates a low level of participation among women and youth in the Organization's various bodies and in all aspects. For example, since the PLO's establishment, its executive committees have failed to include any female representatives with the exception of the current Executive Committee that gained its first female member in 2009. In the PNC and the Palestinian Central Council (PCC), female representation is limited and does not correspond with the actions, roles and sacrifices made by Palestinian women. Furthermore, very few women are at the head of PLO, PNC or PCC departments, and the same can be said of

Palestinian political factions and parties, unions and syndicates. Not a single political faction is led by a woman while the only PNC represented popular union chaired by a woman is the General Union of Palestinian Women. The situation seems even bleaker when it comes to youth representation. The youngest member of the Executive Committee is over 60 years old, and no youths are at the head of political parties or factions, unions, syndicates, or any of the leaderships or administrative departments that form part of the PLO.

### **1. Regulations, legislation, and laws that guide work at the PLO and its factions, and their impact on female representation**

The research team reviewed many official Palestinian documents concerning or issued by the PLO, as well as the bylaws of some Palestinian factions that are part of the PLO. They looked for any signs or mentions in these texts that can be interpreted as favouring men, or limiting the participation of women (Annex 1 provides a list of the reviewed documents). The review sought to find whether any laws, regulations or legislation limited the participation of women in PLO structures or their access to decision-making positions. The findings confirmed the neutrality of these legal instruments and the absence of any discriminatory references when it comes to representation, and rights and obligations, including the right to vote or stand as a candidate.

Two of the most important Palestinian documents that were key references for Palestinian legislation were the 1988 Palestinian Declaration of Independence issued during the PNC's meeting in Algeria, and the 2003 Amended Palestinian Basic Law. The two documents clearly and explicitly rejected discrimination and confirmed the principle of equality. The Declaration of Independence states:

The State of Palestine shall be for Palestinians, wherever they may be therein to develop their national and cultural identity and therein to enjoy full equality of rights. Their religious and political beliefs and human dignity shall therein be safeguarded under a democratic parliamentary system based on freedom of opinion and the freedom to form parties, on the heed of the majority for minority rights and the respect of minorities for majority decisions, on social justice and equality, and on non-discrimination in civil rights on grounds of race, religion or colour or as between men and women, under a Constitution ensuring the rule of law and an independent judiciary..."

Article 9 of the 2003 Amended Palestinian Basic Law states:

Palestinians shall be equal before the law and the judiciary, without distinction based upon



The absence of laws which specify the mandate period or the number of terms/periods of service in leadership positions hinders the alternation of power and the renewal of the political class.

race, sex, colour, religion, political views or disability.

Therefore, the reasons behind this weak engagement and representation of women in PLO structure and bodies are not the legal instruments but rather common practices and implementations of these instruments.

## **2. Cultural and social factors, and administrative and institutional practices**

Participants in the diagnosis mentioned various social, political, organizational, and cultural reasons for the decline in female representation within PLO structures and bodies. Put together, these factors have led to the marginalization and exclusion of women and youth from politics and decision-making circles within political factions and parties, and within the PLO in general. These factors are explored in more detail below:

### *a. Social and cultural factors*

The PLO was born out of a specific social and cultural reality. This means that the Organization's system, leadership, performance, and structure are influenced by the dominating ideas, beliefs, social and cultural values, which at present discriminate between men and women, and dictate specific roles for each gender. This patriarchal culture considers men to be stronger, more capable of managing public affairs, and better at politics and leadership as they are considered wiser, tougher, and more visionary. There is no faith in the abilities of women, who are considered weaker than men and more influenced by emotions. Women are seen to lack the resolve, wisdom and strength necessary to deal with the pressures of politics. Such ideas are widespread in the

Palestinian community and are shared by many leaders in the PLO, as well as in the factions, unions, and syndicates within the PLO. These ideas have limited women to being partners in the struggle but not decision makers.

Despite some achievements in terms of representation for women and their access to higher positions, they remain insufficient and unequal.

#### *b. The conditions and environment surrounding the PLO's formation*

Many participants in the diagnosis saw that the conditions surrounding the PLO's formation and work environment have affected the Organization's structure and work methods. First, the PLO was established outside the country amidst a very complicated reality for the purpose of armed and guerrilla fighting. During this time, most fighters and leaders were male, which led the way to male dominance across the Organization's various activities and over its higher leadership. This situation was further confirmed as some factions had alliances with certain Arab countries and various Arab regimes tried to influence the PLO in one direction or another. The male leaders at the head of the PLO at the time found that they were the best capable of managing this situation to protect the Organization from outside interference.

#### *c. Quota system*

All participants in the diagnosis agreed that the fierce competition between PLO factions and parties led to the formation of a quota system, based on which factions agree on how to distribute powers between them. This system had a negative impact on the structure of the PLO's bodies, and reduced the democratic options available to the Palestinian people whose choices of representatives within the Organization became limited. One of the most significant consequences of this system was the dominance of men over decision-making positions and the exclusion of women. Below are some examples given by participants:

- Basing the formation of PLO bodies and PLO mechanisms on the quota system and on agreements between factions has weakened democracy within the Organization and eliminated any form of true accountability for its performance. For instance, the votes for faction candidates are counted behind closed doors, and candidates are often chosen without elections or honest and transparent mechanisms.
- The allocation system further enshrined male representation within the factions as the number of representatives for each faction is limited while the number of candidates is high, making

the chances of winning for female candidates very slim and limited.

- Competition between political parties and the allocation system have favoured candidates with more political connections rather than the most qualified ones for the job.
- Political competition between the factions often leads to the exclusion of women as each faction seeks to present its strongest candidate to gain better representation, defend its interests, compete with the representatives of other factions, and acquire gains. Women are often marginalized in such situations that highlight doubt and the lack of trust in the ability of women to compete on the political scene and represent their parties' interests.
- The quota system weakens the democratic process during the election of members in PLO bodies. For example, if a certain faction is allocated 20 seats in the PNC, the faction would be asked to present a list of candidates without any control over how these candidates are chosen or if they were chosen based on democratic methods.
- One of the reasons that weakened the participation of women is that it was never based on competency and ability but rather on quotas and agreements between factions.



The only popular union represented in the Palestinian National Council which is chaired by a woman is the General Union of Palestinian Women.

#### *d. Weaker role, position, and performance of the PLO*

The PLO is supposed to be the entity that monitors the performance of the Palestinian Authority, concludes agreements, and acts as the legitimate and only representative of the Palestinian people. However, after the Oslo I Accord was signed and the Palestinian Authority (PA) was established, the opposite happened. The PA gained more power while the role of the PLO diminished to become strictly formal. In fact, when explaining the purpose of this diagnosis to participants and mentioning the PLO, respondents described the Organization's current status as: limp, decaying, ageing, dying, an empty shell that is only used when necessary, an old lion that lost its claws and teeth, dead and buried, a lost hope, etc.

They all noted that the PLO's role was more significant when it was abroad where it had financial independence and where its factions and unions were more active. Nonetheless, this situation changed after the formation of the PA with the PA's role growing bigger while that of the PLO diminishing. Furthermore, the large overlap between the PA and the lack of separation between the two organization's members and roles, marginalized the PLO even more. The situation worsened as the Organization and Palestinian factions grew more dependent on the PA's funding.

Some respondents noted that some PLO institutions had been active while abroad but lost their purpose after returning to Palestine where their roles gradually diminished.

The weakened role and performance of the PLO eventually led to a degradation of its performance and all aspects of its work. Many respondents highlighted several causes and consequences of this decline which are presented hereinafter.

#### *3. Irregular meetings of PLO bodies*

The meetings of PLO bodies have been irregular, and this irregularity has weakened the Organization's role and ability to perform its tasks. It has also undermined democracy, the alternation of power, renewal of leaderships, and any other form of control or accountability. For example, the PNC last convened in 1996, meaning 21 years ago, with many members remaining the same to this day. In such a context, the PNC's male dominated structure has remained the same and members who were once considered young no longer are.

Along with the irregularity of meetings, comes the inability to hold regular elections to renew Palestinian leadership, honour the principle of the alternation of power, reinforce democracy,

and add legitimacy to the existing Palestinian political system.

#### *4. Lack of vision and halt of many PLO plans and programs*

Most participants in the diagnosis indicated that the post-Oslo period was a period of decline for the PLO accompanied by a lack of clear vision for the Organization's role, priorities, tools, and plans. This situation was coupled with a decline in self-financing and weaker departments as many traditional plans and programs the PLO was tasked with – or handled de facto – were stopped. This in turn contributed to the rise of PA plans as the only alternative for setting and guiding Palestinian priorities. As mentioned earlier, instead of the PLO acting as a steering and monitoring entity that holds the PA accountable, many of its own activities became those of the PA.

#### *5. Divide among Palestinians, and PLO reform efforts*

Over the past decade, the divide between Palestinians has helped aggravate the challenges facing the PLO, weakened the chances of it regaining significance, and confused all efforts to reform the Organization. The preliminary agreement resulting from the meeting of Palestinian factions in Beirut was a positive step toward PLO reformation, strengthening, and recovery. The Beirut meetings led to the formation of a PNC committee, tasked with preparing for new PNC elections based on a new vision. Despite the fact that some respondents considered this to be a significant achievement that could lead to PLO reform, a number of them were very sceptical about the situation saying the road to implementing the agreement has many obstacles still and no serious steps have been taken to end the divide. Furthermore, many respondents said they were not satisfied with the meetings or their results as they considered them to have only perpetuated the political quota system instead of coming up with a comprehensive vision that can deal with the challenges facing the Palestinian cause. In particular, these respondents warned that the reasons and circumstances that once justified adopting the political quota system at the time of the PLO's establishment no longer exist today. They emphasized the importance of looking at the reform process from other aspects that honour rights, equality, justice, and fairness, to consequently make the PLO's structure, programs, and work mechanisms truly fairer toward women and youth. Such reforms would give the Organization back some of the life and vigour it has lost over the past years, and help it deal with the various challenges that the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people have witnessed over the past three decades.

#### *6. Focus on the political struggle and neglecting the social struggle*

The programs of the PLO, and those of various Palestinian factions and political parties, mainly focus on the political and military struggle, fighting the occupation, liberating the land, and establishing a Palestinian State while at the same time neglecting the social struggle. They

neglect to consider the kind of State and society they want, rights and obligations, and justice and equality. In fact, many factions fail to give any thought to the social struggle, considering it an issue that can wait until after the liberation of Palestine since they see no sense of dealing with it before a State has been build. The weak representation of women in leadership and decision-making positions is also a result of this thinking and the neglect of social issues, justice and equality, and rights in general.

In the same context, however, the decentralized and on the field struggle of women is welcomed by the leaders of political parties, but their access to decision-making positions is still limited by strict and conservative standards.

#### *7. Decline of the democratic process within the PLO and political parties*

The democratic process has been undermined within the PLO and political parties through the lack of transparent and honest elections supervised by reliable monitoring bodies. This is one of the key challenges hindering the alternation of power, the renewal of leaderships, and the introduction of new members to leadership bodies within the PLO and political factions. High level positions in PLO parties and factions have changed very little over the past three or four decades, and some leaders have not changed at all. In such an environment, the chances of women reaching leadership or decision-making decisions are slim.

#### *8. Weak performance of feminist movements*

Several participants in the diagnosis noted that many institutions advocating for women's rights and many female activists have indeed accomplished a great deal. However, despite their achievements, respondents found that past experiences have shown feminist movements to be weak and unable to effect true social change for the benefit of women, or acquire essential gains that correspond with the role women have played and the sacrifices they have made. As for the reason behind this weakness, respondents claimed it was the insufficiency of achievements due to personal reasons related to performance within the feminist system.

### **C. IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITIES**

#### *1. Opportunities from Palestinian commitments to implement international treaties*

As a result of the efforts made by feminist movements and the Palestinian civil society, many gains have been made and the PA has adopted policies and reforms to reinforce gender equality,

encourage the political engagement of women, and eliminate discrimination against women. On 8 March 2009, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), a move that women's rights organizations consider an important step toward commitment to eliminating gender inequality.

### *2. Opportunities from adopting and implementing the women's quota*

The women's quota in legislative and local elections is an important foundation for future achievements. The PCC's decision to adopt and instil the quota of 30% is a golden opportunity to develop the quota system, and will open the door to further achievements toward equal representation and access to decision-making positions.

### *3. Opportunities within the framework of PLO reforms*

The dialogues, meetings, and agreements held between Palestinian factions, and the continuous efforts to reform the PLO are another golden opportunity that should be leveraged. Communication with all concerned entities should start immediately, especially entities tasked at the Beirut meetings with redrafting the PLO bylaw, including provisions concerning the electoral systems of the PNC and PLO bodies. This communication should focus on the importance of including provisions in any procedure or law developed during the reforms to guarantee the equal rights of women and youth to participate in political life. Slowness in action on this front could lead to the development of a new system that instils the inequality being practiced against women and youth and further denies them access to decision-making positions.

### *4. Higher Council for Youth and Sports*

The PLO's Higher Council for Youth and Sports is one of the most important institutions that could effectively help improve conditions for Palestinian youth. Many respondents praised the Council's work, which helped Palestine reach international levels in the field of sports and raise the Palestinian flag internationally, an important symbol for the Palestinian people. The Council has also helped improve various sports, especially football, and developed a strategy to help increase youth engagement. However, many respondents had comments about the extent to which the Council was able to represent the Palestinian youth and allow them sufficient space to be represented, participate, and reach decision-making positions that matter to them.

## D.RECOMMENDATIONS

The diagnosis reached many recommendations, most importantly:

- 1.** Demand the reform of the PLO based on justice, democracy, and equality. Women and youth must play an effective role and must therefore be engaged in the process rather than kept on the outside. Furthermore, the PLO cannot be reformed without reforming its components (factions, popular unions, syndicates, legislative council), which requires working with all these entities and eliminating the quota system to replace it with democracy and elections.
- 2.** Coordinate between the feminist movement and the youth movement to form allies that can identify common interests regardless of faction positions.
- 3.** The feminist movement and the youth movement must draw their own clear vision, projects, and plans through which they can set mechanisms to gain rights, set a work agenda, made specific demands, and launch programs that aim to form a society in which women and youth play a significant role. They must also benefit from the support and experience of allies such as advocacy groups, social and media activists, and parties with regional and international influence. Feminist movements in particular should coordinate with existing entities that share their goals, such as the General Union of Palestinian Women and the Women's Technical Affairs Committee (WATC).
- 4.** Measures should be taken to develop educational curricula and media participation to support social change.
- 5.** Evaluate the women's quota experience to develop, implement, and improve it and to enhance its achievements.
- 6.** Coordinate, collaborate, and conclude agreements with elements of the youth movement to lobby for the adoption of a youth quota in PLO bodies.
- 7.** Support a specialised study to offer new choices, philosophies, and directions to the PLO based on new principles of guaranteeing rights, equality, justice, and political and democratic

engagement.

**8.** Demand that political factions and parties improve their political, social, and party programs.

**9.** Programs to develop women and youth leaderships.

**10.** Demand the formation of a monitoring and accountability body to guarantee women's rights, and the PLO and the PA's commitment to a full implementation of the women's quota.

**11.** Develop effective mechanisms to urgently benefit from the following important opportunities:

- a.* Follow-up on the President's ratification of CEDAW, and specifically on the adoption of specific measures to translate this ratification into reality, mainly aligning the local legal environment with CEDAW conditions.
- b.* Follow-up on the PCC's decision to adopt and implement a women's quota of 30% in all PLO bodies and entities to institutionalise the decision and guarantee its implementation by issuing binding laws, regulations, clear legal procedures, and a monitoring system.
- c.* The participation of feminist and youth movements in bodies working on reforming the PLO based on the Beirut agreement between factions allows an opportunity to include the demands of women and youth in reform discussions. These demands can then be included in updated laws and regulations that are drafted to reinforce female and youth representation and their access to decision-making positions.
- d.* Hold meetings with the factions that signed the honour pledge to commit to the 30% women's quota in 2012, and ask them to translate their promises into concrete measures and regulations that guarantee the implementation of the quota, and the establishment of a monitoring and follow-up mechanism.
- e.* Communicate with all concerned parties at the Higher Council for Youth and Sports, from the administrative board to the executive body, to develop regulations and laws that allow the youth to reach leadership and decision-making positions within the Council so that the latter can truly represent the youth, their aspirations, demands, and concerns.
- f.* Contact the leadership of the General Union of Palestinian Students to discuss issues that concern women and youth, especially in terms of representation at administrative and decision-making levels. The Union is considered as the gateway for the youth into the PNC.

## E. REFERENCES

Ministry of Local Government, and the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH). *Policy Directions for the Active Participation of Palestinian Women in Managing Local Councils*, 2014.

The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF). *Palestinian Women and Security – A Legal Analysis*, 2010.

Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH), *Amended Basic Law of the National Palestinian Authority*, 2008.

Palestinian Center for Peace and Democracy (PCPD). *Declaration of Independence – Palestinian National Council*, 19<sup>th</sup> session, 1988

Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC). *Toward Equality: The Law and Palestinian Women*, 1997.

Central Elections Commission – Palestine. *Law no. 9 of 2005 concerning general elections (as published in the Palestinian Official Gazette, Issue 57, 2005)*

Central Elections Commission – Palestine. *Local Councils Elections Law No. 10 of 2005, as amended (as published in the Palestinian Official Gazette, Issue 57, 2005)*

Presidential Decree no. 19 of 2009 concerning the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fatah). *Draft bylaws submitted by the Assembly's Preparation Committee to the 6th General Assembly - Bethlehem*, 2009.

The Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fatah). *The Movement's "proposed" draft bylaws submitted to the 7th General Assembly*, 2016.

Ministry of Women's Affairs, and the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW), and women's organizations and centres. *Bill of Rights Document for Palestinian Women*, 2012.

Ministry of Local Government, and the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH). *Toward a National Framework to Implement UN Resolution no. 1325 in Palestine*, 2012.

Hilal, Jamil. *Palestinian Youth – National Fate and Requirements for Change*, ARD Research Study Center, 2016

Center for Development Studies, and the American Friends Service Committee. *Palestinian Youth – Studies on Identity, Space and Community Participation*, Center for Development Studies - Birzeit University, 2017.

Al-Mahtouri, Abdul Salam. *The Quota and its Implementation in Electoral Systems, Empowering Women in Leadership Positions*. [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?id=415786615154422&story\\_fbid=455695674496849](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?id=415786615154422&story_fbid=455695674496849)

Palestinian People's Party (PPP), Bylaws (undated).

Qazzaz, Hadeel. *Eliminating Legal Discrimination Against Palestinian Women Through the Activities of Legislative Council Members*, Women's Technical Affairs Committee (WATC)

Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (PPSF). Bylaws.  
[http://www.nedalshabi.ps/?page\\_id=2857](http://www.nedalshabi.ps/?page_id=2857)

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Bylaws, 2000.  
<http://www.abuali.ps/nedam>

General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW). Bylaws, 2009.

Palestinian General Union of People with Disability (GUPWD). Bylaws, 2006

General Union for Palestinian Writers. Draft bylaws, 2007.

General Union of Palestinian Workers (GUPWo). Constitution of the General Union of Palestinian Workers as ratified by the 7th General Assembly in Tunisia - 1983, Office of Intellectual Affairs and Studies, 2007.

General Union of Palestinian Lawyers. Bylaws, internal regulations for branches, and the General Assembly's internal regulations, 1989.

General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS). Bylaws, (undated).

Nazra for Feminist Studies. *Quota System: Models and Applications from Around the World*, 2013

<http://nazra.org/2013/04/%D9%86%D8%B8%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D9%88%D8%AA%D8%A7-%D9%86%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B0%D8%AC-%D9%88%D8%AA%D8%B7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AD%D9%88%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85>

**ANNEX: List of reviewed documents to discover the presence of any discourse, language or wording which discriminates against Women**

1. The “Declaration of Independence” Document, issued by the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the Palestinian National Council, 1988.
2. Amended Basic Law of the Palestinian National Authority, 2008.
3. Palestinian Women’s Bill of Rights (2008).
4. Draft Regulations (Draft Rules of Procedure) of the Sixth General Conference of Fateh Movement
5. Proposed Regulations (Rules of Procedure) of Fateh Movement, which was presented in the Seventh Conference
6. Regulations (Rules of Procedure) of the Palestinian Arab Front (PAF)
7. Regulations (Rules of Procedure) of the Palestinian People’s Party (PPP)
8. Regulations (Rules of Procedure) of the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate (PJS)
9. Statute of the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS)
10. Regulations (Rules of Procedure) of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)
11. Statute of the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW)
12. Statute of the Palestinian General Union of People with Disability (GUPWD)
13. Draft Statute of the General Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists
14. Constitution of the General Union of Palestinian Workers

15. Statute of the General Union of Palestinian Lawyers

16. Regulations (Rules of Procedure) of the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS)



مؤسسة نساء الأورو-متوسط  
Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation  
Fondation des Femmes de l'Euro-Méditerranée

According to its mandate, the **Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation** (FFEM) analyses women's local realities and public policies through consultations and dialogues at a grass-roots level. Concretely, the Foundation sets up **local clusters of gender equality actors**© every year, in the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia (1 per country).

Each local cluster of gender equality actors© is coordinated by an association as the Foundation recognises that civil society is the real motor of change in our societies to improve women's conditions.

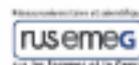
The local clusters' approach is an innovative and participatory process, which supports networking and sharing of good practices in favour of gender equality at a decentralized level and promotes the emergence of projects rooted in the territory.

The Foundation systematizes the results obtained through the local clusters and transfers them to the policy-makers in the Region's countries and at the Euro-Mediterranean level. All the information related to the local clusters' results is available on the Foundation's website (**[www.euromedwomen.foundation](http://www.euromedwomen.foundation)**) and widely disseminated across the Region among key stakeholders, policy-makers and international organisations.

#### Founding Members:



IE Med.



#### Funded by:



#### Labelled by:

