

2005 ANNUAL REPORT - KAYAN

ABOUT KAYAN

Kayan, which means *Being* in Arabic, was established by Palestinian women living in Israel to promote feminist thinking and values in Arab society and to work towards gender equality. Registered as a non-profit in 1999, Kayan is a capacity-building organization which provides programs for the personal and collective empowerment of Arab women.

Projects and courses include: **Personal Empowerment, Community Activism, Women Demand Mobility, Childcare Workers' Rights, Economic Knowledge, and a Legal Department.**

EMPOWERMENT AND ACTIVISM

Kayan has organized courses and groups within **Nazareth, Haifa, Mrar, Kufar Kara, Osifiya, Acco, Arara, Shefaram** and **Nehaf** about topics such as personal empowerment, community activism, gender perspectives and group meetings designed to strengthen women's roles within society. These include:

A semester course on Women and Gender from Feb.-June at **Haifa University**

In **Nahef**, young women aged 18-19 met from July-Dec. 2005. The group succeeded in a project to obtain an internet line open in the local library in the evenings for girls without computer access in their homes and no other social outlet.

In **Acco, Osifiya, Arara and Shefaram** women met in groups geared toward personal empowerment work. In **Kufar Kara**, Kayan led two sessions in June for 13 working women interested in community organizing strategies.

In **Mrar**, 15 women met 12 times to start a catering cooperative and, also in **Mrar**, the Women Demand Mobility Project resulted in the inauguration of a public bus service to serve the needs of the village.



WOMEN DEMAND MOBILITY

In 2003, in the village of Mrar, women decided to demand public transport. In 2004, Tagreed Al-Ahmad, Project Coordinator of Kayan, led a year long community activism course which trained women in community organizing, researching and lobbying the public and local authorities of the need for a bus service in the village which is home to 19,500 inhabitants. The

group successfully installed a bus service in January 2005.

Since August 2005, Kayan has begun to develop an overall strategic regional campaign to further expose the lack of Mobility for Arab Women in Israel. Together with MADA- Center for Social Research, Kayan prepared a survey in which 160 women from towns and villages in the North and Triangle Region participated. In 2006, Kayan will publish a Mobility Report based on the data compiled. In 2006, Kayan will begin a media campaign regarding women's mobility rights and form community groups for mobility and advocacy work.

CHILDCARE WORKERS

Kayan assisted in the formation of the Association for Childcare Workers, which represents 1,200 Arab women who work at home caring for infants and young children. In June 2005, the Association for Childcare Workers was officially registered as a non profit organization campaigning for basic employment rights for the women. In 2005, the Legal Department counseled women on legal issues, including meeting with Bedouin women in Rahat who suffered from unemployment due to the lack of funds in local welfare authorities and attorneys Sawsan Zaher and Ola Shtawee are helping the group draft a work contract. Kayan has promoted a positive dialogue between government authorities and the women.

On Aug. 11 2005, the 2nd national Childcare Workers Conference was held, attracting 160 attendees and much media coverage as it marked

the official registration of the CWA. Together with Kayan and with assistance from Shatil, the CWA will continue to meet, lobby and advocate for economic and labor rights for Childcare Workers.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

In 2004 the Kayan legal department was initiated by NIF law fellow Sawsan Zaher. In Feb. 2005, together with Ittijah, (which has consultative status to the UN Economic and Social Council), Sawsan attended the UN Commission on the Status of Women, where she presented a paper "*Palestinian Women Citizens of Israel, in the Israeli Economy.*"

The Kayan Legal Department has undertaken various legal actions in cooperation with other groups. One landmark was a successful interim appeal to the Supreme Court in June 2005, requiring proceedings of personal status cases in Shaaria courts to be open to public scrutiny. There was also an appeal by board member, Attorney Sonia Boulus of ACRI to the Supreme Court, claiming women's basic rights to low cost contraception in the government subsidized health program. Other legal appeals were undertaken in conjunction with NGOs on issues of equal representation and health.

Other activities involving the Legal Department include lectures and talks on Arab women and legal rights at many conferences, including a conference on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women organized by a coalition of Arab women's NGOs including Kayan. A pro-bono legal station at Kayan has provided legal assistance to 24 women. Kayan

has operated workshops on Legal rights in conjunction with the Gender Mainstreaming Course, Childcare Workers' meetings and the Mobility Project. The legal department has built a bridge between grassroots organizing and civil and legal demands.

GENDER AND ECONOMICS

Kayan has held programs related to gender and civil and economic rights including a pilot project with the Welfare Office staff in Mrar in Gender-Mainstreaming in government. The 10 hour program ran between April-June and included 5 workshops on Gender, Budgets, Mobility, Mental Health and Legal Rights with 13 participating staff members.

A year long course began in 2004 in cooperation with ADVA- Institute for Social Research which was designed to train 15 women from the triangle region and the north in gender and economics. In addition, a business collective initiated with the assistance of Kayan in Mrar enabled women entrepreneurs to cater 2 events at Kayan, including a food fair and the Open House which was attended by the Mayor of Haifa.

REGIONAL & NAT'L COALITIONS

Kayan is involved in numerous feminist/ social change coalitions and initiatives, including:

The Haifa Women's Coalition, The Working Group for Equality in Personal Status; Ittijah; CEDAW, The Women's Budget Group, the City of Haifa Women's Council, Mahut, and the Israeli Social Forum.

In addition, Kayan hosts and acts as a fiscal sponsor to **Aswat**, a newly formed group of Palestinian gay women, working to promote gay rights in the region and openly addressing Palestinian women's sexual identity and preference for the first time.

CONFERENCES, TRAVEL, MEDIA

Staff and board attended 6 conferences this year: The World Social Forum in Porte Allegro, Brazil, the UN CEDAW session, the UN CSW session, a Gender Conference in Berlin, The Euro-Med Social Forum in Barcelona, and the Women in the Arab Media Conference in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.

Kayan has been featured in close to 50 articles and is considered a 'resource and expert on women's issues' both by the Arabic and Hebrew Media.



Kayan-Feminist Organization

118 Arlozorov St.
Haifa 33276 Israel

Tel: 972-4-864-1291,
866-1890

Fax: 4-864-1072

email:

kayan@netvision.net.il
www.kayan.org.il