

أخبارنا

ثقافية - إخبارية - متنوعة

facebook.com/WSU.SYRIA



A Series of Successes

Basima Haj Ibrahim is a 39 year-old civil activist who was born in Aleppo. She's a graduate of philosophy, and she lives with her four children in Soran in the northern countryside of Aleppo.

She told us her story saying: «After we were displaced from our home in Aleppo city, I joined the revolutionary movement and participated in the peaceful demonstrations that condemned the injustice and tyranny practiced by the Assad regimen against the Syrians. Then, after the city was shelled badly, I was displaced with my family to the northern countryside of Aleppo. I started working for civil society organizations, where the majority of my activity was focused on women issues and raising awareness on women's rights. I also worked as a nurse in women and children health clinics in hospitals, in addition to working in the protection field. My participation hasn't been limited to only one aspect of life because I strongly believe in the importance of women's participation and in their ability to prove themselves wherever they are. I currently work as assistant director in the People's Education Center in Soran. In addition, I am the head of Public Relations Department of Women's Union (Aleppo branch). I had to go under very bad circumstances because of the war in Syria. Then, new challenges and difficulties obstructed my way due to the society's stereotyped perception of women's restricted role to only doing certain jobs. However, I managed to overcome all of those challenges with a strong will and determination. I made my decision to apply for higher education at university and now I've recently finished the preliminary stage of master's degree. I've started preparing for my master's thesis, which will discuss the role played by women in CSOs during the Syrian

revolution. In fact I decided to concentrate on Syrian women's sufferings during the revolution. I would like to address the Syrian women and tell them that all women are strong, strong enough to be engaged in all political, social, and economic aspects of life. I hope I can complete my study and obtain a Ph.D. I also pray that someday soon we will terminate the era of the Assad regime's control and live in a tyranny-free country where freedom, dignity and justice prevail».



Ara.com

What positive role have Syrian women played during the Syrian revolution?

This was the question we posted on our social networking pages to each out to the relevant and variant views and answers shared by our followers. Syrian women's participation has never been limited to only one aspect of life, as they have played great roles during the course of the Syrian revolution; they offered help and stood by men to rebel and fight against the dictatorial regime. This participation had a positive impact on the society's outlook of women's role in general, and on women's reality in particular because they could prove their ability to survive pressure and manage through the difficult circumstances.

The followings are some of the answers shared by different people:

«After the Syrian revolution, Syrian women have developed more awareness, self-confidence, self-esteem, and educational achievement. This has been a blessing for women, as the majority of them used to be deprived from completing their studies, while today they have open doors to improve themselves».



Isa'af



«I'm more self-confident and self-dependent now. I support myself in doing everything and I also support my husband in winning the family's bread, in addition to being able to complete my study».



Rania



«Through their participation in different aspects of life, Syrian women have had a greater impact than they did before the Syrian revolution. Although they lost a lot of their precious people and things and had to go through severe and sometimes inhumane circumstances, new door were opened for them to prove themselves in addition to being responsible for supporting themselves and others».



Abeer



«Women's journey during the Syrian revolution helped them prove themselves and show their special competencies in terms of surviving a life full of challenges and obstacles. In addition, Syrian women has been seeking for refining the society's mentality and correcting some mistaken stereotypes relating to women's rights and freedoms and employed women».



Nuha



// Syrian Women during the Revolution

From Marginalization to Effective Participation

When the Syrian revolution started in March 2011, Syrian women played a great role in the peaceful popular movements as they wrote protest placards, participated in the demonstrations, and called out loud for their rights, in addition to acting as paramedics, doctors, reporters and legal activists. However, women's role remained limited to ensure their safety.

The developing events within the Syrian context and the transition to the military movements didn't discourage women from playing their role. On the contrary, they took part in the civil hospitals, humanitarian activities, and military work in addition to forming revolutionary coordination groups that represent civil movements politically and in the media and coordinate and consolidate work on the ground.

As events escalated, Syrian women's role declined, especially after a large number of them were arrested, subjected to all kinds of violations, tortured, raped, displaced or murdered. Therefore, they harnessed social networking sites to serve as a revolutionary platform, through which they could speak, convey their Syrian rebellious voice, and stress their marginalized rights and demands.

After 2018, the explicit presence and activity of the Syrian opposition were limited to the regions they controlled in North West Syria. Nonetheless, women made a qualitative leap forward in terms of political and civil work, which was a new experience for them but also helped them reach decision-making positions after they were marginalized for the past 5 decades. They could also break stereotypes of women work, freed

themselves, and took part in local councils, media offices, and political institutions.

Syrian women's presence and participation on the ground is still very limited due to the impact of the discriminative policy practiced against women and excluding them from political work during the regime of the Baath Party, which dominated and controlled all aspects of civil, voluntary, and political work, and utilized their activities to serve its own interests and promote its special ideology that is based on worshipping the ruler (the Assad family). For instance, Women General Union, (was dissolved later), was formed to empower the role of Syrian women, who showed loyalty to the ruling Baath Party, and then they were assigned some state positions. In fact, the majority of those women lacked competency and were appointed just because they were either relevant or friends of the ruling Assad family, and this was the reason why many competent and experienced women were excluded.

The Assad regime also launched a number of women projects, through which it only sought to show that Syria was taking into the footsteps of advanced countries, in addition to claiming that civil organization existed in Syria. Back then, those projects targeted only a certain group of women, who fitted into certain criteria set by the regime without being relevant to the genuine role of women in political and social life nor in the decision-making process.

All of this couldn't stand against the emergence of a group of women who had high leadership

spirits and waited for a glimpse of hope in order to change the reality, break the restricting chains, and become free of the imposed social custody, which was promoted by the Assad regime. Those women proved themselves wherever they were and acted as prominent community leaders, including activists and actresses like Fadwa Suleiman and May Skaf, novelists like Samar Yazbek, politicians like Nahed Badawiyeh, legal activists and media professionals Razan Zaitouneh, and many other activists who succeeded in northern Syria like Totnji (a media professional Rana), Sanaa al-Ali (a journalist), and Nivin Hotary (Head of the Board of Women Support Unit).

Eleven years of the revolution had a dramatic impact on the Syrian women in particular, especially with the military and political escalation which resulted in the loss of their family member(s), displaced them, and imposed different types of violence on them. All of the sudden, Syrian women found themselves in front of new numerous challenges, especially those who lost their husband/breadwinners and therefore had to take a full responsibility of their families besides the main burdens of life, which resulted from the deteriorated living conditions, lack of services, and restoring to primitive lifestyles to do some daily chores.

However, a lot of Syrian women are still willing and determinate to make a change, play an effective role, and participate genuinely in improving both their reality and reality of the Syrian society as a whole and they believe they can do this because they already have accumulated experiences that used to be marginalized in the past.

While seeking for building the future Syria and achieving transitional justice, women should be engaged and represented equally and effectively as men in all political events, positions of decision-making, and peace talks. This requires building their capacities as well as equipping them with the necessary competencies and relevant awareness. Empowering women at political, social, and economic levels is a must because women have always been an essential and integral part of the revolution.

Written by: Abeer al-Fares



In the opinion column of our paper, we publish articles that reflect views of authors who wrote them and necessarily views of Women Support Unit.

Syrian Women and Civil Society Organizations



Over the past years, civil society organizations (CSOs) were completely absent from Syrian society. However, when the Syrian revolution started, humanitarian, educational, developmental, political and medical CSOs started operating differently each according to their positions, needs of the targeted area, and the period of operation.

The emergence of organizations that work on the promotion of psychological support for women, in addition to protection and political, social, and economic empowerment, was a brand new phenomenon in the Syrian context.

The engagement of women in jobs other than education, medicine, and professional fields is considered as an important advancement, as this has contributed to broadening women's horizon in terms of knowledge, skills, experiences, and capacity building and helped them improve their economic and living situations.

Today, the Syrian society in general, and women in particular are well-aware of all different types of jobs/professions, such as being a trainer on a certain major or work on a certain task within CSOs. This opened doors for variant job opportunities and helped raise awareness of the different components of the Syrian spectrum, taking into account traditions and customs of the Syrian society and ensuring that they are respected through providing special places for women during the activities implemented and employing women in positions related to women issues/affairs.

CSOs' work on issues related to female survivors and providing women with psychological support has greatly contributed to enhancing the reality of Syrian women, especially those who suffered from the circumstances resulting from the Syrian war and lost their parents, children, or husbands, as well as those who were detained or had to experience psychological traumas. CSOs has played a great role in developing care programs to address the issues of these women and help them recover.



News of the sub-committees

Azaz sub-committee

Women sub-committee in Azaz organized different dialog sessions, the most important of which were: An event on Mother's Day. A dialog session entitled: "Context Analysis and Solving Problems"

33

beneficiary

Qabbasin sub-committee

Women sub-committee in Qabbasin organized different dialog sessions, the most important of which were: A session entitled: «Citizenship» A session entitled: «Context Analysis» An event on International Women's Day. An event on the anniversary of the Syrian Revolution.

78

beneficiary

Bzaa sub-committee

Women sub-committee in Bzaa organized different sessions and activities, the most important of which were: An event on Mother's Day. A dialog session entitled: «Social Context» An event on the anniversary of the Syrian Revolution

57

beneficiary



A local, non-profit civil society organization for women's affairs, launched in 2018 through a conference attended by more than 150 women in rural northern and eastern Aleppo from Afrin to reaching to Jarablus.



Design : Aya touma

Preparation : Subhia

Producer assisyant:

Shaghaf al-barri

Contact detail:

[twitter](#)

[instagram](#)

[facebook](#)

[gmail](#)

[youtube](#)

[instagram](#)

[WhatsApp](#)

Address:



The geographical zone of the WSU's work: northern and eastern countryside of Aleppo