

GFBTU and IDWF Signed MOU on Protection of Domestic Workers' Rights in Bahrain

On the Eve of the IDWD commemorating the adoption of C189, the IDWF and GFBTU signed a MoU to promote migrant domestic workers' rights and welfare in Bahrain.

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On the Eve of the International Domestic Workers Day commemorating the adoption of the International Labour Convention 189 Decent Work for Domestic Workers ([C189](#)) on June 16, 2011, the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) and the General Federation of Bahrain Trade Unions (GFBTU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote migrant domestic workers' rights and welfare in Bahrain.



General Federation of Bahraini Trade Unions (GFBTU) and IDWF signing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on cooperation to organize migrant domestic workers in Bahrain

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We need IDWF and domestic workers' leaders to reach out to workers and provide training for domestic workers so that they know their rights.”

Mr. A. Qader A. Karim Al Shehabi, Deputy General Secretary of GFBTU

The MoU is a milestone to strengthen the collaboration between GFBTU and IDWF to help migrant domestic workers in Bahrain by “empowering them through education, organizing and advocacies and to help them in their urgent problems which for many instances can be remedied by legal assistance”, stated in the MoU. This MoU is the result of 2 years of collaboration with their partners including the FES MENA Regional Trade Union Program, to exchange information and knowledge on issues faced by migrant domestic workers and examine various practices to address them.

There are around 100,000 migrant domestic workers in Bahrain. Since 2017, reforms were introduced in Bahrain followed by introduction of a dual/tripartite unified standard contract for domestic workers. However, it needs further reform to outline working hours, minimum wage and rest time, in addition to an enforcement mechanism.

The signing of the MoU is organized on the 15th June, 2019 at the ILO in Geneva by Mr. A. Qader

A. Karim Al Shehabi, Deputy General Secretary of GFBTU and Ms. Myrtle Witbooi, the president of IDWF. "We need IDWF and domestic workers' leaders to reach out to workers and provide training for domestic workers so that they know their rights.", said Mr. Shehabi at the MoU signing event. "IDWF will ensure all domestic workers are protected in whatever country they work. This is a great occasion and we hope it will be the start of many agreements between us." Ms. Witbooi told the participants at the MoU signing event.

The MoU is for two years and can be extended. It will bring the two organizations to implement joint activities together.

The event was witnessed by over 30 representatives of the ILO, trade unions, domestic workers organizations and other labour organizations. Ms Anna Biondi, Deputy Director of the ILO ACTRAV in her address, stressed that it is important that the topic of migration is being covered, "when we take up the challenges of migration in our activities, we are dealing with workers' rights. This will give us the possibility to deal with labour protection at different levels and across countries, through collective bargaining whenever possible."

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