

## **Executive Summary**

### **Report**

# **"Secretaries between the hammer of the salary and the anvil of job description"**

[www.labor-watch.net](http://www.labor-watch.net)

**Jordan Labor Watch**

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**Phenix Center for Economic and Informatics Studies**

**In cooperation with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung**

*Amman – November 2009*

The report "Secretaries between the hammer of the salary and the anvil of job description" deals with obstacles and difficulties female secretaries' face, from long working hours, deprivation of vacations, low salaries, multiple tasks, and the way society looks at their job.

The report shows that secretaries, especially the ones working at medical clinics, work for more than 10 hours a day, and there is a high number of them deprived from official holidays, and in some cases they work during the weekends without any compensation for the overtime.

On the other hand, the report shows that secretaries who are employed in big and medium size institutions work under the Jordanian labor law. The report

revealed the size of low salaries secretaries get even when they have sufficient experience; some of the salaries are less than the minimum wage rate or a little bit above it; secretaries who have university degrees get high salaries comparing to the salaries of secretaries in offices and medical clinics. The most significant finding of the report is secretaries complaints about the multiple tasks, some of them perform, in addition to secretarial work, office cleaning and making tea and coffee, especially the ones working in offices and medical clinics; in some cases employers ask secretaries to do personal favors that have nothing to do with their work.

The report also revealed that in some cases, secretaries suffer from verbal abuse noticeably done by their employers, like threatening with discharge or decreasing the importance of their work. The report also handled the inferior look to secretaries' work by society, and the stereotyped look formed by newspapers adds that the secretary should be only good looking and fit without any other qualifications, in addition to the image caused by media, that the secretaries mostly have more than just a work relationship with employers.

The report showed that most secretaries work on temporary basis and don't feel that they have any stability; they always wait to the first chance to move to a better job. The report mentioned that most secretaries are not registered in social security and have no health insurance because most of them work in institutions with less than five employees, which is the number required to oblige the employer to register his / her employees in social security.

Although part of the secretaries who work in medical clinics and hospitals are registered in the General Trade Union of Health Services and some registered in the General Trade Union of Employees in Public Services and Free Professions, yet most of them are not familiar with the trade unions frame they are registered in.

In the end, the report recommended that it is necessary to perform a comprehensive survey to analyze socio-economical and career related circumstances of females work in the secretarial field, and modifying the social security law to include all who have salaries in the social security, not only the ones working in institutions that have more than five employees, and activating the role of trade unions to educate secretaries about their legal rights, in addition to raise the number of inspectors of work and activating their role to ensure that this group of female workers get their full rights in issues related to having, at least, the minimum wage, working hours, and full holidays and weekends.