

'Only 25% unionists are women in Bahrain'

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Twenty five per cent of unions activists in Bahrain are women and the Bahrain General Federation for Trade Unions is looking for mechanisms to increase the number.

Suad Mubarak, the only female member of the General Federation of Bahrain Trade Unions board, said no efforts had been wasted to encourage women to join union activities.

“We have been visiting workplaces to inform female workers about the need to join their unions and tackle their work-related problems.”

Only three activists are heads of their unions and two of them were sacked recently because of their activities.

One of them is Amina Abduljabar who was asked to leave her teaching job at a kindergarten because of her fight for better rights for workers in the kindergarten sector.

Many female workers hesitate to join unions to avoid clashes with the management. They also do not want to neglect their families.

“We don’t want union activities to be dominated by men. Better services need to be ensured for all workers, including women and youth,” Mubarak said.

She said their effort aims to to reinforce gender equality in unions by finding mechanisms to encourage women to join unions.

“We know how many women and youth are members in the federation but we do not know how many of them are in unions in private companies because these unions do not cooperate with us,” Mubarak said.