



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Faculty of law

The **C**linical **L**egal **E**ducation Center
For Human Rights and Social Responsibility

Women's Rights Program - Empowerment by Knowledge

A significant cut of the female population in Israel and East Jerusalem live within traditional family frameworks and their status in Israeli society is largely affected by religious courts. A gap exists between the Israeli written law and the ability for women, especially those in minority groups, to exercise their rights. The services available only cater to those women who have the ability to acknowledge that their rights have been violated.

Based on the CLE Center's experience in the field year-long workshops as a tool for empowerment are successful as well as a means to learn the relevant issues for the target group. One time lectures, which we have tried in various programs for women in the past, are not effective due to a lack of basic knowledge. We also learned that the location, duration, type of facilitator, the theory and supervision which accompanied the educator and the cultural sensitivity are all crucial to the success of the Workshops. Women have to be empowered by knowledge in order to receive access to justice.



Within the framework of this new clinic we will develop workshops which will take women through the process of learning, to empower them in various issues, both rights and obligations: legal and life-skills, women's rights in the family, labor rights, rights related to childbirth, parenthood, and social rights. The workshop comprises weekly meetings throughout the academic year. Women participate in a group that is specific to their needs and that ensures cultural sensitivity. Each group chooses a project which they work on throughout the year together with the student facilitators. The idea behind this partnership is to make these women, themselves, agents for social change. As the CLE encourages its students to be advocates of social change, they too encourage these women to pass it on to others in their immediate environment. The fact that the facilitators are law students provides an excellent role model. Where possible the workshops will be held at the Hebrew University, which in our experience provides the participants with a feeling of self-worth and an atmosphere of learning. Our target groups for the workshops will consist of groups of disempowered women from the Arab sector, new immigrants from Ethiopia and the former USSR, ultra-Orthodox women and women in prison.