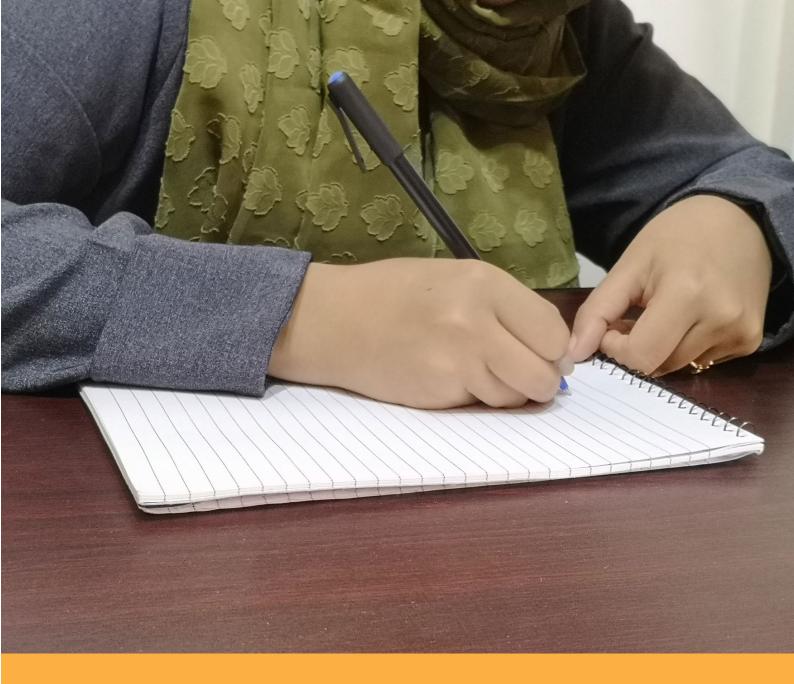




Women In Development and Peace

Women and Economic Empowerment.
Women's Health Empowerment.
Women and Sustainable Development Plans.
Gender Justice and Equality.
Models of Yemeni Women of Peage.

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Women and Economic Empowerment

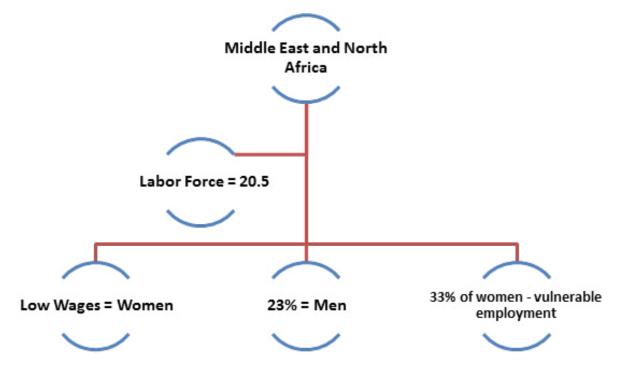
The economic outlook in the region and the world is still impacted by complex political changes, serious security challenges, fluctuating oil prices, and protracted regional conflicts. It was also estimated that economic growth in the Middle East and North Africa regions slowed significantly to just 1.8% in 2017. Growth in the region is expected to accelerate to 3% in 2018. Additionally, the economic structures have been shaped by the dominant public sector in the countries of the region and are affected by it. Moreover, it was noted that there is limited diversity in economies, while less than 3% of the population lives in great poverty, and the vulnerability is still great considering that 53% of the population lives on four dollars per day or perhaps less¹



The region ranked last in the Global Gender Gap Index for 2017, compared to 2006. The highest improvements were observed in the sub-index of educational attainment, while the sub-indices of participation, economic opportunity, and political empowerment had the lowest improvements.

¹⁻ World Bank Annual Report 2016

In the Middle East and North Africa region, only 20.5% of women participate in the labor force. While it is estimated that 33% of women in the region participate in precarious employment, compared to 23% of men. Women are more represented in low paying professions, while there are very few women in top positions in the region.



The main reason behind the low rates of female labor force participation in the region is due to a wide range of interrelated factors. This includes discriminatory legal regulatory standards, limited access to appropriate training, and unpaid as well as unrecognized care work, such as the increased cost of childcare, housework, and poor working conditions including low wages. This is often associated with a lack of social security coverage, discriminatory social and cultural rules, limited access to and control over resources, and the inability of labor markets to generate adequate jobs.

The process of economic empowerment of women is a basic human right. All countries in the region have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). However, seven countries registered reservations to Article 15 related to equal rights for women to conclude contracts and control property. Additionally, 11 countries have registered reservations to Article 16 related to the right of married women to own, manage and dispose of property on an equal basis with men. This reflects negatively on the economic empowerment of women in the region as it affects women's access to equal access to resources.

The Program for Empowering Women in the Arab World provides technical support for third world countries, including the Arab world to enhance the economic empowerment of women and increase the opportunities available to them. This is a catalyst for more sustainable and peaceful peoples, in which economic growth benefits all. Through cooperation with the private sector, civil society organizations, and development partners, the Fund supports government-led efforts, priorities, and strategic regional activities aimed at:

1. Strengthening the supportive environment for the concerned parties to effectively identify

and address the obstacles that prevent women from participating in economic activity.

2. Improving women's ability to access economic opportunities².

Expanding economic opportunities for women is important because it is a critical factor in empowering women. UN Women's efforts on economic empowerment are being implemented in the context of women's rights and work, social justice, and inclusive sustainable development that includes social, economic and environmental dimensions in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Regional Office of the United Nations Women in the Arab States also works with its partners in order to achieve the economic empowerment of women through a variety of initiatives, the most important of which are:

• Provide government policy support to pursue the objectives of the sustainable development goals into the regional and local context.

• Promote gender-sensitive evidence-based policies by engaging the Arab Women's Economic Network "Khadija", a platform for advocacy and knowledge dissemination under the League of Arab States.

• Strengthening the capacity of civil society to engage in dialogue with governments on ensuring that relevant laws and policies are gender sensitive.

• Strengthening the capacities of national institutions to provide gender-sensitive services in relation to economic empowerment.

• Supporting decent work and productive employment by addressing the structural causes of inequality that women face - in partnership with the International Labor Organization.

• Promote women's entrepreneurship, reduce barriers and contribute to creating an enabling environment for the development of the spirit of entrepreneurship - jointly with UNIDO and FAO.

• Increase the focus on women in the migration debate and contribute to promoting equal and safe opportunities, and gender equality for female migrant workers in the Middle East and North Africa region.

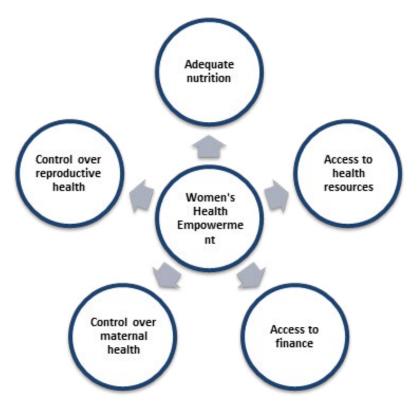
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- World Bank Annual Report 2016
- Women's Empowerment Program in the Mashreq, World Bank.

Women's Health Empowerment:

Achieving sustainable development requires the empowerment of women in all walks of life. The World Bank describes women's empowerment as "the expansion of the freedom of choices and action, which could increase women's authority and control over resources and decisions regarding their lives." This "freedom of choices and actions"—determined by both community and individual agency—impacts women's health outcomes by:

- Enabling adequate nutrition,
- Access to health resources,
- Control over maternal and reproductive health,
- And access to finances, among other factors.



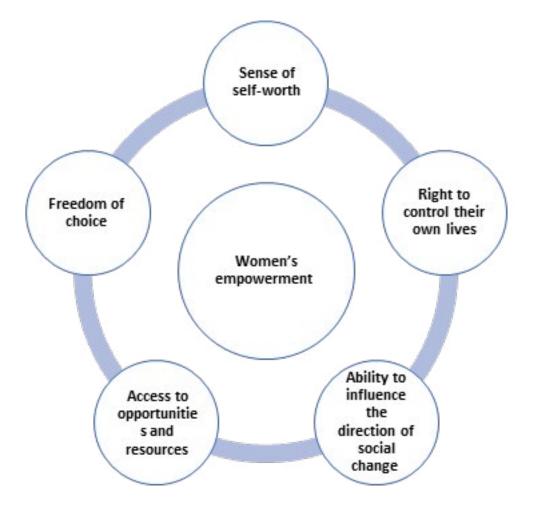


Women's empowerment¹ is a process by which women gain power and control over their own lives and acquire the ability to make strategic choices. It has five components:

- Women's sense of self-worth,
- Their right to have and to determine choices,
- Their right to have access to opportunities and resources,

Their right to have power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home,

1- Economic and Social Empowerment of Yemeni Women, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Issue (39), April, 2021. And their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.



The following issues present significant barriers to women's health empowerment:

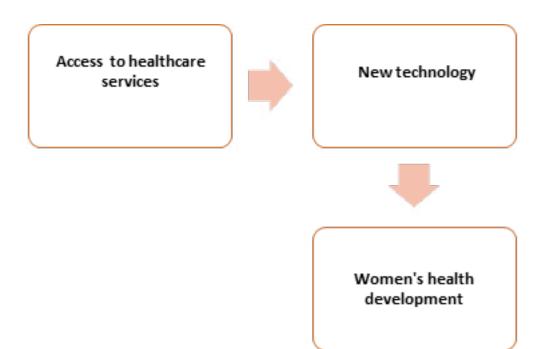
• Lack of appropriate infrastructure and investments, restricting women's health choices.

• Social norms and institutions that prevent or impede choice for women, whether with their consent or through coercion.

• Policy context that is unable to provide an integrated approach towards women's health empowerment.

Complete empowerment can be achieved only by providing access to health services at every stage of women's lives.

While there is no magic pill, the emergence of new technologies enables developing countries to reach higher levels of health empowerment for women in a shorter time with minimal additional spend. This report aims to demonstrate how policymakers can make crucial interventions, aided by technology, to foster women's health empowerment and social justice. We present women's health empowerment as a composite measure including resources, agency, and outcomes.



Despite significant progress, especially since the 1960s, more than half a million women die every year in pregnancy and childbirth due to entirely preventable reasons. 99% of them live in the developing world. Along with this persistent threat, women today face new and serious health risks: 50% of all adults living with HIV/AIDS worldwide are women, with those aged 15-24 years disproportionately affected.

According to the United Nations Women's Policy Division, women's empowerment requires focused interventions, and all development projects and policies must be gender-sensitive. It is vital to build resilience from birth, embed it in communities, and support women throughout their lives.²

However, developing countries struggle to implement policies and programs that seek to improve health outcomes for women. While many programs are designed to address specific aspects of empowerment at different stages of life, none of them are integrated into a holistic model that can be measured periodically to provide feedback to policymakers on the efficacy of such interventions at scale.

Some of the monitored statistics can be summarized as follows:

1. The maternal mortality ratio increased to 38.5% per 100,000, according to the latest estimate in 2015. In 2020, the number was estimated at more than 70% per 100,000 women.

2. The rate of health workers at risk increased to 45.4% of the total health workers in 2019.

3. The rate of female participation in the labor force decreased compared to males, reaching 6% compared to 70.8% for males in the age of 15 years and over, during 2018. It is only 28% in the health sector.

4. The percentage of complaints against health discrimination increased to 350% compared to the situation in 2014, according to the latest OCHA report.³

²⁻ www.worldgovernmentsummit.org

³⁻ Health Justice in Yemen , Medical Journal , May2021 /

Yemen was ranked within the sixth and final group of Social and Heath Justice Index, due to low levels of health care, lack of access to health services for all segments of society without discrimination, in addition to the educational system that generally affects the life and health of children, and thus the productivity of an individual upon reaching the age of 18 years.

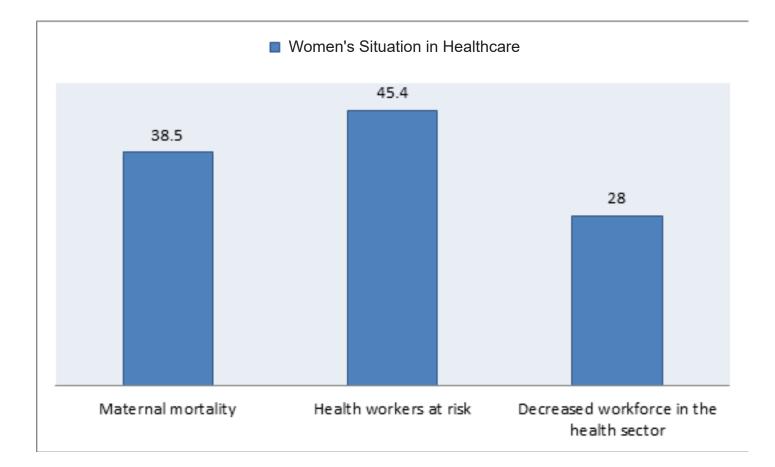
Yemen ranked lowest in the Human Capital Index with a value of 0.37. This means that the earning for the generation born today over their lifetime will be only 37% of what it would be if they had access to full education and healthcare. In other words, Yemen is losing 63% of its productivity due to the lack of full investment in human capital. So, the conditions of conflict, war and instability in Yemen have affected the health situation in general and reduced access to health services to all segments of society.

The health system in Yemen must be a top priority for building the human capital, in order for Yemen to ensure creating a generation capable of productivity. This can only be achieved with two basic conditions:

Ensuring access to health services for all segments of society, without discrimination of gender or age.

Conducting the required health activities according to the priorities of time and place.

Women's Needs Overview in Yemen indicates that nearly 9.9 million women and girls have limited access to basic health services as a result of the destruction or closure of health facilities and the decrease number in healthcare workers. Women and girls are among the most affected population groups. The most vulnerable groups include female-headed households, pregnant and lactating women, the poorest families, children under five years of age, the elderly, people with disabilities, people with chronic or serious illnesses, survivors of gender-based violence. Nearly 5 million women need health assistance.⁴



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- Health Justice in Yemen, Medical Journal, May/ 2021
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Women and Sustainable Development Plans:

- The success of women and their economic awareness in obtaining their rights and achieving gender equality is very important. In the Arab region, the opportunities available to women to participate in the economy are still below than those available to men, despite their high level of educational attainment. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate the issue of women's economic empowerment among the priorities in the national development plans.

- Rural women are as economically conscious as those in Brazil, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Nepal, and Niger, and they are also the key to the success of families, communities, and national economies. Through their work, they maintain their children's education and family health, food security and nutrition. Thus, they are indispensable to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the same time, the intended efforts to improve and develop the economic status of women are also one of the effective ways to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- Significant progress has also been made since world leaders met in Rio de Janeiro in 2012 to define the style of the post-2015 development agenda. Within the newly formed UN Women, a call for a gender-responsive development agenda was made through the report: "The Future Women Want – A Vision of Sustainable Development for all". It is a call for all actors to integrate gender perspectives in the design and implementation of sound and sustainable mechanisms for resource management and infrastructure development in rural and urban areas. This was a major step in ensuring that the post-2015 world includes women and girls as central actors in the development process, as well as men and boys as equal beneficiaries¹.

- David Beasley, Executive Director of the World Food Program (WFP), explained, "We know that creating a society without hunger requires empowering more women through programs that educate and build economic opportunity. He also added that we have to work harder in this area because progress is currently being slowed down in many places where women are not given the opportunities they should have. That is why every day WFP helps millions of women to reach their full potential, improving the lives of their families, communities and peoples."

- Mr. Gilbert. F. Houngbo, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, explained that achieving gender equality is essential to creating a world free from hunger and poverty. Because of this, the Fund has designated this issue as one of its four emphasis areas, and that half of the participants in the projects supported by the Fund are women. We have seen impressive results from our approach working at the family level to promote fair relationships, a fair division of labor, and equitable decision-making for all family members²."

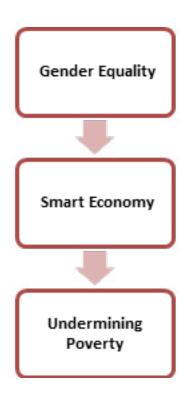
- The Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the World Food Program work globally to combat gender-based discrimination so that men and women have the same rights and equal access to services, resources, and opportunities. Therefore, it is vital and important for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including ending hunger by 2030.

Meanwhile, FAO Deputy Director-General Maria Helena pointed out that innovations in technology, services and infrastructure have great potential to advance gender equality and empower rural women. "We must continue to work together to help remove structural, social and cultural barriers that hinder the ability of women and girls to exercise their rights and freedoms," she added.

- At the same time, gender equality is a smart economy that contributes to reducing poverty, strengthening resilience and boosting shared prosperity. In the Mashreq countries, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon have made tangible benefits in terms of women's access to education and health care, but there are still challenges that hinder women's economic opportunities. For example, only one in five women is considered economically active, and companies headed by women do not exceed 5%.

1- Vinji Nyrongo, Economic Empowerment of Rural Women, United Nations.

²⁻ Building smart solutions to advance equal opportunities for women and girls, Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations.



Work Program:

The Women's Empowerment Program in the Arab Region and the Third World works with the governments of Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon to support the commitments of these countries to strive to increase women's labor force participation rates. Each of these countries has developed action plans for women's economic empowerment accompanied by a detailed action plan that includes the main desired outcomes and metrics to measure the required progress, and the focus is on technical assistance.

In addition, a regional program of work will support inter-country activities and issues of common interest, such as those relating to refugees and internally displaced persons that require special attention at the regional level. The regional program agenda, managed by the Fund Secretariat, will focus on supporting priorities at the country level and on building the evidence base on women's economic empowerment through broad sharing and discussion of results.

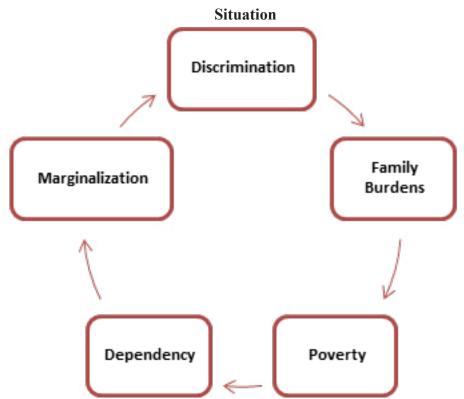
The process of economic empowerment of women is also one of the important pillars in achieving the empowerment of Yemeni women, and without it, the desired comprehensive development in the reality of society will not be achieved. It means, according to what many social researchers see, the equal proportional distribution between men and women in administrative, organizational, professional, and wage positions³.

Women and the Deteriorating Economic Situation:

Based on the deteriorating economic conditions and the increase in poverty, especially in the countryside, women remain burdened with many problems and dangerous negative practices in their lives. Among the most prominent problems faced by women are discrimination, dependency, and

economic, social and political marginalization. They also suffer from exposure to the manifestations and consequences of poverty. They also suffer from the absence of their economic independence, access to resources, including land, inheritance, credit, education and training services, as well as the ability to contribute to development decision-making. At the same time, they still bear a double responsibility in managing the affairs of the household, along with the responsibility to play productive and reproductive roles. This pushes women to fall into the cycle of poverty, and reveals the prominent features of the phenomenon of poverty, despite the scarcity of gender indicators capable of explicitly expressing the true level of women's poverty.

Negative and Dangerous Practices in the Reality of Women with the Complex Economic



Through the available official data and figures, it is possible to track the economic situation of women with the following features⁴:

The percentage of women in the labor force is (7.23%), and the percentage of women out of the total employed is (6.24%).

- Unemployment rates is estimated (2.8%) for women and (5.12%) for men.
- The unemployment rate among young women aged between (15-29) years is up to (8.6%).

■ Women represent (3.3%) of the workforce in the private sector and non-governmental organizations, and they make up (3.9%) of workers in the government and public sector.

■ The percentage of female workers in the agriculture, fishing, and other similar jobs is (7.9%) of the total female workers in the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

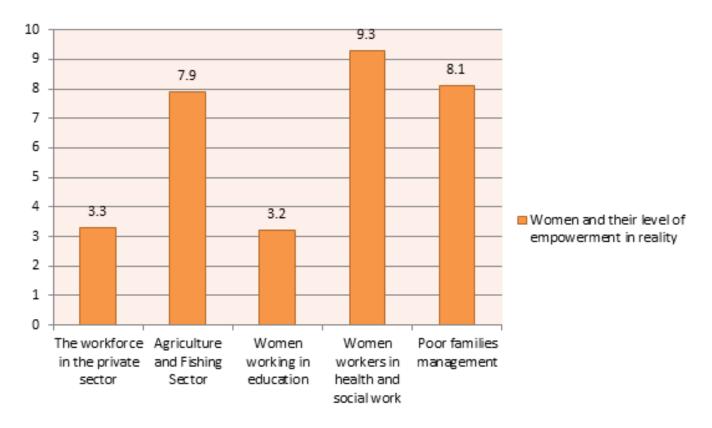
4- See: Abdul Qader Ali Abdo, The Reality of Economic Projects Destined for Women in the Republic of Yemen, Arab Women Organization, pg.4

■ The total working women in the private sector is (7.92 %)

■ Women represent (3.18%) of the total employed in education, and (9.24%) in health and social work.

■ The percentage of women among legislators, officials and managers is estimated to be about (4.4%) only.

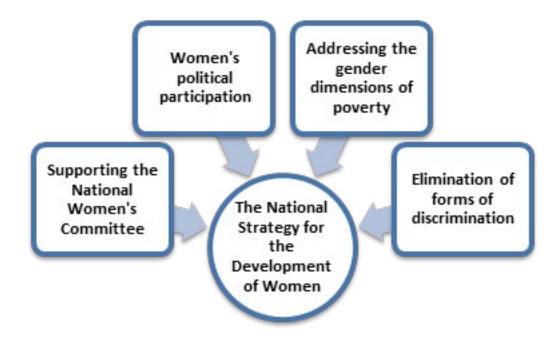
■ The percentage of poor families managed by women (below the poverty line) is estimated at about (8.13%), and the average income of a family headed by a woman is approximately one third less than the average income of a family headed by a man.



This situation is still faced with a number of strategies aimed at improving the status of women in several areas. One of the most prominent of those strategies is the National Strategy for the Development of Women (2003-2005 AD), which has adopted four main themes, focused on the following:

■ Implementation of Yemen's obligations with regard to the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

- Addressing the gender dimensions of poverty.
- The limited representation and political participation of women.
- Supporting the capacities of the National Committee for Women and other national mechanisms.



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Social Justice and Gender Equality:

The international feminist movement began to gain momentum during the 1970s. The General Assembly declared 1975 as the International Women's Year and organized the first World Conference on Women, held in Mexico City. Later, it declared the years 1976-1985 as the UN Decade for Women. In 1979, the General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In its 30 articles, the Convention explicitly defines discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. The Convention targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations, and it is the first human rights treaty to affirm the reproductive rights of women.

The General Assembly

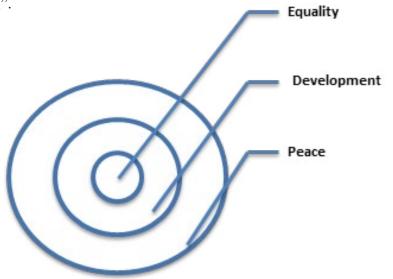


The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Culture and traditions

Five years after the Mexico City conference, a Second World Conference on Women was held in Copenhagen in 1980. The resulting Program of Action called for stronger national measures to ensure women's ownership and control of property, as well as improvements in women's rights with respect to inheritance, child custody, and others.

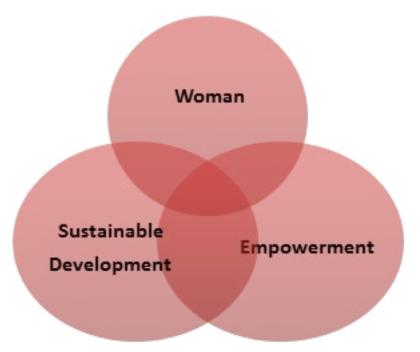
In 1985, the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, was held in Nairobi. It was convened at a time when the movement for gender equality had finally gained true global recognition, and 15,000 representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participated in a parallel NGO Forum. The event was described by many as "the birth of global feminism".



Commission on the Status of Women :

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The CSW plays a key role in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and women's empowerment.

In its session held in 2016, the United Nations Commission focused on women's empowerment and its links to sustainable development. This session resulted in a historic agreement to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a gender-sensitive manner. At its 60th session, 27/2016, it decided to provide a detailed road map on "How to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" in a gender-sensitive manner, ensuring that no one is left behind in implementing the plan, especially women and girls.

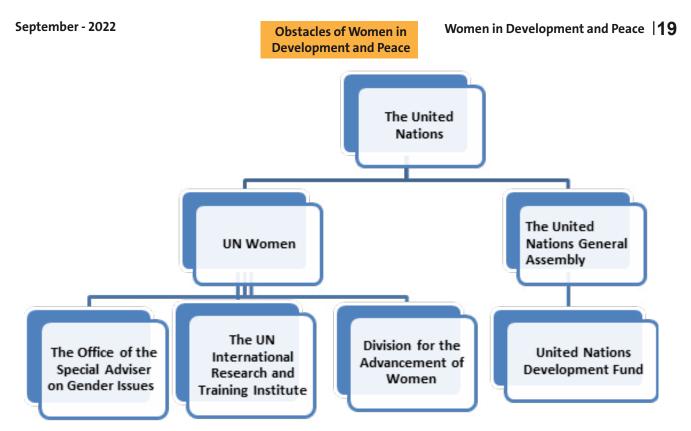


It analyzes the links between the different dimensions of gender equality and women's empowerment, and recognizes that gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires accelerating action on new, long-standing commitments for achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls, and ensuring full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all women and girls.¹

An Organization for Women:

On July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously voted to create a single UN body tasked with accelerating progress in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. The new UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women – or UN Women – merged four of the world body's agencies and offices: the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

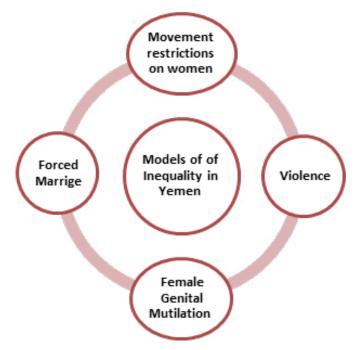
1- Women's Empowerment and its links to Sustainable Development, UN Commission on the Status of Women, UN Women.

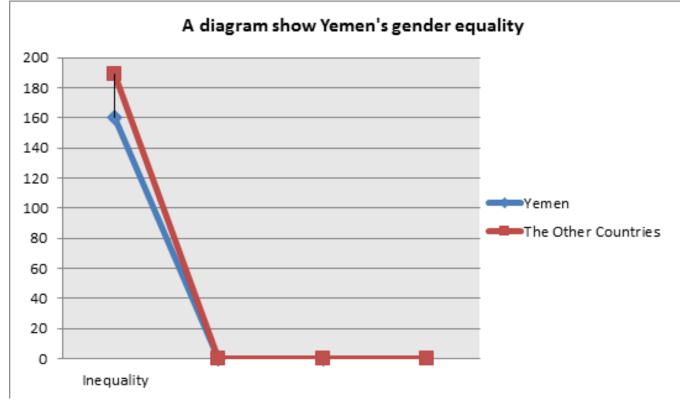


The United Nations is now focusing its global development work on the recently-developed 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Women have a critical role to play in all of the SDGs, with many targets specifically recognizing women's equality and empowerment as both the objective, and as part of the solution.

The 5th Goal, "to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" is known as the standalone gender goal, because it is dedicated to achieving these ends. Deep legal and legislative changes are needed to ensure women's rights around the world. While a record 143 countries guaranteed equality between men and women in their Constitutions by 2014, another 52 had not taken this step.

Yemen ranks 178 of the 189 countries on the Gender Inequality Index. Among the consequences of gender inequality in Yemen, women may be subject to restricted movement, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and gender-based violence.





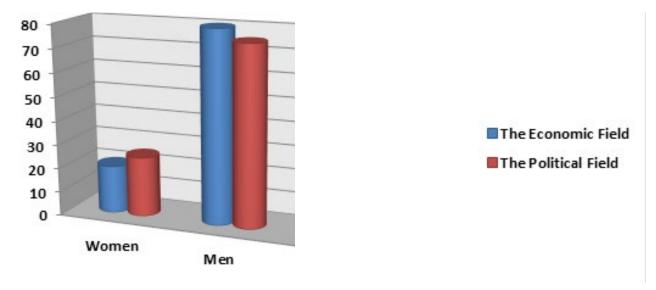
The conflict has magnified socio-economic disparities, depleted resources, and given way to negative alternatives. Although child marriage is not a new phenomenon, rates increased from 32% to 66% in 2017 alone.



Conflict can also strain personal relationships. Although reporting gender-based violence is socially discouraged, it reportedly increased 36% in 2016 than in 2017, according to a recent survey of women across nine Yemeni governorates.²

²⁻ United Nations Development Program, in Depth, Gender, Yemen

Stark gender disparities still exist in the economic and political realms. Although some progress has been made over the decades, women in the labor market still earn 20% less than men globally. As of 2021, only 25% of all national parliamentarians were female, a slow rise from 11.3% in 1995.



Elimination of Violence against Women:

The UN system continues to give particular attention to the issue of violence against women. The 1993 General Assembly Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women contained "a clear and comprehensive definition of violence against women [and] a clear statement of the rights to be applied to ensure the elimination of violence against women in all its forms". It represented "a commitment by States in respect of their responsibilities, and a commitment by the international community at large to the elimination of violence against women".

Violence against women is a pandemic affecting all countries, even those that have made laudable progress in other areas. Worldwide, 35% of women have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence. In September 2017, the European Union and the United Nations joined forces to launch the "Spotlight Initiative", a global, multi-year initiative that focuses on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls.³

In 2020, it will be 25 years since the Beijing Platform for Action set out how to remove the systemic barriers that hold women back from equal participation in all areas of life, whether in public or in private sectors. Despite some progress, real change has been agonizingly slow for the majority of women and girls in the world. Today, not a single country can claim to have achieved gender equality. Multiple obstacles remain unchanged in law and in culture. As a result, women remain undervalued, they continue to work more, earn less, have fewer choices, and experience multiple forms of violence at home and in public spaces.

UN Women stands at the centre of mobilizing governments and civil societies to keep the promises of the Beijing Platform for Action to all of society. In every step it takes, it is committed to making gender equality a lived reality for all women and girls who have historically been marginalized and who have waited long enough. This is a vision of a more prosperous, peaceful and fair world that is ultimately better for both women and men alike.

Models of Yemeni Women Peace:

Throughout history, women have been able to make their political imprints and push their countries to the stage of peace. They play an active and key role in restoring peace and security to their societies after the conflict was almost about to destroy all aspects of life and rip apart the social fabric. Involving women in the peace process, having their voices heard, and participating in many peace issues are crucial, especially since women tend to live in an atmosphere of peace, and are thus closely associated with peacebuilding. From here, we provide examples of women who became peace advocates, and have realistic experience in the fields of peace. Through this topic, we can shed light on one of the prominent peace women in Yemen, activist Mona Luqman, get to know her experience and expertise in working within the fields of peace and humanitarian work in Yemen.

Mona Luqman is a Yemeni peace activist, chairperson of the Food for Humanity Foundation in Yemen, and a co-founder of the Women's Solidarity Network. She is also a Gender and Inclusion Adviser at Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance. She noticed that there are many diverse humanitarian problems in Yemen during the conflict and war phase in 2015, and said that the Yemeni people faced starvation too early.

Hence, Yemeni activist Mona Luqman and her co-workers began working by raising funds to provide water and assistance for the displaced, especially since many of them were forced to move to areas unfit to live in. Thus, the initiative began, by gathering young people and protecting them from engaging in armed battles. She defined the role of women by saying, "We women were trying to prevent bloodshed by involving them in voluntary work.¹"

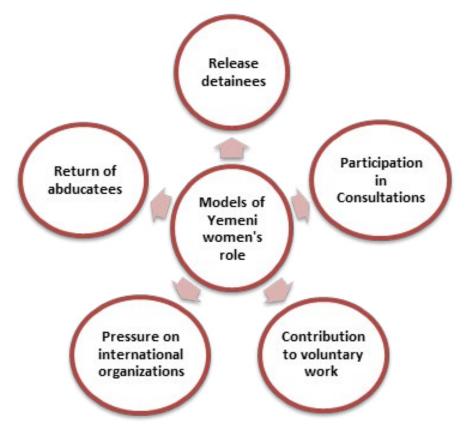
In one of her statements to the United Nations News, she said: "I lived under the siege of Taiz, Sana'a and on the mountains. I was displaced to many places for several year, and fmy family and I found that it is better to leave Yemen to be able to help people more. Of course, this decision was very difficult, especially since I am an activist and deeply involved in my society, but I had to make that decision."

Luqman stressed the importance of the role of Yemeni women in times of conflict, as women are at the forefront of humanitarian response



to raise awareness and settle disputes between warring parties. She notes that there are many grievances and conflicts within the same conflict. She pointed out that there are local disputes over water and land resources, and that women had a role in solving many local issues of this kind among others.

At the same time, woman contributed to the release of detainees and the return of abductees. Women also worked to pressure the United Nations, international bodies and the Security Council through a series of periodic briefings to inform the international community about the nature of the situation inside Yemen. Mona Luqman participated in Oman's consultations with the UN envoy in the security track, and the Yemeni-Yemeni consultations in Riyadh.



Luqman also addressed the issue of displaced families in Yemen, noting that there are more than four million displaced families in Yemen. She explained that these displaced people live in the open, and do not have any means of protection. Unless there is significant and urgent support, many of the United Nations expectations of famine will come true.

Local and governmental institutions were directed to support the emergency preparedness and humanitarian response, and to involve women in these decisions, as they are among the most affected groups by water scarcity and in fetching water.²

She called for the implementation of a specialized gender analysis for the response itself to meet the needs on the ground, and not random. It is also necessary to develop and support local policies that involve actors, including women, in this process.

²⁻ Source: Follow-ups and documentation of the personality of the humanitarian activist Mona Luqman, within the tasks of humanitarian and scientific research.



