

# Women in Peace in Yemen

## International Organizations Foster Women's Inclusion in Yemen's Peace Process

### Women in Yemen: A Beacon of Hope Amidst Formidable Challenges to Peace

# WDP

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## Feminist Efforts Reflect the Yemeni Women's Faith in the Culture of Peace in Yemen

### Boosting International Cooperation to Empower Yemeni Women in Peacebuilding: Ensuring Adequate Funding and Resources

Despite Yemen's long-standing adherence to a culture of revenge, particularly in tribal-dominated regions, the ongoing conflict in the country has demonstrated that Yemeni society upholds and aspires to a culture of peace. Particularly, women have emerged as avid proponents of peace, actively working to promote it through various means. They engage in numerous humanitarian endeavors, participating in peace-focused events, contributing to artistic works that advocate for peaceful resolutions, and undertaking initiatives aimed at conflict resolution within their communities.

By: Yasmine Abdulhafeez  
Women in Development and Peace

These efforts encompass activities such as mediating societal disputes, advocating for the release of detainees, supporting the families of victims and

detainees, and distributing food to those in need. These endeavors are carried out by women through feminist initiatives, institutions, and collaboration with various organizations.

"The Yemeni woman who works in the field of peace has her reasons; she

seeks to establish peace especially in her life, not only because of conflicts and disputes, but also the customs and traditions that deprive her of many of her rights, so the presence of women in the field of peacebuilding is necessary." This is what Salma Abdullah Al-Musa-

bi (a member of the Yemeni Women's Consensus for Security and Peace) said.

She adds in her talk that women must be supported in the peace process, especially as many of them face many obstacles, such as the lack of faith in the necessity of women's presence in peacebuilding from decision-makers, in addition to the male domination that devotes the exclusion of women from the meetings related to peace and restricts their movement. Additionally, various customs and traditions hinder the mobility of women between different areas.

In November 2023, Ammat Allah Abdullah worked with a group of girls in the countryside of Taiz Governorate

to establish the Rural Women's Forum for Peacebuilding, which is a feminist human rights forum that has visions, aspirations and goals that contribute to enhancing and developing women's social participation at the local and national levels.

The forum was established for several goals, as she mentioned on her Facebook page, and among these goals are; encouraging women to face the obstacles that they face in the context of effective social, political and diplomatic participation, and qualifying, training and empowering women and girls to effectively contribute to peacebuilding and conflict resolu-

continue ....page2

tion, and achieving national renaissance and comprehensive development socially, politically and economically.”

Another goal of the forum is to enhance the skills and capacities of women and girls that are necessary to interact with the issues of society, to resolve the conflicts that can be solved at the community level, to enhance the political participation of women, and to involve the vulnerable groups (the marginalized and people with disabilities) in the social and political development.

The message of the forum is “to seek to qualify women and girls and empower them to participate effectively, based on the values of equality, responsibility, transparency, and the spirit of partnership in raising the collective awareness of the importance of social and political participation of women at the local and national levels, and to create a positive social change.”

The establishment of this forum indicates that the efforts of Yemeni women in spreading the culture of peace are not limited to the urban areas only, but extended to the villages and rural areas; believing that they have the ability to make a social impact by achieving peace in all parts of the country.

Najween Muhammed bin Muhammed Ghanem (a member of the Central Committee of the Justice and Building Party) says that women must be supported and empowered; as they have the ability in this field, and are capable of coexistence and dialogue through the negotiating table, and giving them the opportunity, and empowering them in any upcoming events in the field of peace.

She points out in her talk that there is a great deficiency from the competent authorities in giving women enough space to engage in dialogues related to the field of peace, in addition to what women suffer from due to the political instability in the country, which is one of the main challenges facing women activists in the field of peace.

On her part, Shifa Saeed Bahmeesh (a local peace mediator in Aden) says: “The situation of the Yemeni woman who works in the field of peace depends on the local conditions and the challenges that she faces in Yemen; as Yemeni women are an important part of civil society and peaceful work in Yemen.”

Bahmeesh affirms that the Yemeni woman plays an effective role in enhancing peace, security and social justice at the level of the local and national community, yet the woman working in peacebuilding faces many challenges, such as political marginalization, access to political participation and decision-making, and the lack of representation of women in government institutions, which restricts their effective

participation in achieving peace.

Bahmeesh adds in her talk: “Many Yemeni women suffer from sexual violence and gender-based violence, which poses a major obstacle to their role in peacebuilding, in addition to the suffocating economic situation that most Yemenis are going through, especially the segment of women.”

She continues: “This also negatively affects the women working in the field of peace, and they may not be able to participate fully in the peaceful work; due to the financial pressures, and the inability to obtain the necessary resources.”

About the possible solutions to enhance the participation of women working in peacebuilding in Yemen, Bahmeesh says: “The participation of women in decision-making must be enhanced, and their representation in the official government institutions and local authorities in various governorates must be enhanced, as well as confronting sexual violence and gender-based violence effectively; through legislation and strong protection mechanisms, in addition to providing support and assistance services to women victims.”

She continues her talk: “It is important to provide decent and sustainable work opportunities for women, and to enhance the economic capacities of women working in the field of peace; by providing training and financial support, and increasing awareness and education about women’s rights and their role in peacebuilding; through awareness campaigns and educational programs that target the local community and youth.”

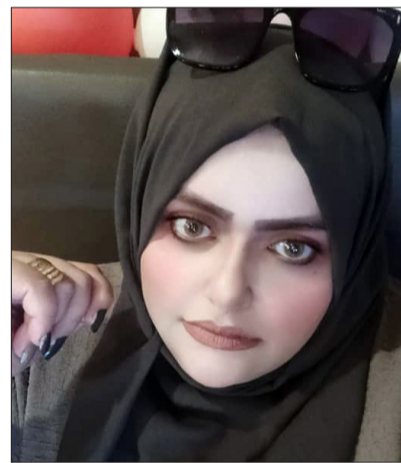
Bahmeesh stresses the need to intensify international cooperation to support Yemeni women in the field of peacebuilding, and to provide the necessary funding and resources to enhance their role, and enable them to participate effectively in peacebuilding processes.

She says: “The Yemeni government, the international community and non-governmental organizations must work to support Yemeni women in the field of peace; to enhance justice and stability in Yemen.”

#### Model Prominent Women

Many names of Yemeni women who have made great efforts in the field of peacebuilding in Yemen have emerged, especially in recent years, which witnessed a conflict that had a great impact on the lives of millions of Yemenis, and their efforts were of great importance in alleviating the suffering of many segments of the Yemeni society.”

One of these Yemeni activists is Asia Al-Mashriqi, who worked to support displaced individuals through the organization she headed, “Sustainable Deve-



Tahani Al-Sarari

lopment Organization.” It is a non-governmental organization established by a group of women in 2015. The first project of this organization involved providing assistance to the displaced who fled from the city of Haradh.

The organization’s activities continued to provide assistance to refugees in many areas of the country; as it implemented about six thousand small projects, repaired a hundred wells, in addition to paving many roads, and providing support to about fifty health centers.

Due to the efforts of the activist Asia Al-Mashriqi in supporting many individuals from the weak groups of African refugees and Yemeni displaced people in the north and south of the country,

she was awarded the “Nansen Refugee Award for 2023” as a regional winner for the Middle East and North Africa region, which is an international award granted by the United Nations to those working in assisting refugees.

Afraa Hariri is a prominent Yemeni activist who has made great efforts in defending the rights of women in Yemen, and she is a member of the Women’s Advisory Group for the Office of the UN Envoy for Yemen, and she was a member of the National Dialogue Conference.

Afraa worked in many aspects, such as establishing the first shelter center for female prisoners who were released, and their children, and the victims of women and children, in addition to establishing the legal protection for abused women in the country.

Afraa participated in the Sweden negotiations as a member of the Women’s Technical Advisory Group, and she was also among the participants in the fourth consultative meeting on peace in Yemen, which was held in the Egyptian capital Cairo in 2017. She also participated in the second meeting of the Yemeni Women’s Consensus for Security and Peace, which was held in Jordan in 2015.”

Afraa also participated in the preparatory meeting in the Jordanian capital Amman on the implementation of the project “Towards a comprehensive and feminist peace by the hands of women in Yemen”, and also participated in the third consultative meeting of the comprehensive feminist consensus for security and peace on the topic of de-escalation and the security plan.

Radhiya Shamsheer, a Yemeni activist, worked in the field of women’s rights in Yemen, and supported her participation in various aspects of life, she was a member of the National Dialogue Conference, which was held in Sana’a in 2013, and she also participated in the consultative meeting in 2006, which was held to discuss the discriminatory texts in the laws in force in the country. Radhiya is the first journalist in Yemen, and a pioneer in this field at the level of the Arabian Peninsula.”

#### Laws and Conventions Related to Women in the Peace Process

Tahani Al-Sarari, the executive director of Aden Foundation for Rights and Development, says: “There are a number of important laws and conventions that are related to the role of women in the peace process, such as the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which was issued in 2000, and relates to the role of women in conflict resolution and peace processes, and the resolution urges to increase the participation of

women in decision-making and peacebuilding, and to enhance the rights of women and empower them in this field.”

Al-Sarari adds in her talk to the Women in Development and Peace newspaper: “Many UN resolutions enhance the role of women in the peace process, and stipulate the need to protect them from violence and sexual assaults during conflicts.”

She continues: “Also, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which is one of the most important international documents that deal with women’s rights, and recognizes their rights in political, social and economic participation, and enhances their role in decision-making and peace processes.”

She continues her talk saying: “There is also the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which is an international legal framework that regulates the trial of serious criminal offenses, such as genocide, rape, and sexual slavery. The statute enhances the accountability of those responsible for committing crimes against women during conflicts.”

She affirms: “In addition, there is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: This declaration is a global framework for the protection of human rights, including women’s rights. The declaration emphasizes the principle of gender equality, and calls for the protection of women from any discrimination and violence based on gender.”

Al-Sarari says: “These laws and conventions are just examples of the global legal framework related to the role of women in the peace process, all these documents aim to enhance the effective participation of women and protect their rights during conflicts and peacebuilding processes.”

On her part, Fathiya Ahmed Muhammed (a lawyer) says: “The increase of women’s participation falls within the full and meaningful participation on an equal footing with men in the efforts made to make peace, prevent conflicts, and build peace within the main priorities of the Department of Political Affairs and Peacebuilding.”

She continues saying: “This issue was included for the first time in the agenda of the Security Council in 2000, when the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.”

She adds in her talk: “The number of women participating in peace-making processes in Yemen is still low, despite the multiplicity of commitments and initiatives taken at the global and regional levels; also, many peace agreements do not include provisions related to gender considerations, which sufficiently meet the needs of women in the fields of security and peacebuilding.”



# Yemeni Women Leading the Way: The Economic Impact on Peace and Prosperity in Yemen

*Yemeni women, renowned for their unwavering strength and resilience, serve as the bedrock for peace and stability in Yemen. Despite the formidable challenges they encounter, their remarkable fortitude and significant contributions within the economic realm shine through, playing a crucial part in societal progress and fostering sustainable development.*

By: **Hebah Mohammed**  
Women in Development and Peace

This report highlights the groundbreaking economic role undertaken by Yemeni women in establishing peace and stability within the nation. Women across Yemen actively participate in diverse economic sectors, ranging from agriculture and industry to business and technology. By harnessing their skills and capabilities, they drive job creation, stimulate economic growth, and foster social investment.

## The Economic Role of Women and Its Importance in Achieving Peace

The process of building peace in Yemen presents a tremendous challenge that requires the involvement of various efforts from all segments of society. In this context, Yemeni women play a vital and decisive role in this process, especially in the economic aspect.

Gamala Al-Qadhi, the director of the Safe Space at the Yemeni Women's Union in Sanaa, states: "The economic role of Yemeni women is not limited to providing income for their families, but extends to include positive effects on the local economy and the society as a whole. When Yemeni women participate in work and take an active role in business, industry, and agriculture, they contribute to creating employment opportunities and promoting sustainable economic growth. Yemeni women represent the fundamental pillar of social and economic stability in Yemen. They are the main drivers for development and sustainable improvement in Yemeni communities. Through their effective participation in economic life, Yemeni women become capable of achieving financial independence and improving their living standards and the lives of their families."

She also added: "The role of women in promoting peace through economic participation is crucial. The current hardships have had a positive impact on the role of women. Those who previously had no economic role now have a significant economic role, working from their homes in independent small projects. This effective participation of women leads to increased family stability. When families are stable, the community becomes more stable, making it ready to embrace peace and social coexistence."

She further stated: "Empowering women economically in Yemen is a crucial factor in the peace-building process. When Yemeni women are given equal opportunities to participate in the workforce and make economic decisions, it contributes to enhancing social and economic stability in the country. Achieving gender equality and empowering women promote social justice, reduce discrimination, and alleviate resulting tensions and conflicts."

Laila Lutf Al-Thawr, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Political Office of the Arab Hope Party, also emphasizes the importance of economic empowerment for women. She points out that economic empowerment is crucial for women to effectively participate in the peace process. Women with their own projects and financial independence have the ability to contribute significantly to peacebuilding through fieldwork, mobility, and addressing various social issues. On the other hand, women facing economic challenges are often hindered in their capabilities and participation in peacebuilding efforts.

Al-Thawr further highlights the significance of enhancing women's mobility to participate in peace-related events in different countries, as well as their active involvement in peacebuilding and addressing community issues. Economic empowerment of women also helps resist extremist ideologies that seek to exclude women from society.

Furthermore, Al-Thawr suggests that women's economic participation enhances their competitiveness and presence in implementing various projects in community peacebuilding, ultimately challenging stereotypical perceptions of women's roles in society.

She stresses that the lack of economic empowerment for women in Yemen exacerbates poverty, instability, and inequality, hindering the peacebuilding process and reinforcing divisions and conflicts. It is crucial for everyone to clearly recognize the consequences of this situation.

Al-Thawr emphasizes the importance of economic empowerment for women in Yemen by supporting their capabilities, skills, effective participation in the workforce, and access to appropriate education and training. It is essential to remove

obstacles such as gender discrimination, violence, lack of awareness, and logistical support.

## Reforming Society through Women's Economic Empowerment

Many projects highlight the importance of women's economic empowerment. Despite the difficulties, many women are asserting their presence and participating in various projects, contributing to the stability of families, especially those who have lost their breadwinners. Their contribution has significantly alleviated the humanitarian situation at the societal level. Many women have also started small businesses that have expanded into projects they were not involved in before, now working in large projects previously attributed only to men.

According to Dr. Laila Lutf, "We are witnessing the establishment of women-led companies in fields such as supply, contracting, import, and export, which were previously dominated by male entrepreneurs due to the effort and public relations required for the work."

It is noted that women in general have become capable of establishing their own businesses and achieving independence, greatly contributing to changing the landscape of societal peace and resolving conflicts without relying on the support of others. Fawzia Abdu Rabbu, President of the Women's Union in Sana'a, Yemen, stated: "Women's economic empowerment enhances their ability to succeed and progress economically, and having the authority to make economic decisions and take actions regarding them is a fundamental human right. All countries in the region have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). However, 7 countries have reservations about Article 15 (related to equality in women's rights in making contracts and managing properties), and 11 countries have reservations on Article 16 (related to the right of married women to own, manage, and dispose of property on an equal basis with men). This has a negative impact on women's economic empowerment in the region, affecting women's equal access to resources."

## Female Role Models in Economic Independence & Conflict Resolution

Dr. Laila Lutf Al-Thawr, the Assistant Secretary-General, Head of the Political Office and Relations of the Arab Hope Party, President of Sam Organization for Rights and Development, a local trainer and mediator, an expert in negotiation and conflict resolution, is one of the female role models who has achieved economic independence through her own business in several economic projects. She tells Women's Magazine: "My financial independence and private business have played a major role in my ability to contribute to solving social and humanitarian issues. I started working in the field of prisoners' affairs and funding field teams through self-efforts, after the support from several organizations and the UN envoy's office stopped. I had to sell some of my personal belongings to support those teams and enable them to work in areas such as Aden, Lahj, Al-Baydha, Sana'a, and Nihm, and those teams relied entirely on my personal support."

She continues: "The general idea is that women's financial independence, whether they have a large or small project, enables them to finance themselves and rely on themselves, without depending on any external party, and this contributes to spreading peace. Most of my work in conflict resolution has been self-funded, including my contribution to Sam organization for human rights and development, as I covered most of the organization's activities from my own financial resources, and this has greatly contributed to the organization's continuity."

She concludes by saying: "My financial independence has helped me a lot in moving on the ground and mediating in conflict resolution and dealing with the issues of detainees. I have been able to resolve armed conflict issues in Marib and release detainees with self-help. Financial independence gives women the freedom to make decisions and move freely in their work."

## Main Challenges

The most important challenges facing women in Yemen are many, which hinder their path towards economic work and participation in spreading peace. The ongoing conflict and strife in the country have led to a deterioration in living conditions and an increase in poverty, which affects women in particular and increases their economic and social burden.

According to Gamala Al-Qadhi: "Regarding the challenges facing women when participating in economic projects, they differ according to their circumstances. Illiterate women play an important economic role, and educated women have a significant economic role and special challenges. Rural women have an effective role and special challenges as well. However, they all face the challenge of competition from foreign products and the intervention of wealthy men in their competition."

For example, fabric merchants have monopolized the field of sewing robes that women specialize in, and people with greater capabilities can provide fabrics at cheaper prices, provide labor, sell products at lower prices, and thus make women bosses work with them for cheap wages, which hinders the competition of women who work in sewing and own their own projects, and they cannot compete with the owners of money."

She also pointed out that although the economic situation in our country is very bad in general, it is even more difficult for women whose participation in the economic side was very weak; due to the nature of life and the distribution of roles in our country, which led these women to face many challenges that depend, of course, on the type of project.

She mentioned that among those challenges are the laws that have been recently imposed, which require paying a lot of money, whether at the beginning of opening projects, or the size of taxes and insurance, and the lack of facilities to encourage women to open small projects, and other fundamental reasons that have also led to the closure of many economic projects led by women and their bankruptcy in recent years.

She added: "The weakness of early recovery and economic empowerment projects support from donor agencies, and the weakness of women's ability to provide the necessary capital to open projects, which led to most of women's efforts being limited and their participation in small projects, and also limiting them within a narrow framework and specific projects."

Some of these challenges are also shared by Hayam Al-Absi (a researcher in the field of economic empowerment for women and youth), who says: "The challenges are many; some of them are related to financing or armed conflicts, and some are related to the woman herself or her society, and in my opinion, the most important challenges are the material challenges represented in the difficulty of accessing financing to start her project, and due to financial challenges, the woman who owns the project cannot expand or develop her project, especially in light of the general market's weak purchasing power."

Also, due to the high prices of raw materials or primary materials that women have difficulty obtaining due to the country's conditions, and among the challenges is also the inability of women to develop their skills at work sometimes; because the woman has to perform her traditional roles within her family, in addition to managing her project, as well as the restrictions imposed on women may hinder their effective entry into the labor market, all of this has a negative impact on sustainable development, and on social and economic stability."

## Women's Projects in the Face of Economic Challenges and Conflicts

Researcher Hayam Al-Absi says: "Due to the deterioration of the economic situation in the world in general, and in countries that are under armed conflicts in particular, including Yemen, women have entered the labor market and practiced new professions and managed them skillfully, and we have recently seen many projects owned by women or managed by women, which helped the emergence of small and medium-sized financing projects that target women, and provide them with financial support to start their projects, as well as skills development programs that enhance their role in economic projects."

She continues: "The level of success of those projects owned by women is determined by the level of experience of the woman who owns the project, the strength of her capital, and also the requirements of the market. Therefore, we see that projects related to food and beverages are successful due to the continuous need of the market for them, and also the beauty field is one of the fields that achieve sustainability and success. It is good to see such projects recently emerging that keep pace with progress and development in the world in those fields. We have also seen new projects recently, such as: sports halls, projects related to weddings and parties, and some women's products have become competitive with imported products, such as: the manufacture of bags or cosmetics and others."

She confirms: "There are successful models of projects owned by Yemeni women that are still ongoing, and have developed for the better, such as: projects for designing women's abayas, workshops for designing wedding dresses and party dresses and tailoring them, as well as projects for cosmetic products or beauty centers. She believes that e-commerce projects are successful projects that receive great popularity, and despite the intense competition in those fields, there are projects that have survived and become famous; because the project owner has a great deal of development and updating for the project that is commensurate with



Laila Lutf Al-Thawr

the developments taking place in local and international markets."

## Steps to Improve Women's Economic Participation

There is a need to take effective and sustainable steps. These steps must be directed towards overcoming the obstacles that hinder women's path and enhancing their opportunities to obtain paid employment and establish their own businesses.

Hayam Al-Absi says: "The possibilities of obtaining financing must be provided and transactions must be facilitated for women, and these are among the most important opportunities for improvement. It is good to provide facilities for women's projects, such as customs facilities, and to facilitate the work of local and international organizations working in the field of economic empowerment for women. Also, easing the restrictions on them will enable them to develop their skills and take care of the project in a way that ensures its continuity and sustainability, thus enhancing the role of women in the labor market and actively helping to develop the country's economy"

Al-Qadhi shares suggestions for improving women's economic participation by saying: "Local products resulting from women's projects must be protected, and Yemeni women must be financially supported by providing the necessary tools and materials to start their own projects, and providing a suitable work environment to market their project. It is important that equal and comprehensive opportunities for education and vocational training for women be available, including a focus on economic and commercial skills. Financial and technical support should be provided to women who want to start small projects or expand their current projects. Soft loans, financing, and alternative support can help develop business plans and marketing."

She also emphasizes the need to provide equal and comprehensive opportunities for women to participate economically, and government institutions, non-governmental organizations, and civil society must work together to promote women's rights, provide appropriate support and training to enable women to participate economically, raise public awareness of the importance of women's role in peace and development, and encourage economic projects that aim to empower and enhance women's participation."

She continues: "Working to change attempts to distort and demonize women's work, which is considered contrary to our customs and our true religion, which urged us to strive to earn a living, instead of begging or begging from others, with the importance of highlighting success stories for Yemeni businesswomen; to be an encouraging and motivating model for other women who are afraid of work despite their need for it."

She also continues her talk about the necessary steps and solutions by saying: "Attention to sustainable projects to empower women instead of emergency response projects, which in turn will definitely lead to economic and developmental stability within the community. It will also have a positive impact on improving the level of family income and protecting children and families who lost their breadwinner during the conflict, or even in peacetime, thus raising the standard of living for the family, which will greatly help social stability, and directing everyone's capabilities towards development instead of conflict and preoccupation with conflicts; for women are the first pillar in building and preserving the family."

She concludes: "It is important to take into account that the projects that some consider small are an opportunity that can change the life of an entire family, and contribute significantly to establishing social peace, the country's revival, and supporting its cohesion, which in turn enhances peace in the family and society."

Finally, focusing on the role of Yemeni women in economic work and peacebuilding is not only a matter of justice and human rights but also a strategic investment in Yemen's future. Enhancing women's economic participation means enhancing sustainable development and stability, and promoting opportunities for justice and peace in society.

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## Our Vision

A society that believes in  
the importance of women in  
establishing peace and raises  
their public awareness. Therefore,  
they become able to participate  
in all areas of building and  
developing the society.

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# Limited Official Opportunities Hamper Yemeni Women's Engagement in Peacebuilding

*Despite enduring immense challenges and suffering since the onset of the conflict in Yemen, women have displayed remarkable resilience, making tangible contributions to peacebuilding. This report closely examines the pivotal role played by Yemeni women in peace processes, despite the harsh realities of poverty, rights suppression, and violence amidst the ongoing conflict. Women have emerged as active partners in political and social arenas, wielding the potential to effect positive change. Their ability to bridge differences and seek solutions offers great hope for their involvement in any settlement to end the conflict.*

By: Ahmed Bajoaim  
Women in Development and Peace

Article 31 of the Yemeni constitution guarantees women the same rights and responsibilities as men, including equal participation in all aspects of life, including peace processes, negotiations, and political activities. However, the implementation of this law has been largely absent in lived experiences, especially during the years of armed conflict that have hindered the realization of constitutional provisions. Nonetheless, this constitutional article serves as a solid foundation for women to assert their rights and ensure their equal participation in peacebuilding alongside their male counterparts.

## Women in Ministries

In May 2020, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor launched a national plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 regarding women in peace and security. This plan reflects the belief in the role of Yemeni women in creating positive change, preventing conflicts, and building communities based on principles of social justice and equality. It also emphasizes the official commitment to advancing women's status and enhancing their position through practical measures. The plan includes projects and programs to protect women, combat gender-based violence, and promote their leadership in decision-making, as well as addressing their needs in future plans.

The Ministry of Social Affairs emphasized that the plan is aligned with Yemen's commitment to international treaties and conventions, as well as responding to the UN resolution on women. The plan calls on international and local organizations and donor partners to support its implementation in order to uplift women's status and achieve their aspirations for a sustainable future.

According to international development and gender researcher Mufeed Ali, Yemeni women have held ministerial positions since the unification in 1990 until the formation of the latest government in 2020. The researcher noted that out of a total of 4444 ministerial positions, 95.5% were held by men, while only 18 positions (4.1%) were allocated to women over the past thirty years. This disparity clearly demonstrates the low representation of Yemeni women in the decision-making process, which has fluctuated based on the prevailing political circumstances during the same period.

Through the percentage indicated by the researcher in international development and social gender, Mufeed Ali, the clear weakness of the official role and successive governments in the presence of women in ministerial positions becomes apparent. According to the researcher, their empowerment fluctuates over time due to the political circumstances that Yemen has experienced over the past decades and the nature of the stage. This leads us to the conclusion that decision-makers lack confidence in the importance of women in leadership



positions to address crises, alleviate the effects of conflicts, and promote peace and stability, which requires a different approach. The United Nations and international organizations demand the involvement and empowerment of women in decision-making positions to mitigate the intensity of conflicts.

## Local Authority's Role: Al-Mahra as an Example

In exploring the role of local authorities in involving women in peace processes, the advisor to the governor of Al-Mahra Governorate for women's affairs, A'lia Al-Harizi, explains that women today have become genuine partners in all political, economic, and social fields in Yemen. Women have played a significant role in expressing their suffering due to the conflict and unstable situation, and the women of Al-Mahra have had their share in this. They have participated in numerous peace-related conferences and workshops held both domestically and internationally. Al-Harizi further confirms that since assuming her role as the advisor to the governor for women's affairs, she has organized numerous workshops and training courses to enhance women's capabilities in various political, economic, social, cultural, and religious fields.

Al-Harizi continues by stating, "The local authority in Al-Mahra Governorate has shown great interest in empowering women to participate in decision-making within the governorate, without monopolizing all powers by other genders. The authority has assigned leadership positions to Al-Mahra women within the governorate, including the position of the deputy governor for women's affairs, the advisor to the governor for women's affairs, and the director of the women's department, who has been granted full authority to qualify and train female cadres in the governorate. Contracts have also been made with specialized academic figures to train, qualify, and raise awareness among women about their rights, as guaranteed by the Yemeni constitution and the international treaties and conventions ratified by our country."

## The National Committee

The National Committee for Women plays a pivotal role in empowering women and increasing their participation in peacebuilding by enhancing women's capabilities, developing their goals, and preparing them to become successful

leaders. In this regard, the National Committee for Women in Aden concluded a training course targeting women participants in components and political parties with the aim of empowering them to take on decision-making positions, familiarizing them with advocacy campaigns, enhancing advocacy plans for women's leadership, and increasing their participation in peacebuilding. The course lasted for 6 days with the participation of 30 women, as part of the Women's Empowerment Project implemented by the National Committee in collaboration with the UN Women.

According to the official Facebook page of the National Committee, Dr. Shafiq Sa'eed, the committee's president, affirmed on December 19, 2022, that success in the women's political elite enhances advocacy plans for women's issues, improves future joint political work for Yemeni women, creates a positive turning point in empowering and politically qualifying women, and increases their opportunities to participate in decision-making positions. At the same time, she emphasized the necessity of increasing women's participation in leadership positions within components, political parties, or government administrations, as it is essential to give Yemeni women a strong push forward and create more opportunities to empower women in decision-making and peacebuilding processes.

Furthermore, Dr. Shafiq participated in the consultative meeting, which included 200 participants with the Office of the UN Special Envoy to Yemen, according to a recent report issued by the National Committee on December 14, 2023, in Aden Governorate. The meeting discussed enhancing communication channels between Yemeni women and the Office of the UN Special Envoy to support peace negotiations and conflict resolution, meaning to increase women's participation in any political settlement to end the conflict and establish permanent peace. The meeting also addressed improving strategic partnerships with women and developing the leadership skills of Yemeni women in comprehensive peacebuilding processes.

As mentioned in the committee's official report, the meeting also discussed the need for a comprehensive approach from the beginning to achieve the desired goal for Yemeni women, including setting priorities and identifying the root causes

of the armed conflict among local parties. Overcoming the obstacles to peacebuilding through women's participation was also emphasized. This includes a series of consultations between female elites and the UN Special Envoy's office to develop a comprehensive peace vision in Yemen.

The chairwoman of the National Women's Committee in Al-Mahra Governorate, Mahal Al-Zain Badinar, stated that the committee's role lies in honing and developing women's skills, enhancing their presence, and providing them with opportunities in political decision-making centers and any upcoming peace negotiations. The committee advocates for women's participation in peace negotiations at all levels and stages, whether by expressing women's voices, calling for more inclusive processes, undertaking joint projects, exchanging experiences, or building relationships with other mediator networks.

## The Role of Women's Union

In a press interview conducted by the Women's News Agency with the president of the Women's Union in Yemen's Abyan Governorate, Amna Al-A'bd, she spoke about the union's role in promoting the presence of Yemeni women in leadership positions and empowering them to contribute to peacebuilding. The interview, titled "Amna Muhsin: Establishing the Women's Union of Yemen was the first step to engage women in administrative work," on June 11, 2021, emphasized that the Women's Union has strengthened the presence of women in most state facilities, contributing to women's decision-making.

During the interview, she urged women holding leadership positions in state institutions to play more effective roles in Yemeni women's issues during the conflict and work to change laws that she referred to as unjust towards women, enabling women to play their desired role in peacebuilding. Alongside children, women are one of the most affected groups by the ongoing conflict in the country, and the Women's Union of Yemen is active in most Yemeni regions, with approximately 23 main branches in various governorates.

## The Projects

Al-Harizi confirmed that the local authority in the governorate has presented numerous projects to enhance women's participation in various fields, and to prepare them well to preserve all their

rights. This was achieved through the implementation of many plans, programs, and workshops that elevate women's qualifications, train them in needed areas, enable them to lead, and contribute to peacebuilding in a country exhausted by conflicts and in need of stability and sustainable solutions, which can only be achieved through women's participation in peace negotiations.

On her part, Badinar stated: "The committee contributed to projects in the water, agriculture, and education sectors, as well as women's economic empowerment, and also enhancing women's participation in various sectors including peace. This was done by identifying priorities and required needs in the targeted areas where women suffer due to the current deteriorating living conditions. The National Committee's office, with support from various entities and institutions, was able to intervene in the field of professional training for women."

## The Future Plans

Badinar further explains that the National Committee in the governorate has worked within its future plans to achieve sustainable development goals and enhance women's role through education, training, skill development, improving health conditions, and social and cultural empowerment of women for social participation beyond the family scope. On a broader scale, this provides women with opportunities to access a wide range of educational options, contributing to eradicating female illiteracy, and thereby improving their image, roles, and achievements in society. Social and cultural empowerment focuses on females in terms of education, in addition to economic empowerment, which is a necessary right to achieve gender equality and broader development goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction, and social improvement.

In conclusion, it can be said that official entities have played a role, but perhaps they seem hesitant to involve women in peace processes. The actual work on the ground was different in representing Yemeni women in conflict resolution negotiations and peacebuilding. Finally, working more seriously towards women is required, as they are among the most affected groups by the ongoing conflict in the country for the past nine years.

# Women: Extensive Efforts in the Peacebuilding Process and Advocates Beyond Words

*Peacebuilding, in its linguistic sense, refers to the act of creating harmony, while peace encompasses a broad and inclusive concept, representing security, stability, and the absence of violence. The use of the words differs based on contextual usage, but the underlying essence remains consistent. Throughout history, Yemeni women have been recognized as symbols of patience, sacrifice, and generosity, with a crucial role in the process of peacebuilding.*

**By: Haneen Al-Wahsh**  
 Women in Development and Peace

The content of peacebuilding varies according to the social type. In the eyes of some, social roles are defined, and the concept of peacebuilding for women is confined within a societal framework (such as mothers who are respected as peacebuilders in society, tasked with specific responsibilities, including raising the next generation and instilling in them the values and foundations of peace to maintain social cohesion).

### Voices of Women

In the context of the women's role in highlighting the voice of women and delivering it widely, Huda Al-Harbi (a journalist in the Niswan Voice platform) says: "From the perspective of our sense of social responsibility towards the homeland and society as a result of what we have reached from a humanitarian, economic and political situation, and even a difficult social situation, in light of the conflict we live in, we tried hard



on the platform to raise the voices of peace, and deliver the voice of women in particular; because she is the most affected."

She adds: "[This was done] By shedding light on the numerous images of the daily struggles experienced by Yemeni women. They are mothers who lost their sons, wives whose husbands have been abducted, daughters suffering from orphanhood, hunger and deprivation, victims who lost their limbs because of mines, or individuals struggling daily to access clean water, household gas, or even for firewood to cook whatever she can

to alleviate hunger."

Huda continues to explain the challenges Yemeni women face in these circumstances, saying: "There are prominent female models that were a light to be illuminated in the darkness of the conflict and its misery; many women have presented honorable roles, and they have been able to form the most beautiful images of success and excellence in an environment that is less than difficult."

She adds: "We always tried to deliver the voices of women calling for peace, and our message was to win the rights and stop the absurd conflict

that destroyed everything beautiful inside us."

### Women and Social Peace

Despite the efforts made to involve women in the peace process and conflict resolution in Yemen, there are those who hinder them from reaching their goals and objectives. Here, journalist Nawal Baqtayan says: "The Yemeni woman is the first victim of the conflict; she was deprived of her political empowerment."

She added: "Marginalizing women and depriving them of participation in all fields constitutes a form of violence practiced against in plain view of the creators of these international decisions and charters, which have become mere words without action. Consequently, women have been denied their right to participate in decision-making or in building and spreading the foundations of peace."

In the same context, peace activist Hiyam Abdu says: "Women activists in the field of peacebuilding and those working with civil society organizations face smear campaigns, in addition to disdainful looks from some women and, to a greater extent, men".

She affirmed: "International decisions and agreements are not implemented as stipulated. Women's rights are still deprived in all areas, and they lack the freedom to make final decisions. They face the most heinous forms of social violence simply because they are women. This affects their ability to contribute to peace efforts, primarily within their narrow domestic sphere, before the broader societal sphere. This results in a generation that lacks peace or has a limited understanding of it."

### Local Studies and Research

The Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies issued a study in 2023 on the efforts of Yemeni women in the peacebuilding process entitled: "Enhancing the voice of women in the peace process in Yemen: mechanisms to activate their role and related priorities and recommendations." The study explains that there are gaps that hinder the participation of women in the peace process in Yemen, particularly the exclusion of women from peace track talks. Their absence from the negotiating table raises deep concern.

Through the study's inference of the opinions of the activists, some of the women participating in the workshop confirmed that the existing gaps in the approach of the United Nations organizations and other relevant international organizations responsible for implementing the agenda of women, peace and security; as they do not do much to ensure meaningful participation of women in the peace process, while women face increasing repressive measures that undermine their rights within Yemen.

Based on their experiences in engaging in peace efforts sponsored by the United Nations, the Yemeni participants (with experience in various economic, political and civil society fields) identified the following major challenges: the lack of alignment of the peace process approach sponsored by the

United Nations in Yemen with the lived reality, and clear shortcomings in enhancing the fair and meaningful participation of women in the Yemeni peace negotiations.

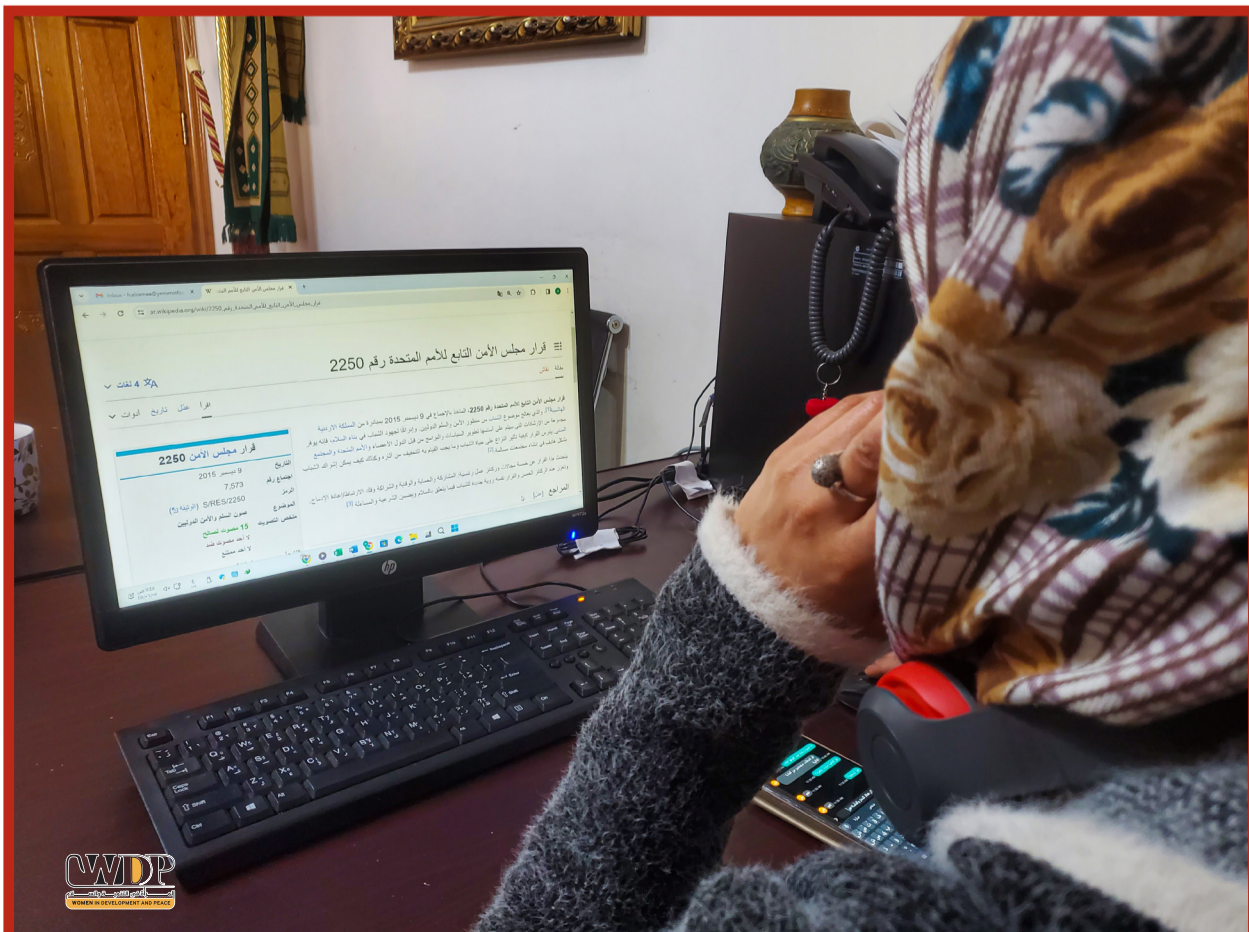
The study noted that during the National Dialogue Conference (2013-2014), women successfully negotiated for a 30% representation in elected bodies and government institutions. However, those efforts were undermined with the outbreak of the conflict. Women were marginalized almost entirely from the official peace process, and their participation was limited to discussions in the second and third track, where they were strictly confined to advisory roles. This pattern also applied to other civil society actors.

### International Resolutions

In the context of international resolutions related to women and peace, UN Resolution (1325) stipulated the necessity of involving women in decision-making at all local and international levels, in peacebuilding and preservation, in addition to protecting women from all forms of violence and activating the laws that guarantee the protection of women.

The resolution was unanimously passed on October 31, 2000. However, until this moment, Yemeni women are still waiting for the implementation of this resolution, especially as they have been subjected to marginalization and exclusion in all its forms due to the ongoing conflict that has been raging for years.

*Yemeni women play a pivotal role in building and achieving sustainable peace in Yemen*



# Yemeni Women in Conflict: Dedicated Efforts towards Achieving Psychological and Social Peace

*Yemeni women have always been characterized by courage and resilience, demonstrating their wisdom in overcoming the challenges of conflict and maintaining stability in their own lives and the well-being of their families. Despite the ongoing hardships they face, the status of Yemeni women has witnessed significant development compared to past decades.*

**By: Ahmed Bajoaim**  
**Women in Development and Peace**

The bravery of these women and their ability to endure the burdens of life and contribute to social peace deserve recognition and praise. They play a crucial and vital role in Yemeni society, preserving psychological and social peace amidst the continuous conflict in the country. The crisis that Yemen has been experiencing for years has resulted in infrastructure destruction, hindered essential services, and immense suffering for the population, particularly women and children.

In the midst of harsh conditions, humanitarian crises, and armed conflicts between warring parties, numerous inspiring stories of women have emerged. They have assumed leadership positions and, through their esteemed roles, have worked to uphold psychological and social peace and create peace for those around them.

## Inspiring Women

Abeer Al-Hadhrami, one of the inspiring women and pioneers in Hadhramout Governorate, has managed to be a role model for successful women and hold a position of decision-making authority. A brief introduction about her reveals that Abeer is a visual artist and the head of an academy focused on training artists, which she personally established. She has participated in numerous art exhibitions locally and internationally (in Italy, France, Malaysia and Egypt), presenting artwork that conveys messages about women's rights and opposition to violence.

In early November of 2023, she was appointed as the General Director of the Ministry of Culture's office in the coastal region of Hadhramout. Al-Hadhrami emphasizes that she is the first woman to be appointed to this position, which represents a significant breakthrough for Hadhrami women, particularly in terms of leadership empowerment, and for Yemeni women as a whole.

On December 12, 2023, Al-Hadhrami obtained a master's degree in the field of educational psychology, with her thesis titled "The Effectiveness of a Training Program Based on Visual Art in Reducing Depression Severity among Students." She affirms that the process of peace requires the Yemeni society's attention to all its segments, including women. Through visual art, she has conveyed a message about the importance of psychological and social peace, as well as the significance of enhancing women's role in peacebuilding. Al-Hadhrami indicates that she has made great efforts to focus on youth and women, who are among the most affected groups by the ongoing conflict in the country.

During her tenure as the Director of the Ministry of Culture's office, she has developed a plan that specifically involves women in the creative economy, transforming the talent possessed by young female artists into a source of income and empowerment simultaneously. This highlights their capabilities within society and creates a positive impact that contributes to psychological and social peace.

She adds, "Highlighting and empowering women in leadership positions is of great importance to society as a whole, not just for women. This contributes to reducing conflicts, minimizing disputes, and creating a more sustainable and stable environment."

## Female Leadership

In another story about female leadership that has moved through the corridors of many administrative positions in government work, Awsan Mohammed Bahussein has become an exemplary figure among women and a source of pride. She has been able to reflect a positive view of successful female leadership and surpass her male counterpart in some positions due to her perseverance,

hard work, excellence, and the qualitative leap she has made in those sectors she has undertaken.

Currently, Awsan works as an advisor to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. She says, "I started my administrative work in the Hadhramout Chamber of Commerce and Industry. I was an employee in the Administration of Administrative Affairs and Human Resources in the Chamber, and then I had the opportunity to become the director of the Administration of Administrative Affairs and Human Resources in the same sector."

Awsan continues, "It was only a short period of work and effort, and I was appointed as the director of the Hadhramout Chamber of Commerce and Industry during the year 2011-2016. After that, a decision was issued appointing me as the deputy director general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade's office, and then the director general of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's office. After that, I was assigned by the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor to become an advisor to the ministry."

Regarding her role in fostering psychological and social peace and peacebuilding operations, Awsan says, "Through my management of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's office, I unified the management of health and occupational safety and placed it under the executive administration."

She adds, "There were contributions in the social aspect and the psychological support for women and children, as well as facilitating institutions and civil society organizations in implementing programs and interventions within this framework, whether they were direct assistance interventions or empowerment aspects for women and youth through training courses and workshops."

Emphasizing the significant importance of women's presence in leadership positions to preserve peace, she states that so far, women have not had real participation, and their participation is still limited to minor tasks.

## Insights from Experts

In this regard, Dr. Salah Madshal, the head of the Political Science Department at Hadhramout University, believes that women are half of society and cannot be dispensed with; they are active and engaged in all aspects of life.

He adds, "Any participation of women contributes to the making of peace processes and the resolution of conflicts in various aspects. It is assumed that the distinction between men and women should be eliminated in peace negotiations because women, by nature, tend towards psychological and societal peace and avoid conflicts in their various forms."

Dr. Madshal further stated that our local society has greatly underestimated women's rights on all levels, including peace processes and the resolution of the ongoing violence in Yemen for several years. Naturally, this has affected the seriousness of negotiations, hindered their progress, and imposed almost impossible conditions by all parties involved.

He emphasized that empowering women in previous negotiations would have created good and positive signs that give hope to the Yemeni people in ending the conflict and the catastrophic consequences it has caused in the lives of citizens.

Continuing his statement, he said, "Ye-

*Yemeni women are the cornerstone in preserving psychological and social peace during times of ongoing conflict in Yemen*



meni women today are struggling to reclaim their rights from a society that has become inclined towards masculinism, which is a backwardness produced by the conflict. However, there are many women who have made a name for themselves that is difficult to overlook in any consultations or workshops aimed at ending the armed conflict. They have made significant efforts in fostering psychological and societal peace."

## General Vision

Based on the international community's belief in the importance of the participation of Yemeni women in consultations and peace processes, the United Nations Special Envoy for Yemen, Hans Grundberg, met with a number of Yemeni activists and leaders on May 22, 2022, to discuss efforts to consult on the peace process and conflict resolution, including taking into account women's perspectives on conflict resolution negotiations and peacebuilding, as mentioned on the official website of the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen (OSSE-GY) in a report titled "UN Envoy Consults Yemeni Women on Multitrack Peace Process Design and Priorities."

The report indicated that the participants in the meeting emphasized the improvement of living conditions for civilians and freedom of movement, especially for women, and the involvement of the private sector and local mediators in peace processes, conflict resolution, and equal opportunities for employment among different segments of Yemeni society, including women.

The report further explained that the UN envoy affirmed his ongoing efforts to encourage the Yemeni parties involved in the negotiations to ensure genuine women's participation in peace processes, integrating the perspectives of Yemeni women within the framework of peace negotiations, and addressing women's and youth issues within the negotiation agenda, as it represents a top priority for both the UN envoy and the United Nations.

## Official Role

Faiza Bamatarf, President of the National Women's Committee in Hadhramout, expressed the committee's commitment to empowering girls in all domains, including leadership roles with decision-making authority, and to promoting women's participation in peace processes and increasing their representation. The National Committee has achieved numerous success stories, enabling women in various fields to serve as role models for Yemeni women as a whole.

Bamatarf further highlighted the committee's dedicated efforts to ensure the presence of women in both official and private institutions, with the aim of fostering development and reducing the gender gap.

As the president of the Hadhrami Wo-



**Dr. Salah Madshal**



**Abeer Al-Hadhrami**

men's Conference, held in Mukalla in December 2019 under the slogan "Women: Partners in Building, Development, Peace, and Stability," and funded by the GIZ organization, Bamatarf explained that the conference yielded empowering outcomes for women in Hadhramout, politically, economically, and socially.

She underscored that the remarkable achievements of inspiring women such as Abeer Al-Hadhrami, Awsan Bahussein, and others who have held leadership positions are the tangible results of the conference's outcomes. These outcomes were approved by the local authority in the province and have been implemented over the past years, recognizing the significance of women in fostering psychological and societal peace and highlighting their crucial role in this sphere.

## Challenges

Regarding the challenges and obstacles, Awsan Bahussein highlighted the most prominent ones and summarized them as follows: the lack of encouragement for women and the necessary facilitation to open up opportunities for them to achieve just peace. Here, she refers to the society's limited perception of women and official bodies, as well as the failure to implement constitutional legislation in this regard.

She adds, "Furthermore, there is a lack of significant opportunities for women to participate in decision-making and their limited representation in key positions. Additionally, women require higher and specialized training in certain fields that would enable them to contribute to peacebuilding."

In the same context, Abeer Al-Hadhrami stated that unfortunately, international resolutions and workshops on women's empowerment have not been implemented in the desired manner on the ground. She emphasized that if these resolutions were implemented at least by 50%, the status of women would be significantly improved.

She further adds, "If some women managed to reach leadership positions, they would exert extraordinary efforts and face

numerous unimaginable challenges, unlike men. This explains why many girls succumb to the surrounding circumstances."

## Solutions

Regarding the proposed solutions, Madshal emphasizes that the most crucial steps to enhance the presence of women in leadership roles and peace negotiations involve raising societal awareness of their significance. This can only be accomplished through women's own struggle to assert their rights, with the support of political elites, intellectuals, academics, youth, and engaged community members. It requires collective efforts to effect real change.

He adds, "Universities must play a significant role in training and developing the capacities of both girls and boys, emphasizing the importance of women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict resolution."

In her remarks, Al-Hadhrami highlights several key solutions, including "the attention of local authorities to women, empowering them to lead government departments, enhancing their capacities to achieve balance among all social groups, involving them in various issues, allowing them to express their perspectives, and addressing the problems faced by women, including violence-related issues."

She further states, "Continued training and capacity-building, along with improving the economic situation of women, are essential to enable them to contribute their developmental ideas to the country, including the cessation of conflicts and the achievement of peace."

In conclusion, it can be affirmed that women, inherently, embody peace and have a strong desire to live in safety and stability. With the compassion they carry within their families and communities, they serve as the cornerstone for maintaining psychological and social peace amidst the ongoing conflict in Yemen. Therefore, providing the necessary support for women is crucial to further their contributions in building a sustainable and prosperous future for the nation and its citizens.

# Yemeni Women and the Challenges of Peacebuilding: A Journey of Change and Overcoming Obstacles

*Yemeni women embark on an extraordinary journey towards peace amidst challenging security conditions and dynamic social and cultural transformations. They confront formidable hurdles, including insecurity, limited freedoms, gender disparities, poverty, unemployment, and social marginalization. However, they transcend the role of mere victims, emerging as active participants and catalysts for positive transformation in Yemen's peacebuilding efforts.*

By: Hebah Mohammed  
 Women in Development and Peace

This report delves into the challenges that women encounter throughout the peacebuilding process, offering potential solutions and recommendations to address these obstacles. By highlighting the resilience and agency of Yemeni women, it underscores their pivotal role in shaping a peaceful future for their nation.

## Challenges Facing Yemeni Women in the Peacebuilding Journey

Yemeni women face immense challenges in their journey towards building peace in Yemen. They grapple with multiple and complex challenges that pose strong obstacles to achieving stability and sustainable development in Yemen. These challenges range from social, cultural, economic, and political factors, interacting with each other to form interconnected and intertwined challenges.

Dr. Muna Dawood Al-Qaseer, President of the Humanitarian Cooperation Foundation in Sana'a, highlighted some of these challenges, stating: "Yemeni women face many difficulties in working towards peace in Yemen, most notably security challenges arising from ongoing conflicts, making peacebuilding extremely difficult for Yemeni women. They face the danger of violence and threats due to their role in promoting peace, and may be at risk of arrest, abduction, or persecution."

The social and cultural restrictions imposed on Yemeni women also pose significant challenges to their involvement in peacebuilding. The role of women as negotiators or leaders may conflict with traditional expectations, leading to marginalization or threats when entering unconventional fields. Additionally, Yemeni women may struggle to access the necessary resources and funding for peace activities due to the extensive destruction of infrastructure during the conflict. This impacts their ability to provide essential support for peace initiatives.

Key challenges faced by Yemeni women in their peacebuilding journey include the suppression of basic rights and freedoms, gender inequality, high rates of gender-based violence, limited access to education and healthcare, economic opportunities, and high unemployment rates. Furthermore, they endure threats from armed conflicts, complicating their situation and endangering their lives and rights, making it difficult for them to effectively participate in peace and reconciliation efforts.

The lack of political representation for women in Yemen also presents a significant obstacle to their involvement in peacebuilding. Despite some Yemeni women holding leadership positions and participating in negotiations, they encounter challenges in accessing political positions and making important deci-

*If appropriate resources are available to women, they will be able to create local peace initiatives*

sions.

Maha A'wadh, a women's rights activist and the head of the Women's Summit in Aden, emphasized the perseverance and determination of women in advancing peace efforts despite obstacles and challenges. She stressed the increasing women's activism and dedication to peace, acknowledging the arduous path ahead due to numerous challenges and obstacles hindering women's access to civil space and necessary resources for implementing peace-building initiatives.

She continued: "If appropriate resources are made available to women, they will be able to create local peace initiatives. The participation of women in local peace efforts is evidenced by their presence in humanitarian and social issues, their desire to amplify the voices of victims, and their commitment to peacebuilding. However, numerous activities require the lifting of restrictions imposed on peace, whether related to conflict parties or governing authorities."

Maha emphasized, "In Yemeni society, there are still deep-seated discriminations that manifest from the power hierarchy to the entire community, limiting women's political, intellectual, and economic participation. These restrictions publicly expose women to discrimination risks, which intensify among the most vulnerable women in society. There is an urgent need for effective and fair mechanisms to support women's efforts and enhance their role in peacebuilding."

### Women's Role in Peace Building

"Yemeni women face many difficulties in working towards peace and reconciliation in Yemen. One of these difficulties is the lack of political will by decision-makers in the state. Despite the active role of women in society and their contribution to achieving peace, they do not have an official participation in the central and local delegations and negotiations for peace" according to Dr. Amina Mohsen Al-Abd, Goodwill Ambassador for Peace and Global Peace.

Al-Abd continues: "Despite this, Yemeni women have succeeded in participating and contributing to peace talks through non-governmental organizations and civil society. Their participation and important vision are one of the key factors in building peace and achieving reconciliation. However, this is not enough. Achieving greater progress requires a political decision by the state to effectively involve women in official and unofficial negotiations and talks for peace."

She concluded by saying: "Necessity dictates that political decision-makers take serious steps towards empowering women and their effective participation in all aspects of the peace and reconciliation process in Yemen. This will not only enhance the role of women, but will also contribute to building a brighter and more stable future for the entire country."

Judge Iman Al-Khatib, a member of the National Dialogue Conference and the Yemeni Feminist Consensus for Security and Peace, agrees with this by saying: "Today we face great challenges that hinder women's participation in the peacebuilding process. One of the most important challenges is the negative view held by the political elite towards the role of women in the field of peace. Although peacebuilding is not limited to ending conflict, the political elite considers this field to be exclusive to men, and women do not play a role in peace negotiations; due to their lack of participation in combat and lack of influence on the ground."

She continues: "We must realize that peacebuilding includes many aspects, ranging from social peace to human and general peace, and we need a peace that puts an end to all these conditions that the Yemeni people suffer from, starting from prisoner exchange operations to opening roads and crossings. Building peace is not only about ending the conflict, but it is also about all aspects of Yemeni social and public life."

### Women's Platform to Enhance the Role of Yemeni Women in Peacebuilding

"One of the challenges facing Yemeni women is the lack of a connecting link that brings together all their activities. Although the Feminist Consensus for Peace was the first initiative formed af-

ter the outbreak of conflicts in Yemen, the efforts made are still scattered and uncoordinated due to political and social factors. We call for the necessity of finding a solution to this problem by linking all scattered activities through a women's platform that brings together all women's groups from northern to southern Yemen, promoting cooperation and coordination" according to Judge Iman Al-Khatib.

Furthermore, Al-Khatib points out that the lack of financial resources and logistical services is a barrier to the contribution of Yemeni women in peacebuilding. The tragic situation faced by Yemeni women in the conflict, and their challenges in obtaining salaries, education, shelter, food, and other rights, highlight the need to provide the necessary support for Yemeni women to be able to fully contribute to peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts in Yemen. The restrictions imposed by decisions to prevent the movement of Yemeni women and their inability to obtain logistical support hinder the activities of women in Yemen in the peacebuilding process."

### Women's Role in Peace Building: Steps & Solutions

"It is truly unfortunate that the National Women's Committees and the Yemeni Women's Union are restricted and deprived of their role in supporting Yemeni women. Women-led civil society organizations face enormous challenges and suffer from a lack of financial resources, to the point where financial support for these institutions is almost non-existent. To address this, we call on international organizations to play an active role in this regard by allocating a percentage of the support provided to Yemen in favor of civil society activities. We also call on ministries to commit to Yemeni law, which stipulates support for the establishment of community institutions by granting them an annual percentage of their budget to enhance their activities. Unfortunately, this commitment is often not fulfilled in reality" according to Judge Iman Al-Khatib. Unfortunately, this commitment is often not realized in reality, according to Iman Al-Khatib.

She added: "To achieve the empowerment of women and enhance their role in the peacebuilding process, a special fund must be created to support women's ac-

tivities in Yemen. This fund can contribute to providing the necessary support for women during the peacebuilding process.

She pointed out: "In Yemen, we suffer from the absence of specialized legislation to protect women from all forms of violence, whether domestic, verbal, physical, psychological, or legislative violence. If specialized legislation is put in place, it will be a deterrent to many forms of violence against women. We also suffer from the absence of a national plan that supports the implementation of Resolution 1325, which aims to protect abused women and provide support for them."

She concluded by saying: "There is an urgent need to coordinate all efforts to enhance the situation of Yemeni women in the peace process. A coordinating council or body must be established to highlight and promote the role of women in the peacebuilding process. Efforts must be unified to confront the obstacles and challenges facing Yemeni women, and this coordinating council must work to coordinate joint efforts and direct attention towards achieving real change for Yemeni women towards peacebuilding."

Human rights activist Maha Awad stressed the need for women to have comprehensive and appropriate protection to be able to develop peace initiatives with greater impact and effectiveness. It is also necessary to provide the necessary protection cover for women, as they face difficulties in mobility and restrictions on their freedom. She also calls for the protection of women's rights and the addressing of the escalating violations and gender-based violence, and emphasizes the need to ensure social peace and expand the civil space by enhancing protection for women.

She concluded by saying: "At the global level, the international community must work to enhance women's participation in peace efforts and provide the necessary resources to support them. International and regional policies and programs must include the dedication of women's rights and the promotion of their role in peacebuilding, and the necessary measures must be taken to enhance the protection of women's and girls' rights in conflict-affected areas."



# Yemeni Women Leading the Frontlines of Humanitarian Work

*Despite Yemeni women bearing the heaviest cost of the ongoing conflict in the country for years, they actively strive to promote peace in their regions through intensified efforts in various humanitarian works. They provide assistance to those affected by the conflict, either through individual initiatives, established institutions, or through humanitarian organizations, initiatives, associations, and more.*

By: Yasmine Abdulhafeez  
Women in Development and Peace

In recent years, many female names have emerged across Yemen's provinces as activists in this field, attempting to change the reality experienced by many families in the country. They have significantly contributed to alleviating the suffering of numerous Yemenis by providing aid to individuals affected by the conflict, which has led to the deterioration of living conditions for many families. These women have traversed long distances, treacherous routes, and dangerous places to reach those in need.

Yemeni women have also played a significant role in treating the wounded, releasing the abducted and detained, and resolving conflicts within communities, particularly in rural areas. They have even gone as far as participating in waste management in their cities, driven by their desire to change the reality of their country, which is filled with hardships and tragedies.

The courage possessed by Yemeni women to engage in the peace process is not an easy task, especially in a society governed by customs, traditions, and practices that confine women to specific roles. Nevertheless, they have succeeded in becoming active partners in promoting and achieving peace within their communities.

## Women's Peace-promoting Humanitarian Efforts

The story of Shinaz Al-Akhali and her companions, who worked to resolve a societal conflict among three villages in the Sabir Al Mawadim district in Taiz Governorate, southwestern Yemen, which lasted for thirty-three years, has captured the attention of many media outlets and activists. This is due to the significant role played by this woman and her team in bringing peace among the residents regarding a disputed water well.

Shinaz, along with her colleagues, including ten young women and five women in the advisory committee they formed alongside the initiative's team, managed to alleviate the suffering of the villagers. Previously, their children and women had endured hardships and difficulties traveling long distances to fetch water.

The role of Yemeni activist Misk Al-Maqrabi, who comes from marginalized communities, is equally important. She worked on establishing a project titled "Dark-Skinned Peace Mediators," which consists of a group of marginalized women led by her. Their work involves visiting marginalized families in various areas of Taiz Governorate with the aim of resolving conflicts among them.

This humanitarian event, which contributes to promoting peace in society, is the first of its kind in a country where marginalized groups face racial discrimination, depriving them of their rights and subjecting them to injustice, persecution, and marginalization.

## Challenges

An anonymous activist from a humanitarian organization highlights that the country's humanitarian and economic situation has led many women to gravitate towards humanitarian work as a means to support themselves and provide assistance



*Women's participation in humanitarian work enhances sustainable development and contributes to achieving social justice and equality*

to families affected by the conflict.

She emphasizes that women working in the humanitarian field, particularly those in the field itself, endure significant hardships. However, they persistently intensify their efforts to alleviate the suffering of individuals in the areas they serve, fearlessly overcoming all encountered obstacles.

The activist points out numerous challenges faced by women in this field, including societal perceptions of their role within humanitarian organizations and the dynamics of working alongside male colleagues. In several regions, social customs and traditions restrict gender mixing and discourage women from pursuing work outside their homes.

Furthermore, she highlights the various obstacles that negatively impact the psychological and physical well-being of women, such as bullying, societal perceptions of assertiveness, and other forms of harassment.

Amal Mohammed Al-Sabri, a lawyer, identifies a prominent challenge for women involved in humanitarian work during field visits—the lack of legal and social protection. Women frequently confront numerous obstacles that impede their smooth execution of fieldwork, making it difficult to access necessary facilities and resources.

Al-Sabri adds that negative societal customs, traditions, behaviors, and a lack of trust between local communities and humanitarian organizations pose significant hindrances to women's work in the field.

She strongly emphasizes that women play a positive, vital, and prominent role in humanitarian work, actively promoting peace and societal harmony. Their contributions are considered crucial, making them essential partners in peacebuilding at both the local and national levels. She asserts, "The involvement of women will significantly impact the achievement and strengthening of peace, as well as the enhancement of social cohesion."

Agreeing with this perspective, humanitarian activist Amal Saeed highlights that the main challenges faced by women engaged in humanitarian work stem from racism and societal perceptions, particularly evident during field visits.

Saeed elaborates, "Society perceives this work as suitable only for men, and it is not permissible for women to engage in it. We frequently encounter derogatory remarks and disparaging comments. However, we pay no heed to what we hear, and we don't care about society's perception

of our activities."

Amal adds in her statement, "Many social media platforms incite society against women working in the humanitarian field, tarnishing their reputation, particularly female employees within organizations working in this sector, which adversely affects their movements."

She further addresses another challenge faced by many female activists in the humanitarian field, saying, "We face difficulty convincing our families to allow us to travel when work requires it. Even if they trust us, they fear the negative societal perception of women working in this field."

She continues, "In addition to these challenges, women working in this field encounter other hardships. They are sometimes compelled by authorities in certain areas to allocate a portion of the aid intended for deserving families, and in other instances, they are asked to register names they are unfamiliar with, aside from those they include in the lists from the camps and various locations they visit."

Afaf Mahyoub, a civil society activist, shares the same opinions as her colleagues, stating, "Many girls who work in humanitarian work without receiving any financial compensation face numerous pressures from their families, society, and even the relevant authorities."

She adds, "Many parents force their daughters to quit their jobs, arguing that it is a waste of time and effort without any benefit. Additionally, many guardians believe that women should not work at any time, especially if one is forced to work frequently and continuously. According to them, it is considered a flaw that does not align with customs and traditions."

Continuing her thoughts, she says, "Women also encounter difficulty in maintaining communication with their colleagues, especially those from conservative families. Moreover, they face challenges when trying to meet with them regularly if work demands it. In the eyes of society, such actions are seen as bold."

She continues, "Society believes that women cannot endure the hardships of work for long periods. They also struggle to access supporters and require time to establish connections. Their knowledge of benefactors is limited compared to men, who have extensive networks."

Afaf emphasizes that women sometimes find it difficult to form a voluntary team without receiving any financial return. Additionally, being a woman leading such a team is viewed primarily as a household task in our society, with their true responsibilities seen as domestic work and child-rearing.

Afaf believes that coordinating with the relevant authorities regarding the implementation of certain humanitarian activities is extremely difficult and that they do not provide any facilitation to ensure smooth workflow without obstacles that may hinder the team's work or delay the completion of tasks as required, along with providing protection and security.

Aisha Jabari, the president of Wyam Shabab Foundation for Development, states, "Safety, the security situation, and difficulty of accessing affected areas, in addition to cultural and social barriers, are among the prominent challenges. Alongside fatigue and harsh conditions experienced by women activists in humanitarian work, there is also discrimination and sexual violence."

She adds, "Women's participation in humanitarian work promotes sustainable development, contributes to achieving social justice and equality, and enhances peacebuilding and harmony in affected communities."

## Women's Vital Role in Humanitarian Work

Moath Al-Soufi, a researcher and trainer in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, says, "In the midst of conflicts witnessed by many countries, including Yemen, the presence of women in humanitarian work is necessary and essential due to the fact that they are among the most affected groups by the conflict and its consequences. Therefore, their role in the peacebuilding process in general, or in humanitarian work specifically, must be activated."

He continues, "No one can understand the needs, services, and wants, preferences and uniqueness of vulnerable groups except women. Many displaced women have specific needs and experiences that are better understood by women than men. Men may not fully comprehend all the needs, struggles, and specificities of women. Some men may have to go to the field and conduct field surveys to grasp

some of the needs, but they cannot delve into the needs of women."

Al-Soufi points out that it is crucial to involve women in humanitarian work as they strive to meet the societal and vulnerable needs, such as the elderly, children, displaced individuals, and marginalized groups. Women are more capable of sensing what these groups require. Therefore, women must play a significant role in humanitarian work.

In Yemeni regions that have witnessed conflict, women have been at the forefront of humanitarian work. There are numerous examples of women and girls who have actively participated in humanitarian activities. Al-Soufi states, "Women in Yemeni society are respected and accepted by the conflicting parties, especially because they seek to mitigate the impact of the conflict. They are trusted in areas where battles occur."

Dalia Mohammed, a social activist, says, "Women are present in places where the state and its men are absent, through the implementation of various initiatives or through community organizations, whether in the humanitarian and development aspects or in mediation and conflict resolution. Therefore, they have had a noticeable impact in creating a kind of peace and social stability."

Dalia believes that it is essential, given the current circumstances, to support and involve women in various programs and peace consultations.

## Interventions

Samira Nasri, the President of Al-Firdous Women Development Society, tells the Women in Development and Peace newspaper, "Women working in the field of peace in Yemen face many challenges and difficulties. These include the male-centric view of women, which limits their ability to lead and confines them to specific areas. Additionally, political orientations create barriers that contribute to discrimination and division regarding support for women."

She further adds, "There is a need to raise awareness among women about the importance of their role in society and the necessity of women supporting each other. It is essential to support them in actively participating in decision-making processes and provide the necessary opportunities to empower them for meaningful engagement in peacebuilding on the ground, not just on paper."

Samira emphasizes the importance of appropriate selection, where competent women are nominated for leadership positions, whether in rural or urban areas.



# Yemeni Women Play Decisive Roles and Facilitate Crucial Transformations in Peacebuilding

*The ongoing conflict in Yemen has had negative repercussions on various sectors. Undoubtedly, women have been one of the most affected groups during the conflict, which makes their participation in decision-making processes a crucial necessity to ensure the fulfillment of the needs and aspirations of all segments of society. Despite the challenging circumstances, Yemeni women have managed to bring about significant and positive transformations in various fields.*

By: Alia Mohammed  
Women in Development and Peace

## Towards Peace

Hooria Mashhour, a feminist and human rights activist, believes that Yemeni women were among the first social and civil groups to demand an end to the conflict and a return to the table of consultations, dialogue, and negotiations.

She adds, "Despite the exclusion faced by women in the first track of peace, which was under the auspices of the United Nations, they managed to form a network of feminist solidarity for peace with the support and sponsorship of the Peace Track Initiative and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. They have achieved significant accomplishments in the second track of peace," she points out, referring to the fact that the second track of peace provided a space for civil peace forces despite the difficulties and complexities of the Yemeni scene.

She emphasizes, "The list of what women do is endless. In short, they undertake many roles and still have the strength and energy to continue, despite the numerous difficulties and challenges they face. But their sense of responsibility drives them forward and prevents them from giving up."

On another note, Eftikar Surur, a member of the Women's Party Bloc, explained that Yemen's history throughout the ages has been rich with the roles of Yemeni women in peacebuilding and promoting democracy. She affirmed in her statement the contributions and participation of women in the political process despite the exclusion and marginalization by some segments of society that view women as inferior to men.

She adds, "Yemeni women have been



able to enhance their roles in political participation and peacebuilding, making progress in various fields. Their role stood out in 2013 when they participated in the National Dialogue, with women representing 30% of the total participants in this dialogue to reach decision-making positions and negotiation tables."

## Feminine Alliances and Active Participation

Office of the Special Envoy in Yemen has succeeded in supporting Yemeni women and involving them in peace processes. In 2015, the "Yemeni Feminist Accord for Security and Peace" group was established, which included 60 Yemeni women from diverse backgrounds and political expertise. In 2018, the "Yemeni Women's Advisory Group" was formed with the support of UN Women and the Yemeni Feminist Accord Group.

Eight women from the Yemeni Technical Advisory Feminist Group participated in the Geneva consultations on Yemen, presenting three papers on the economy,

politics, and confidence-building. In the same year, six members attended the Stockholm consultations.

Regarding women's participation in peace negotiations, Hanaa Ahmed, a member of the Women's Policies and Partisans Alliance, believes that Yemeni women possess many skills in conflict resolution, negotiation, and mediation. She emphasizes that effectively involving women in peace negotiations and mediation efforts leads to a more sustainable and inclusive peace.

She adds, "Yemeni women have played a significant and essential role in peacebuilding at the local, national, and international levels, providing various services in different sectors through active participation in the security and peace process."

She continues, "Many women's organizations in Yemen have worked to promote women's rights and empower them for political participation. These organizations have provided awareness programs and necessary support for Yemeni women to engage in political work, in addition to

participating in local and international feminist alliances and partnerships against violence and in support of women's rights."

Hooria Mashhour describes the Feminist Peace Roadmap as a "comprehensive national peace project" and states, "Women had a significant role in peacebuilding by developing the Peace Roadmap and settlement, which was based on national, regional, and international references to bridge the perspectives of the parties involved. Their work did not stop there, as they participated in workshops and seminars across different provinces to listen to people's priorities and amplify the voices of women and the Yemeni people regional and international platforms. They continue to make significant efforts in expanding these initiatives."

It is worth mentioning that the Feminist Roadmap for Peace aimed to provide a guiding framework for achieving peace in Yemen in three stages: the first stage being

a ceasefire, the second stage comprehensive peace negotiations, and the third stage political transition. The roadmap proposed multi-party peace processes in Yemen to address various conflicts with the support of the international and regional community.

## Other Roles in Society

Rania Khalid, a feminist activist, presented several economic roles carried out by Yemeni women to enhance peace and stability in Yemen. These include promoting economic growth through participation in business management and the labor market, building competence and skills by providing educational and vocational training opportunities for women in society, as well as empowering women economically to achieve financial and social independence. This strengthens their role in society, gives them greater space in decision-making, and promotes gender equality.

In the same context, Hooria Mashhour highlighted the roles of women in the fields of humanitarian relief and rights.

She stated, "Women have provided support to the most impoverished and needy groups and acted as local mediators to resolve certain conflicts, such as disputes over land, water sources, or roads. They have supported those whose rights have been violated, such as the League of Mothers of the Kidnapped, by providing legal assistance to some detainees or prisoners and implementing support and advocacy campaigns to defend women's rights."

She added, "On the other hand, voluntary initiatives led by women's groups have emerged, reflecting a significant development in collective feminist work. These initiatives are characterized by their inclusive nature, as they include representatives from various regions, political affiliations, and even factions involved in the conflict."

## Challenges & Difficulties

Social obstacles, traditions, and Yemeni culture are among the main challenges facing Yemeni women," as affirmed by Eftikar Surur regarding the key challenges faced by women in their political participation in decision-making and peacebuilding in Yemen.

She points out the societal perception that limits women's roles to household chores and family care, explaining that Yemeni women, in different periods, have suffered from the marginalization of their role in the political process and the deprivation of their right to decision-making. This is a result of political instability in Yemen, ongoing conflicts, and gender-based discrimination. However, despite these challenges, Yemeni women have managed to demonstrate positive political transformation in peacebuilding processes.

Yemeni women in politics remain a source of strength and a catalyst for fundamental change in comprehensive and sustainable peace issues. They still need further support from the local and international community to overcome challenges and achieve equality, justice, and democracy in Yemen. Additionally, there is a need to establish clear communication channels between women's groups participating in peace initiatives, open avenues for their engagement in the peace process, propose shared agendas, provide training programs that enhance women's capabilities, and work under women's alliances.

*Yemeni women possess many skills in conflict resolution, negotiation, and mediation*



# Yemeni Women: Empowering Their Role in Security for the Establishment of Peace



*Women play an important role in women's police, community committees, and security institutions*

*Women play an active role across various spheres, from families to society and the workplace. When granted their rights and supported by men, they contribute to upholding security, driving development, and mitigating social issues that affect them. Yemeni women have relentlessly striven to foster peace through diverse avenues. Some initiate peace initiatives by mediating conflicts between parties, while others serve in the security sector alongside men, safeguarding the community and assisting fellow women in times of peril to facilitate peace.*

By: **Afrah Borji**

Women in Development and Peace

Lieutenant Muna Gharama highlights the transformative impact of women's qualities in creating a world characterized by peace and harmony. With their emotional intelligence and compassionate hearts, women possess two influential attributes that can alleviate challenges and conflicts. Consequently, it is imperative to provide women with opportunities to voice their perspectives, recognizing their pivotal role as an indispensable step towards achieving lasting peace.

Gharama continues, "Women are subjected to torture and oppression during armed conflicts, as some women and girls experience issues such as rape, murder, detention, and humiliation, living in fear and terror. Women are the most affected during conflicts."

She adds, "International agreements, such as Security Council Resolution (1325), have been put in place to ensure that women do not live in fear and terror, and have established provisions for their special care and protection as stipulated by the rules of international law, which address the inappropriate impact of armed conflict on women, the effects they experience, how to protect them, and also state that they have an active interest in conflict resolution, calling on all parties involved in armed conflict to consider protecting

women and girls.

## Women in Security

Regarding the presence of women in the security sector, Major Laila Al-Nashri says: "The participation of women in security achieves peace for women, who in turn represent half of society. This in turn brings peace to the community and the family, ensuring security, stability, and tranquility. Women in general, and especially in the security sector, work to mitigate harm to women who are victims of domestic violence from their husbands, children, or relatives. By protecting their dignity and preventing exploitation, women contribute significantly to security by fulfilling important tasks such as providing women with essential documents like ID cards and passports."

Police officer Noor Al-Rida'i adds: "Women play a crucial role through the women's police, community committees, and security agencies. They also build positive relationships and trust between citizens and security agencies, contributing to peace, security, and stability, addressing societal issues, and facing challenges to enhance public security."

## Women Achieve Peace through Security

Journalist Samira Badhawi emphasizes: "Security is the fundamental cornerstone for peace and stability. In Yemen, where conflict prevails, it is essential to establish security in all provinces, disarm conflicting groups,

and implement measures to maintain peace. Furthermore, women-led initiatives are crucial in establishing peace."

She further states: "Many Arab and Western countries seek to bring peace and stability to Yemen, ensuring security for the region and safeguarding maritime navigation routes."

On another note, Lieutenant Muna Gharama adds: "Women contribute to achieving security and peace through awareness campaigns, field visits, collective initiatives to protect women, and participation in promoting awareness, maintaining their role in achieving security, stability, and justice, and empowering female leaders."

The role of women in society enhances their involvement in decision-making on security matters. Priority should be given to women in effective participation for maintaining security and peace. Women excel in bridging gaps and actively engaging in civil society, appearing as equals to men in peacebuilding efforts.

## Challenges and Difficulties Facing Women

Lieutenant Laila Al-Nashri spoke about the difficulties and obstacles facing women in the security field in security and mentioned the rejection and belittlement by some security personnel, the limited opportunities for broader roles compared to men, and the lack of incentive systems. She emphasized women's capability and called for encouraging and removing obstacles for women in the security field.

She added, "Women are capable of working in the field of security with competence, as they have proven through their work in this field. They are capable of dealing with various issues and problems, and contributing to achieving security and stability in society."

She also called for the necessity of encouraging women to work in the security field, removing all obsta-

cles they face, providing a suitable environment for them to work, and allowing them to work in various security fields, as well as implementing incentive and reward systems for them.

She pointed out that there are many women in Yemen working in the security field, who have proven their competence and are capable of contributing to achieving security and stability in society. Lieutenant Muna Gharama said, "The beginning was extremely difficult due to customs and traditions that view women in a demeaning way, considering them incapable of bearing responsibility like men, in addition to not granting them sufficient authority and the neglect of leadership towards them."

Garama added: "People looked at us with surprise and astonishment, due to their previous non-acceptance of this work, but over time, many people began to realize the importance of women's presence in this field, especially in light of the difficult circumstances that Yemen is going through."

On the other hand, the policewoman Noor Al-Rida'i, who works in the security administration in Hadhramaut Governorate, said: "I face significant challenges in my work, due to the condescending view of men towards women, and their refusal to accept that women have a higher role than them. Women are also disadvantaged in terms of positions and ranks, and this is the hardest thing."

Al-Rida'i added: "I volunteer with community committees for the women's sector, and I work as a military officer in the security administration, which requires a great effort from me. But I always strive to prove my worth and achieve my goals."

As for the journalist Samira Badhawi, she said: "Perhaps the biggest obstacle is the society's narrow view of women involved in the secu-

urity sector; the condescending view of them, in addition to the inequality between them and men in many things,

such as security ranks. It is rare to find women rising in the security sector to the rank of colonel or brigadier, or even major or captain."

Badhawi added: "I also suffer from a lack of motivation at work, despite exerting great and multiplied efforts like men, in addition to the slow recruitment of women and the postponement of their enrollment in the police college in some governorates, despite the desire of many young women to join, and their repeated demands for it."

## Prominent Roles

Yemeni journalist Samira Badhawi said: "Many Yemeni women have contributed to achieving security stability in the country and have borne the greatest burden in the ongoing conflict."

Badhawi added that women have played non-traditional roles in this field, with some joining security sectors to enhance the role of security and disarmament in the region.

She emphasized that Hadhramaut Governorate is a model in demonstrating women's participation and involvement in the security sector. She pointed out that events surrounding the control of one party over the capital of the governorate (Al-Mukalla) and some directorates have strengthened women's presence in the security aspect at security points and in raid operations.

Badhawi also explained that Yemeni women have actively contributed to ensuring food security for families in the absence of male family members, amidst the difficult circumstances facing the country. Despite the challenging conditions, Yemeni women have proven their ability to contribute to peacebuilding and stability in the country through their presence in the security sector.

# Women's Initiatives and Coalitions Take Center Stage in Yemen's Peacemaking Efforts

*Women in Yemen fulfill diverse roles within society, particularly in the aftermath of the conflicts and political turmoil that have plagued the country. These experiences have motivated them to actively engage in peacebuilding and fostering social cohesion. Despite facing significant challenges such as unemployment, poverty, violence, and other social issues, women and girls persistently strive to safeguard their security and stability. They tirelessly seek opportunities to lead stable lives alongside their family members, contributing to the well-being of a harmonious community even in the face of a deteriorating humanitarian situation.*

By: Hanan Hussein  
Women in Development and Peace

## Prominent Coalitions

A group of feminist initiatives and blocs appeared that sought to contribute to the field of peacebuilding in Yemen, including the "Women's Solidarity Network," which is a bloc of a group of women's organizations from various parts of Yemen. The bloc seeks to enhance coordination between women's formations in Yemen and support their efforts in peacebuilding.

As well as the "Peace Partners Alliance," which includes a group of international non-governmental women's institutions. The alliance seeks to enhance women's participation in the peace process and ensure their representation at all times. Recently, the "Noon Bloc" appeared in the governorate of Aden, and the "Wahj Womanish Bloc" and "Women of Life Bloc" in Taiz, and other women's blocs.

A group of effective initiatives also emerged in women's circles, including the "Women for Taiz Initiative," the "Yemeni Feminist Consensus for Peace and Security," and the "Women's Solidarity Network," which includes a group of women from civil society organizations from various parts of Yemen.

In addition to the "Hadhrout Women for Peace Organization," which consists of eight women who succeeded in calling for the reopening of one of the main roads and temporarily opening Rayyan Airport. These blocs and initiatives focused on supporting women, advocating for them, and conveying their voices to decision-making places, and played many roles such as mediation, dialogue, conflict resolution, trust-building, and sustainable development.

## Main Results

In mid-2023, the "Wahj Womanish Bloc" took an effective step in peacebuilding by publishing an official statement addressed to all parties to the conflict in Yemen, calling for the speedy intervention and release of all women imprisoned on political issues and forcibly abducted, and called for not involving women and children in any conflicts or arresting them arbitrarily.

## Wahj Taiz

Ola Al-Saqqaf, a member of Wahj Womanish Bloc, speaks about the bloc that includes a group of women leaders, saying: "Wahj is a women's bloc that includes 15 women leaders from various directorates of Taiz Governorate (Al Qahira, Al-Muzaffar, Sala, Al-Shamatin, Sabir Al-Mawadem). The bloc includes women from different categories, including activists, academics, rights activists, journalists, as well as local mediators and workers in the field of peace."

Al-Saqqaf added: "The bloc was founded in January 2023 with the support of the National Organization for Community Development. Its goal is to work on supporting women and their various issues and conveying their voices to decision-makers, as well as unifying women's efforts to work on peacebuilding and contribute to building community development through various sectors, directly or indirectly, and striving to stop the conflict."

She continued: "At the beginning of the

*Women are active partners and have a significant role in peacebuilding and spreading it among community members*



bloc's establishment, several programs were adopted to build the capacities of its members, and then several projects were implemented, including a project in the health sector. We worked on supporting the health sectors in need of support in Taiz, by holding meetings with stakeholders to discuss obstacles and provide support. A hearing session was held on improving health services in the governorate as part of the Accountability Project, which is part of the Active Communities Project, in partnership with the National Organization for Community Development and funded by Safer World organization.

She adds: "The second project is currently under implementation, and it focuses on the suffering of women in the security field. Through it, women are supported in this field, and its outputs, which the bloc seeks to see the light, include the restoration of two rooms, a bathroom, and a training hall for female police officers in criminal investigation in Taiz Governorate, and the training of two policewomen to work in the field of criminal investigation and how to investigate suspects, collect evidence, and issue reports, among others."

She adds: "We also conducted workshops to shed light on the difficulties that hinder women's education in higher positions within the Taiz police. The workshops targeted 15 policewomen and five policemen from the Criminal Investigation Administration, as part of the Resource Mobilization for Change and Support for Women's Networks in Conflict project."

## Noon Aden

The Noon Bloc, a prominent coalition in Aden Governorate, was established in November 2022 with the support of the National Organization for Community Development. Comprising 15 women from diverse social backgrounds, its primary objective is to empower women and involve them in peacebuilding efforts across all levels of society.

Notably, the Noon Bloc is a result of the Rising Peace Project, implemented by the Peace for Sustainable Communities (PASS) organization and funded by Safer World. The project has yielded significant outcomes, including the establishment of local peace councils, civil society organizations, the Noon Women's Bloc, and advocacy initiatives involving international organizations and entities.

Under the Community Accountability Program, one of the bloc's initial endeavors focused on enhancing sanitation in the Seerah and Khowr Maksar districts. This involved rehabilitating sewage networks in various locations.

Additionally, the coalition has undertaken an education sector project in collaboration with Safer World and PASS. This project involves providing curricula for primary and secondary schools, with a funding contribution of twenty thousand US dollars.



Nora Nuaman

## Yemen Coalition

Sara Al-Faiq, the Executive Director of the Civil Peace Coalition, says: "The coalition consists of ten civil society organizations, and was founded in 2018-2019, in five Yemeni governorates."

Al-Faiq adds: "The coalition received capacity-building training from the International Law and Public Policy Group project, and it was agreed to transform it into a coalition, after which it expanded to include 22 organizations in nine Yemeni governorates, which is what made its activities and projects reach most of the governorates of the Republic of Yemen."

Sara added, saying: "The coalition supports advocacy campaigns for peacebuilders in Yemen; the "Watan" project, supported by the Dutch Pax organization, was implemented. Several advocacy campaigns were carried out, including a national advocacy campaign to promote the role of women in economic empowerment in 2021."

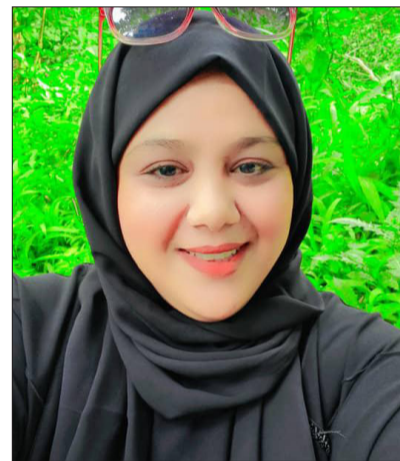
She further adds: "In 2023, the focus was on a campaign to promote the role of women in community mediation in Yemen, and the preparation of a policy paper on the role of female mediators in Yemen."

## The Importance of Coalitions & Women's Initiatives

Nora Nuaman, the supervisor of the National Organization for Community Development (NODS YEMEN), speaks about the importance of women's initiatives and coalitions in bringing about and creating peace in society, saying: "Women's and youth initiatives and coalitions in Yemen promote the values of peace and work to contain or reduce conflicts, enhance social cohesion, limit conflicts and security problems, and also provide support for the official, local, and security entities, even at the military level."

And she adds: "The existing coalitions to support women work on enhancing trust and building relationships between all sectors, such as the security sector, the community, and local authorities."

She emphasizes: "These initiatives or coalitions are considered a fourth authority in my opinion, due to their importance in establishing security and peace and brid-



Alhan Al-Shaibani

ging the gap between authorities and local communities, as well as working to convey the issues of the community to decision-makers."

She also adds: "The importance of these coalitions in the community is to assist in resolving social issues that affect community security and threaten peace, and to contribute to providing resources to the security and official authorities to achieve a change in behavior for all parties, to achieve peace from the grassroots (local communities) to the top (decision-makers) at the national level."

As for Alhan Al-Shaibani, a social activist, she talks about the emergence of women's initiatives by saying: "Many women's coalitions and initiatives have emerged since the outbreak of the conflict in Yemen and the Arab world in general. Their importance lies in supporting the community and the responsible parties in achieving security, safety, and peace, as well as in the development and revitalization of the country."

She adds: "One of the most prominent roles that women have played in the field of peace is the preservation of human rights in general and women's rights in particular. They have worked to restore the rights of women, empower them, rehabilitate them, and integrate them into the three tracks. Women have supported their fellow women in reaching decision-making positions in the state and supported them in building peace in Yemen."

## Challenges

Ola Al-Saqqaf talks about the main obstacles by saying: "Certainly, we have faced many difficulties, the most prominent of which is that the coalition is primarily voluntary, and therefore there is no full dedication to work on it on a larger scale. For the same reason, we have not been able to provide a lot of resources, in addition to the numerous needs that the city of Taiz required compared to our limited ability to cover them, which posed a major obstacle for us. I also do not forget the difficulty of obtaining information."

Alhan Al-Shaibani explains that the most prominent challenges she faced during her work in peacebuilding were, saying: "Yes, I faced many challenges, the most prominent

and severe of which reached the level of threats because, as it was said, we encourage girls to rebel, break with tradition and religion, and engage in corruption, and this is not true."

Meanwhile, Sarah Al-Faiq lists a set of challenges facing coalitions and youth initiatives, saying: "There is a weakness in the joint efforts and initiatives in advocating for women, and it is difficult to achieve a tangible impact, as civil society is eager for awareness and knowledge projects to support women's issues. If each party takes a specific side or issues, this will achieve a quick response and enhance community awareness of the importance of involving women in peacebuilding to a greater extent."

## Solutions & Remedies

Ola Al-Saqqaf informs us that "Wahj Bloc" is implementing several remedies to improve its work, saying: "We are currently working on organizing the coalition internally so that we become more capable of presenting the coalition better than it is currently with less effort and time due to the preoccupations of all members."

Ola adds: "We also seek to diversify sources of support and solve the problem of the current lack of resources. We are working to address the issue of numerous needs and conducting studies and working papers, even if they are simple. We are also organizing meetings with decision-makers to prioritize our work."

Alhan Al-Shaibani adds, saying: "There are many solutions, the most prominent being raising awareness in society in general and in the women's community in particular, about the importance of women's role in peacebuilding and empowering them in this pivotal role."

Sara Al-Faiq believes that it is necessary to write working papers to support women's participation and to work on the proposals that are raised in the policy papers that are neglected in the ongoing projects, and to present them for adoption by decision-makers.

Several researchers also recommended the importance of raising awareness about the active role of women in peacebuilding and educating children that women are effective partners, and they have a significant role in creating and spreading peace among members of the community with dedication and sincerity to build a strong and happy Yemen. They also emphasized the need to activate the role of monitoring and follow-up by the donor agency and relevant authorities on the coalitions - whether women's or joint - and the necessity of involving relevant parties in continuous awareness efforts to preserve all services and projects that concern the population and the community as a whole.

It is no secret that Yemeni women play a vital role in building and achieving sustainable peace in Yemen, and women's initiatives and coalitions have succeeded in making women's voices heard in the peace process, and providing sustainable solutions, as well as leaving a feminine mark that will not be erased or obscured by time, and the question now is: Will women contribute to peacebuilding and stopping the conflict completely?"

# Women's Unwavering Commitment to Peace: Shinaz Al-Akhali as an Exemplary Role Model

*Women, as the bedrock of society, fulfill crucial roles as mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters. In the face of conflict and displacement, Yemeni women have assumed diverse responsibilities to foster peace within their nation and restore stability to their lives, even as they bear the brunt of the conflict's impact. One remarkable individual exemplifying this resilience is Shinaz Al-Akhal. Despite enduring the loss of her family and friends, she has emerged as a prominent figure in the peace process. Shinaz firmly believes that personal loss ignites unwavering determination within the human heart, compelling individuals to prevent others from enduring the bitterness of such experiences.*

By: **Afrah Borji**  
Women in Development and Peace

## The Outset: A Mediator of Peace

Shinaz Al-Akhali says: "The beginning was not easy; it started when I became a member of the Women of Taiz for Life initiative. I took on the initiative to open roads and crossings to and from Taiz Governorate, meeting with both sides of the conflict to negotiate and dialogue about it. My colleagues and I acted as local mediators between the parties."

Al-Akhali added: "After that, we met with OCHA representatives in Aden and tried to raise the issue to the highest levels. It was mentioned by the UN envoy in one

of his briefings, praising our efforts in that case. We, as women, also engaged in various activities to advocate for the cause."

Later, Shinaz joined the NODS Yemen organization, where she worked as a project coordinator for "Communities Making Peace" in Sabir Mountain (Al-Mawadim). "We formed a team of young men and women, led them, and worked on resolving various conflicts, the most important of which was the 33-year water conflict in Al-Sour. We met with all parties to the conflict, conducted dialogues with them, and finally gathered them in one place to agree on a final solution to the conflict."

## Challenging Situations

Shinaz Al-Akhali adds: "I did not en-

counter any difficulties; as the Yemeni society (especially in Taiz) has come to believe that women are peacemakers, who do not want the conflict to continue as men do."

She pointed out: "There was only one difficult situation that occurred during a conflict; this was the only time when a mediation and conflict resolution was led by a woman, but they acknowledged me and the group of young women who were with me."

She continued, "We attended all the meetings with the parties individually or collectively," and Shinaz said with joy (how proud they were of me and the other women!), even my words were heard and greatly respected by the community leaders and dignitaries in Sabir Mountain, as well as in the city of Taiz. I also mediated in several neighborhoods in the directorates of Taiz to resolve various community conflicts.

## One Table

At first, Shinaz conducted a comprehensive study of each issue, then met with each party separately, which made it easier for her to bring the warring parties together at one table. She also listened to the different perspectives of each party, then took on the role of mediation, negotiation, dialogue, persuasion, and sought common interests, and then brought them together at one table for final negotiation and understanding.



Shinaz Al-Akhali

## Dedicated Commitment

Shinaz says: "The duration of the conflict was long. During this struggle, I lost the dearest person to my heart (my brother Raidan), who meant everything to me in this life. I also immediately lost my friends (Muhammad Al-Qudsi and Riham Al-Badr) after him. I lost many dear ones, which caused me a deep wound that has not healed until this moment. I wished for peace in Yemen and for this conflict to end."

Shinaz began to consider many social mediations to resolve the different conflicts within Taiz, as an attempt to establish permanent peace. This made her deeply inte-

rested in peace and she used all ways and methods to become a leader in peace so that others do not go through the pain of loss and separation like she did.

## Peace-Building Achievements

The most important achievement Shinaz accomplished is that she listened to each party with complete neutrality, and flexibility was her ally in order to understand the issue and find a solution to it. She also gained the trust and love of the parties, which helped her greatly to become an accepted mediator by the parties, in exchange for maintaining the confidentiality of what each party told her. Finally, your intention should be sincere for your country and not for fame or the like.

Shinaz Al-Akhali says: "I did not go through any specific difficulty or challenge; I passed through challenges as if they were an enemy that I must overcome and then leave behind. Being a person who loves challenges and easily overcomes them."

Peace from Shinaz Al-Akhali's point of view is summarized as "security, stability, returning to the stage of state and love, as well as not experiencing loss again, and finally, peace means living without conflicts or struggles, in other words (the stage of no conflict)."

Women in Yemen play a fundamental role in establishing peace, as they seek to achieve security, stability, and peace in the country, so that the country may enjoy peace and prosperity.

# Madina Adlan: A Woman of Remarkable National Stature

*Women play a significant role in the peacebuilding process, contributing to the recovery and reconstruction of Yemen, advancing development in a secure and prosperous environment, and fostering agreements among its people. In this context, we had the opportunity to meet with one of the female peacebuilders in Yemen, who has been an inspiration for women aspiring to drive change in their local communities, demonstrating that determination and resilience can lead to success despite the challenges.*

By: **Hanan Hussein**  
Women in Development and Peace

First, tell us about yourself and your latest academic qualifications.

I am Madina Yaslam Adlan, born in Al-Mukalla. I pursued a Master's degree in Political Science and Crisis Management.

## Do you have memberships related to peacebuilding?

For the past five years, I have been a member of the Advisory Committee for Local Governance and Peacebuilding in Hadhramaut, Yemen, addressing issues crucial for institutional and economic stability in the region. I am also part of the Women's Party Bloc working in the peacebuilding field, an outcome of the Third Women's Summit.

## Including yourself, women have played a prominent role in bringing peace to some Yemeni regions. Could you highlight the main objectives you pursued and successfully achieved?

I have made multiple attempts to intervene in conflicts among young individuals engaged in military activities from various factions, aiming to reduce direct confrontations and prevent escalation of conflicts and infighting within the same area.

Additionally, I volunteered to assist displaced individuals from Aden and Abyan during the 2015 conflict, despite the presence of armed forces from all sides.

## Through presenting your most successful peacebuilding goals, have you had other involvements in the field of peacebuilding?



Yes, I participated in workshops organized by the Hadhrami Women's Foundation for Peace in 2018, which demanded the opening of Rayyan Airport. We partially opened the Dhaba road to solve the citizens' transportation problem, as this road connects the east of Hadhramaut with the west, and also connects the coastal Hadhramaut with the rest of the governorates. We also built a temporary hall at Rayyan Airport in cooperation with the local authority at that time and several political and social figures.

I also participated as the Secretary-General of the Women's Peace Conference in December 2022. There are more involvements, including my participation in the six women's summits organized by the Wajd Foundation for Humanitarian Support, where we implemented the outcomes on the ground.

I also participated in a workshop discussing the Feminist Peace Map project launched by the Peace Path Initiative, where I attracted and encouraged many educated women and girls to engage in decision-making positions in 2022. We are currently working on bridging perspectives on establishing a political and partisan women's alliance in Hadhramaut to address their common issues.

## Have you had involvements outside the borders of Yemen?

I participated in several external workshops, the latest being a ceasefire extension workshop organized by the



Madina Adlan

Political Forum in partnership with the German Agency in 2022. I also participated in a meeting with the Office of the Special Envoy in Jordan as the only influential woman from Hadhramaut in 2021.

I also attended meetings with the Office of the UN Special Envoy and the ambassadors of European countries and the Ambassador of the United States, where I raised many issues that help in peacebuilding in Yemen.

## There are obstacles and challenges for women working in peacebuilding in Yemen. Can you share your opi-

## nion on this aspect?

Every woman working in the peace field is bound to face difficulties because unfortunately, society does not understand the meaning of women's work in peace-related areas. Most people are limited in their understanding of the gender and feminism matters. Therefore, all fields have both positive and negative effects, and all of my work has had positive impacts on society. We always see women facing obstacles, whether it's going out to work, pursuing their education, or engaging in different fields, especially in the context of armed conflict, struggles, and the country's economic situation. This in itself is a major obstacle for women, as they have contributed to the establishment of peace and the preservation of social security.

## While Yemeni women are surrounded by customs and traditions from all sides, do you think this poses an obstacle to women in their peacebuilding efforts?

As a woman living in a male-dominated society governed by customs, and traditions, and heavily influenced by conflicts, I have never stopped my involvement in any participation, conflict resolution, or mediation, especially during armed conflicts in the city of Mukalla.

Successful women always manage to overcome challenges and find solutions in defending their cause. How did you manage to overcome the challenges you faced in the field of peacebuilding? We

practice peacebuilding as a daily behavior in our lives, such as coexistence, accepting others, and respecting differences of opinion. While society does not easily accept any action or intervention by women in particular, I tried to find allies, starting with my children, as well as my brothers, colleagues, and comrades, and neutralizing many opponents such as religious men and tribal extremists.

## The media is the fourth authority in any society. In your opinion, has the media been fair to women by addressing their issues and praising their role in society?

Unfortunately, the role of the media is weak, as it fails to focus on explaining the meaning of working in the peace field and also does not highlight women working in these fields. This has created a false image of women, which does not encourage many women to join the peacebuilding field.

## So, what is your advice for Yemeni women in general?

My advice to Yemeni women in general is for each woman to seek the appropriate field for her and to participate in the peace-building process in her community effectively. I also advise them to showcase their activities and work on unifying women's efforts and coordinating among themselves as one team, as this will have a deeper impact and the society will be more accepting of the idea of women working in various fields, including the field of peace.

# Various Media Outlets Depict the Reality of Yemeni Women in Peacebuilding

*In Yemen, which is plagued by a long-standing conflict, women face numerous challenges such as deprivation of education and healthcare, violence, marginalization, and limited roles in peacebuilding. Media outlets play a pivotal role in shaping public opinion in any society, thus greatly influencing how people perceive women's issues in the realm of peace and raising awareness that befits the women working in various peacebuilding fields.*

By: Hanan Hussein  
Women in Development and Peace

## The Role of Media

Various types of media play a significant role in shaping societal awareness and creating a suitable mental image of girls and women working in the field of peacebuilding in Yemen.

Journalist Yasmin Al-Qadi explains that different media outlets have a crucial role in presenting the issues of peacebuilders in Yemen. She states, «The media, in general, and radio, in particular, focus on showcasing women's issues related to their success in the job market or overcoming life obstacles, especially cultural and traditional barriers that impose restrictions.»

She adds, «Among these women are teachers who, despite the conflict and current circumstances, continue their educational work. The media has highlighted the role of medical professionals who persist in their work despite the challenges of the crisis, such as Zuha Al-Sa'di, who was honored by the community radio station «Lana» as a peacebuilder.»

Journalist Wedad Al-Badawi believes that media coverage of women's issues in peacebuilding is highly important. She says, «Peacebuilders do not have media platforms that defend them against constant attacks. Despite the media saturation and hate campaigns working against women, there is still a strong presence. Yemeni women have reached international platforms and foreign media outlets. No one but the women has conveyed the popular voice of the Yemeni street, while men have been associated with different factions.»

Journalist Fathi Ben Lazraq discusses the role of media during the conflict and states that media overlooked many societal aspects due to the conflict. He adds, «Unfortunately, Yemeni media did not play a positive role in presenting women's issues, whether in showcasing their success stories in peacebuilding or highlighting the violations suffered by Yemeni women during the conflict.»

He further elaborates, «At the beginning of the conflict, media outlets showed bias towards certain parties and focused on political and military news, neglecting women's issues. A significant part of this negligence was the political marginalization of women, which negatively affected their activities in various fields. This led the media to marginalize them and disregard their presence in its various platforms.»

## Women's Issues in the Media

In recent years, Yemen has witnessed some progress in presenting women's issues in the field of peace through the media. Some independent media outlets have started providing more comprehensive coverage of these issues, including violence against women, deprivation of education and healthcare, and other societal issues.

However, there is still a significant shortfall and a need to improve the presentation of these issues in Yemeni media. Often, they are superficially addressed or focus on certain aspects while neglecting others. There is also a lack of media coverage of women's role in the peace process.

Arwa Al-Abbasi, a local presenter, spoke about the media's efforts to build a distinctive

*Organizations should provide support and funding to entities that support and empower women*



image despite having many priorities. She said, «Women's issues, in general, are not a priority in Yemeni media. However, some visual and auditory media outlets have allocated a small percentage of their broadcasts to showcasing the issues of women peacebuilders.»

Arwa added, «Media outlets strive to raise awareness about the issues facing women peacebuilders and shed light on their contributions and challenges. Therefore, there is still a need to enhance the role of Yemeni media in presenting the issues of women peacebuilders and highlighting their contributions and challenges.»

Abdulleem Al-Haj, a program director at a local radio station, confirms that their program lineup always includes women's issues. He says, «We target women's issues in all our programs, including live programs, open slots, talk shows, recorded programs, and social discussions.»

Rami Al-Boraihi, a radio program director, states, «At the radio station I worked for, there was a dedicated program for women that addressed social problems they may face in various fields. There were specific episodes in the live programs, both in the morning and evening, where women from different specialties and various fields were invited to discuss their achievements and the obstacles they face in Yemeni society.»

Wedad Al-Badawi speaks about the reality of media coverage of women's issues in the field of peace, saying, «From the beginning of the conflict, there was no proper coverage of women's issues in the field of peace. The evidence is that the first women's peace advocacy group was formed in October 2015, but it was not presented by the media due to their preoccupation with conflict news, and they did not pay attention to covering peace news.»

She added, «Before 2019, there was negative media coverage of women's issues, and these issues were exploited and defamed through women. After that, the Feminist Nine Group was formed in 2019, and they worked on media campaigns with the support of the United Nations, involving various youth and women's components inside and outside the country. Through this coalition, they conducted advocacy campaigns for women's issues and their efforts in the media.»

She continued, «These media campaigns were conducted at a time when despair prevailed in society due to the impact of the conflict, and people felt fear and exhaustion.



Fathi Ben Lazraq

This made society welcome and engage with women in the field of peace. The campaign included television, radio, and websites. At that time, these media outlets only cared about presenting the issues when there was funding for this campaign. Women were the ones most eager to build peace and find ways to restore harmony among their children, and they were the ones who paid the price.»

Al-Badawi confirmed that after that, several media platforms were established and funded by international organizations with the aim of covering the positive presence of women in the peace file in Yemen.

## Suppression & Obstruction

The role of media is considered important and influential in Yemeni society, but Yemeni media outlets may face several challenges in presenting women's issues in the field of peace.

Rami Al-Brihi believes that «One of the prominent challenges faced by radio stations in discussing women's issues was the lack of response from some women who the radio wanted to invite to talk about their experiences and the challenges they face.»

Yasmin Al-Qadi also spoke about the challenges that different media outlets may face, saying, «Local media tries as much as possible to address issues to a greater extent, but we know the difficulty of addressing certain topics, especially for those who do not want to be highlighted. I am confident that in the near future, the media will have a greater role in conveying the voices of women - peacebuilders - and making them role models for other women in society.»

Al-Badawi spoke about the obstacles faced by women in the media, saying, «Parties with different political orientations always criticize



Rami Al-Boraihi

the presence of women in this file through their media outlets, refuse to engage with them in the peace file, and accuse them of not understanding national interests and others.»

She added, «One of the prominent challenges is that some media outlets are owned by certain political figures, and therefore any opposing women's media efforts are seen as going in the opposite direction and as unpatriotic efforts.»

She continued, «Another challenge is the pursuit of some media outlets to obtain money and funding by exploiting women's issues. In the past, they used to compete in presenting media materials about the role of women in peace issues for the sake of profit, unfortunately, rather than for the sake of women. Furthermore, some organizations used to produce episodes about success stories of women during the conflict and broadcast them through local radio stations, which led to radio stations setting high prices for airtime.»

## Recommendations & Suggestions

To improve the presentation of women's issues in the field of peace in Yemen, here are several suggestions and recommendations. Journalist Adiba Al-Sarari stated, «The media is a double-edged sword. It is the suitable environment for highlighting various issues to the world, spreading them, and emphasizing peacebuilding, especially in a context like Yemen that has suffered - and continues to suffer - from the consequences of conflicts for many years.»

Al-Sarari added, «Women are an integral part of any work in life in general and important partners in peacebuilding at various levels. Therefore, the role of the media lies in conveying the successes and achievements of women through formulating plans and solu-



Adiba Al-Sarari

tions for most humanitarian and complex issues, both politically and humanely.»

She further stated, «It is important for the media to serve as a crucial foundation in seeking researchers in all fields to create a successful environment capable of peacebuilding in Yemen.»

Wedad Al-Badawi emphasized the importance of media support for women and allocating space for showcasing their success stories. She said, «The media should be positive and supportive, refraining from distorting the image of women as is currently happening. Organizations should provide support and funding to entities that support and empower women, rather than being solely profit-driven. These missed opportunities should be accounted for and not neglected at the expense of women.»

Journalist Fathi Ben Lazraq proposed several remedies to activate the role of the media in addressing the issues of women as peacebuilders. He suggested granting an active political role to women in the axis of peace and its construction, pushing the peace process forward. This, in turn, would encourage the media to pay attention to their opinions since women carry ideas and formulations that are less extremist than men.

He added, «I call on all political parties and media outlets to grant women an active and clear role in the peacebuilding process in Yemen.»

Media plays a significant and crucial role in presenting women's issues in the field of peace in Yemen and can contribute to positive changes in favor of women. However, there is still a need for comprehensive and objective media coverage of women as peacebuilders, which would help enhance their rights and capabilities in Yemeni society.

# International Organizations Foster Women's Inclusion in Yemen's Peace Process

*International organizations play a pivotal role in strengthening women's engagement in the peace process in Yemen. They actively support women's involvement in negotiations and peacebuilding, while also working towards empowering women to participate in public life. These efforts align with the objectives of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, which emphasizes the promotion of women's roles in conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding.*

**By: Afrah Borji**  
Women in Development and Peace

International organizations employ a range of activities to bolster women's participation in Yemen's peace process. These include providing financial and logistical support to women peacebuilders, offering training and technical assistance to women involved in peace negotiations, advocating for the inclusion of women in peace talks, and exerting pressure on conflicting parties to ensure women's active involvement in peacebuilding initiatives.

*Yemeni women have played an important and effective role in supporting peace through participating in various activities*

## Featured Programs

In the context of supporting women in peace-related fields, many international organizations support women's empowerment in Yemen through the implementation of training and qualification programs, and promoting their participation in various fields.

In this regard, Mohammed Al-Kathiri, a consultant and expert in peacebuilding and conflict mitigation, says: "Perhaps the most prominent program in international organizations is the program implemented by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) in Hadhramout Governorate, which included training 50% of trainees who were women."

Al-Kathiri adds: "This program aims to qualify female leaders in the fields of peace and security, and to enhance their participation in the peace process."

Al-Kathiri added: "Saferworld implemented a joint program with local organizations, it ensured the participation of 50% of women in various activities, including social cohesion activities and supporting women in the peace process."

## Women are important partners in building peace

These programs emphasize the importance of the role of Yemeni women in building peace and stability in the country, and the need to support and empower them to participate in various fields.

Social activist and president of Aman Development Association



for Less Fortunate Groups Samira Sioud says: "Despite the difficult circumstances that Yemen is going through, Yemeni women have proven their ability to bear responsibility and face challenges."

Sioud continues: "Yemeni women have played an important and effective role in supporting peace, through participation in various activities, including awareness and education activities, building trust between conflicting parties, and supporting national reconciliation efforts, in addition to calling on women's rights organizations to ensure the full and effective participation of Yemeni women in the peace process, provide support for them, and enable them to participate in various fields."

## International Reports

According to a report by the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, titled "Women, Peace and Security," in 2015, the United Nations Special Envoy to Yemen and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women collaborated to establish the Yemeni Women's Advisory Group for Security and Peace, an advisory mechanism that included about 60 Yemeni women by 2018.

The report also added that in 2016, the Special Envoy's office sent a delegation of seven Yemeni women from the Women's Advisory Group for Security and Peace to



Mohammed Al-Kathiri

Kuwait to participate in the consultations preceding the Kuwait Peace Conference. Although the women did not have a direct role in the negotiations, their participation contributed to enhancing the presence of women in the Yemeni political process.

In 2018, the United Nations Special Envoy to Yemen established the Yemeni Women's Advisory Group, a high-level advisory mechanism that includes eight Yemeni women.

The report confirms that three of the women were selected from the Yemeni Women's Consensus Group, the largest group consisting of approximately 60 Yemeni women, while the other five were selected from various women's and community organizations.

In 2020, five members of the Yemeni Women's Advisory Group also became members of the Women's Consensus Group, which increased cooperation between the two groups. The report also emphasizes the importance of gender equality at all stages of work. The



Samira Sioud

office seeks to achieve this goal by ensuring that women are represented by at least 30% in all meetings and initiatives it leads, as well as by introducing gender analysis and considerations in all activities, planning, and engagement, by involving women in the decision-making process.

## Challenges & Difficulties

Samira Sioud says: "Women in international organizations in Yemen face a number of challenges and difficulties, the most prominent of which is the ongoing conflict in the country and the failure to implement Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which calls for enhancing the role of women in decision-making and combating all forms of violence against them."

She emphasizes that the non-implementation of Resolution 1325 deprives women of their main role in organizations and limits their ability to participate in decision-making. She adds that the

non-application of laws related to women's rights in Yemen contributes to the exclusion of women from leadership positions in organizations.

Sioud explains that the conflict in Yemen has led to an exacerbation of the challenges facing women in organizations; it has become difficult to implement any international decisions that serve women. She calls on the relevant parties to implement Security Council Resolution 1325 and laws related to women's rights in Yemen, in order to enable women to participate in decision-making and combat violence against them.

## Treatments & Recommendations

Al-Kathiri provides a number of recommendations, including: "The need to implement Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, by including women in decision-making in international organizations, and combating sexual violence against women."

Al-Kathiri continues: "It is necessary to amend the laws related to women's rights in Yemen to ensure equality between women and men in rights and duties. Women must be enabled to participate in decision-making by providing logistical and material support to women in international organizations, as well as providing training, technical support, and protecting them from violence."

Finally, international organizations must intensify their efforts to enable women to participate effectively in the peace process in Yemen and achieve sustainable peace in the country.

# Yemeni Women: Catalysts of Peace and Bridges of Tolerance in Society

*In our contemporary world, numerous countries and societies grapple with challenges and conflicts that pose threats to peace and stability. Amidst this reality, the pivotal role of women emerges prominently in their efforts to propagate the principles of peace and tolerance throughout society. They embark upon a profound and significant revolution by constructing bridges of understanding, fostering cooperation, and enriching dialogue and tolerance among community members.*

By: Hebah Mohammed  
Women in Development and Peace

The role of women in disseminating the values of peace transcends specific domains and encompasses families, local communities, and even the global stage. They contribute to the establishment of harmonious and prosperous societies by imparting education on human values, tolerance, and cooperation. Furthermore, women are empowered to actively participate in decision-making processes and engage in peacebuilding endeavors, thereby playing a vital role in shaping a peaceful future.



## Yemeni Women's Role in Spreading Societal Peace

The history of Yemen is full of diverse examples of the role of women in spreading the spirit of peace and peaceful coexistence, as they have shown the strength of determination and will in facing challenges and achieving positive change; the ability of women to empathize, understand and be wise enables them to transform conflicts into opportunities for dialogue and learning, also create safe spaces for exchanging opinions and ideas.

Dr. Huda Ali Alawi - Director of the Women's Center for Research and Training, Aden University - says: "Women tend to instinctively consolidate the values of peace; as they are the most prominent stakeholder in achieving stability and building peace, they seek through their social initiatives to generalize the perspective of recovery and combat violent practices and enhance the opportunities for understandings and approaches and defuse tension. Women have made a difference in various levels of informal peace, and have called in their feminist rights movement for years to confront the repercussions of the conflict, and revealed in their various activities, such as lectures, seminars or publications on social media, the extent of the damage suffered by women and children as a result of the violations that affected them as a vulnerable segment that suffers and endures the horrors of fighting and pays its high price."

She continues: "Women play an influential role in establishing a societal awareness that advocates peace and rooting the idea of defending the principle of tolerance through employing their emotional and humanistic tendencies towards integrating the culture of peace in their positions and daily behavior, especially within the family institution; in order to preserve its cohesion and revive its authentic values in alleviating the causes of problems and conflicts of a social dimension."

She continues: "The process of spreading the culture of peace among school students comes within the policies and programs that the government is supposed to mobilize, represented by the Ministry of Education and its guidance institutions; with the aim of advancing the message of education and enhancing the real role of the school in ensuring the favorable climates for the non-classroom activities that polish the interests and talents of students in the framework of designing positive ideas and spreading the model of peaceful leaders and defenders of the values of justice and peace."

While Ebtisam Al-Hammadi - a trainer in building and making community initiatives - reported that there are many success stories for the role of women in building peace in Yemeni society, she mentioned Dr. Manal Thabet, who contributed to spreading a picture of the images of peace in Yemeni society as the president of the Economic Forum for Sustainable Development; Dr. Manal reflected an honorable image of the Yemeni pavilion at Expo Dubai 2020. And in the context of

peace-building, there are many names, such as Bushra Al-Maqtari and Amat Al-Salam Al-Hajj, the president of the Abductees Mothers Association

## The Role of Mothers in Spreading the Values of Societal Peace

"The mother is the primary root of many beliefs in children, and what the mother plants in the children, especially in the early years, remains with them throughout life. The mother can play this role by instilling the value of tolerance in its different dimensions. On a personal level, she instills this value through tolerance and accepting oneself, and on a humanitarian level, accepting others with their difference without division, and training oneself on that. Flexibility in religious and social ideas also plays an important role in raising the child on tolerance and acceptance others", said the trainer Ebtisam Al-Hammadi.

Al-Hammadi continues: "Another thing I would like to point out is the role of various media, especially cartoons, in raising children on violence. From here comes the role of censorship by the mother on her children, whether for TV, phone, electronic games or any electronic tool that can affect the thinking of the children, to form in them a style of violence or non-acceptance of the other."

## Yemeni Female Teachers: Pioneers of Peace

Teachers play a key role in spreading the values of peace in Yemeni society to facilitate and enhance constructive communication and dialogue, guide students towards the values of peace, and raise awareness of the importance of peace through these efforts. Teachers are an active part in building a Yemeni society characterized by tolerance and peace.

Hind Al-Dheeb - an educator who has been working in the field of teaching for years - says: "Yemeni teachers are one of the basic elements that spread the values of peace and tolerance in Yemeni society, as they are an integral part of influencing the emerging generations, and they are the ones who guide them towards positive values and peaceful coexistence."

She continues: "The years of conflict have affected the level of understanding of the peace process among the current generations and the language of hostility has become widespread among school students; which doubled the challenges before us in consolidating the concept of peace and security among members of society. And also, the intellectual invasion on social media sites that works to consolidate the enmities and culture of hatred among young people in the absence of the family, which makes us do several school activities aimed at educating children and young people in schools about the importance of peace and spreading the message of coexistence and tolerance."

She added: "Consolidating peace in the



Dr. Huda Ali Alawi

educational process and its curricula has become very difficult; due to many obstacles, including the educational system and the lack of awareness of the family and society. However, we cooperate with the school administration to teach students the concepts of peace by addressing the topics related to peace, tolerance and peaceful coexistence in their educational curricula that include the concepts of cooperation, mutual respect, and acceptance of differences."

She continued: "Also, teachers, especially teachers of the first grades, work on polishing the skills of social coexistence, and enhancing the concepts of peace by encouraging group cooperation in the classroom, and organizing interactive activities and discussions on various social issues, and the diversity of social and tolerant values."

She explained that there are a number of public schools that were operational before the conflict, that have clear goals aimed at fostering a culture of peace in both the school and the community. They achieve this through organizing events and initiatives designed to raise awareness about the importance of peace and tolerance. These events included seminars, workshops and cultural activities on dialogue and understanding among students and promoting peaceful values.

While Shaima Qaed - an educational su-

pervisor in a private school - participates by saying: "We today need to unite all educational efforts to deal with the effects of the conflict peacefully, which is an essential part of the culture of peace. And teachers should train students on how to activate peaceful dialogue and solve problems in constructive ways, and enhance the values of tolerance and reconciliation among them; to enhance the culture of peace in the school, and encourage cooperation and integration through organizing group activities and cooperative projects."

While trainer Ebtisam Al-Hammadi says: "The teacher always serves as the primary guide in instilling many human values, the most important of which is the value of peace, by first creating it within themselves (inner peace), which then radiates outwardly as external peace. Educational activities, stories and videos play a significant role in guiding students towards this superior human value, as well as through various sports activities involving students with diverse intellectual orientations or from different governorates".

Shaima Qaed believes that Yemeni teachers in particular need adequate support and attention, by providing opportunities for continuous training, and paying the deserved wages; so that they can provide wide roles in the field of consolidating the values of peace and tolerance in society. And also providing guidance and psychological support to teachers, especially in these difficult economic conditions, and encouraging them to apply educational activities that represent the values of peace and tolerance.

Dr. Huda Alawi mentioned some recommendations that can be followed to encourage women's participation and empowerment more in spreading peace, including: choosing influential women who have a role in society, from teachers, activists and lawyers, and qualifying them in building and making peace, as well as effective media guidance, through various media channels, which focuses on the success stories of Yemeni women in making peace.

She added: "Also, women must be empowered in various fields, and involved to play a role in building peace, including enabling them to participate politically in ministerial portfolios under the quota system as stipulated by the Yemeni constitution, and Yemeni women must build their capacities in resolving conflicts, building peace and solving problems. And the local community must accept the participation and empowerment of women in the activities that contribute to building peace, and reducing conflicts, racism, violence and inequality."

## Recommendations

Ebtisam Al-Hammadi says: "Women can play an effective role in spreading societal peace by designing special programs in capacity building to instill the values of peace

# Women in Yemen: A Beacon of Hope Amidst Formidable Challenges to Peace

*The conflict in Yemen has amplified the suffering experienced by its people, manifesting in pervasive hardships such as poverty, hunger, and illness. Women, in particular, have endured marginalization and a lack of trust in their capacity to assume leadership roles and participate in decision-making processes within the country.*

By: Yasmine Abdulhafeez  
Women in Development and Peace

Their suffering extends beyond these challenges, as women have also encountered obstacles in expressing their opinions and asserting their rights. The decline of local institutions and organizations advocating for women, coupled with the departure of many activists due to the conflict, has further exacerbated these difficulties.

In response to these circumstances, numerous women have taken it upon themselves to establish institutions, initiatives, and networks aimed at alleviating the suffering of Yemeni citizens and addressing various humanitarian concerns. Some of these organizations have also actively sought to empower women in peacebuilding efforts within their communities. They demand an end to the conflict, engage in community mediations, and undertake other activities aimed at fostering peace in the country.

These include the Yemeni Women's Pact for Peace and Security, Women for Peace Alliance, Mothers of the Abducted Association, Southern Women for Peace, Women's Summit, Yemeni Women's Peace Conference, Masar Initiative, and others. The emergence of such entities has encouraged the creation of groups working towards the same goal, some of which are part of the following networks:

The Nine Feminine Group, founded in 2019, includes the Yemeni Women's Pact for Peace and Security, Women's Summit, Southern Women for Peace, Peace Partners Alliance, Peacebuilders Group, Young Leadership Institutions, Feminine Voices for Peace Network, Women for Yemen Network, Youth Awareness Platform, and Feminine Solidarity Network. This group was established with the support of the United Nations to involve women in the peace process in Yemen.

Through the unlimited participation of women in the peace process, it requires significant efforts from governmental entities and international organizations interested in women's issues to support and empower women in Yemen for active participation in the peace process. This includes giving them the opportunity to shape initiatives and supportive institutions within the community, as well as participating in negotiation tables and decision-making.

Despite the intensive efforts to support women's presence in the peacebuilding process in Yemen, whether by Yemeni women willing to contribute to the peace process or through international efforts, their participation remains low.

## UN Resolution 1325: A Pillar for Supporting Women and Enhancing their Effective Participation in Peacekeeping

This was confirmed by a report issued by the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies on February 9, 2023, entitled "Enhancing Women's Voices in the Yemeni Peace Process; Mechanisms for Activating Their Role, Priorities, and Related Recommendations." The report indicated a significant decline in the participation of Yemeni women in peacebuilding since 2015.

The report mentioned that women represented only 4% of the participation in the Stockholm Agreement in Sweden, which was held regarding a humanitarian ceasefire in the city of Al-Hodeidah. They attended as negotiators, not mediators, and represented 12% in the Kuwait talks in 2016, considered the highest women's participation in the negotiations.

### Women Empowerment

In this regard, Manal Abdulrahman Sultan Al-Dabhani (a central committee member in the Al-Nasiri Union organization) says: "When we talk about peace, we must talk about the political process of women, as it is closely related. The stronger the political participation of women, the more they have a role and a place in the peace process. Unfortunately, Yemeni women still suffer from weakness in political life."

She adds in her speech: "The reality in dialogue and political work for women, the dialogue table was not open except for men supported by the parties to the conflict, as we found in all previous peace negotiations except the Stockholm Agreement, where there was only one woman."

She continues in her speech: "But rights are taken, not given, and as women, we must continue to raise our voices and break the barrier of male dominance in decision-making."

She adds: "We found that there are feminist initiatives, alliances, and projects that seek and work to involve women in peace-making mechanisms and reconstruction, despite the challenges and difficulties they face, especially in the military path, where women's representation is absent, using them only as victims."

Media activists say: "Raising awareness about the importance of empowering Yemeni

women in the field of peace necessarily calls for intensifying campaigns that make society accept the idea of their involvement in this matter, in addition to activating the role of entities that organize events and seminars in universities, schools, and all institutions about the necessity of empowering Yemeni women in the field of peace."

Others believe that religious discourse can be a supportive factor in empowering women in the areas of promoting and preserving peace in Yemeni society, by not inciting to impose restrictions on women's movements, doubting women's capabilities to work in certain fields, or convincing families to hinder their encouragement to develop their capabilities, or confining them to specific aspects, or staying at home, or marrying them.

It is essential to encourage women and support their access to leadership positions through which they can convey their voices and demands in their desire to be an important element in spreading peace in all regions of the country, which truly need a genuine and fundamental peace process.

Social activist Nadia Naji says: "If we start from the philosophy of gender, we see that this philosophy considers that the divisions, roles associated with men and women, as well as the differences between them, and even the perceptions and ideas related to the male's view of himself and the female, and the female's view of herself and the male, are all products of society, its culture, and its prevailing ideas."

She continues: "So, all of this is artificial and can be completely changed and abolished; women can take on men's roles, and men can take on women's roles, and it is possible to change women's perception of themselves and of men. This idea is shaped by society in the child from an early age, and this can be addressed through means and policies."

Nadia emphasizes the need to ensure that women occupy a central importance and that women's issues are priorities in peace and security decisions at all levels. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to work to confront the social, cultural, and political obstacles and the protection risks that limit women's full participation in achieving and maintaining peace.

She adds: "Women are active factors in establishing peace in armed conflicts, but their roles as fundamental players and agents of change have not been sufficiently recognized, as we have previously pointed out. Nevertheless, women must be present among peacekeepers due to their exemplary roles in the local environment."

She believes that women and girls must be involved in peace processes in communi-

ties dominated by men in order to pave their way through participation in serving local communities. She insists on the need to strengthen the application and monitoring of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women as active elements in peace and security, adopted on 31 October 2000, and Resolution 1820 on sexual violence, then the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1889 on 5 October 2009. This resolution essentially reaffirms the commitments adopted in Resolution 1325, but it focuses on women's participation during post-conflict phases and reconstruction, and emphasizes the importance of increasing the number of women in peacebuilding and peacekeeping forces.

According to Nadia, for women to be able to participate in the peace process in Yemen, it requires many steps that help them to be an active element in this aspect. Among the most important of these steps is to confront the social, cultural, and political challenges that limit women's participation in this field, especially since women's efforts and participation are limited to certain areas.

### Challenges & Solutions

Regarding the challenges facing women in the peace process, political activist Manal Al-Dabhani says, "The challenges facing women working in the field of peace in Yemen include the weak representation of women in peace negotiations, the division of women on key issues, as well as their limited participation in specific issues."

Al-Dabhani also sees that one of the challenges is that their participation in the peace process is selective by male political leaders, without taking into account women's qualitative interests and political vision. In addition, there is a lack of effective civil society organizations that can crystallize a unified vision for women in crises, taking into account racial and tribal differences, as well as differences between urban and rural women.

On the other hand, Shainaz Al-Akhali (a lawyer and human rights activist) says in her interview with Women in Development and Peace newspaper, "The challenges facing women in the peace process are numerous and varied, including the absence of women in negotiation committees and dialogues related to peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Yemen. These matters have become managed behind the scenes and led by men who benefit from the continuation of the conflict."

She continues, "Yemeni women are present in decision-making positions at the local level, but only as a decoration. There is a trend to appoint women, but they do not have any real authority; they are only there for decision-making."

kers to claim that they are present as desired by organizations and to move towards their involvement in decision-making."

Al-Akhali emphasizes the need to implement UN Resolution 1325 regarding the inclusion of women in political decision-making positions in a real, not just symbolic, manner, and to push for their presence by organizations and society to be at the table for dialogue and negotiation in all committees.

### Major Pillars to Support Women in Peacebuilding

In this regard, A'ida Hasan Ashoor Abdallah (member of the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference) says, "UN Resolution 1325 is one of the fundamental pillars to support women and enhance their effective participation in peacekeeping operations." Ashour adds, "This resolution ensures women's contribution beyond the end of conflict to achieve the sustainability of peace agreements and economic growth, prevent conflicts, contribute to recovery, engage in networks, alliances, organizations, political processes, and economic and political empowerment."

She continues, "The outputs of the national dialogue have allocated shares for political participation and the national plan for implementing the resolution, which includes measures, programs, and projects to protect women, combat gender-based violence, support protection programs, monitor issues of prisoners and detainees, provide humanitarian assistance, achieve justice, repair harm to prevent recurrence, prevent conflicts, and build a culture of peace."

A'ida points out that there are many obstacles to activating these pillars, including the quota system that allocates a limited number of seats at the negotiation table for warring parties and political parties, and the lack of social awareness of the importance of implementing international agreements, indicating a lack of will to involve women in decision-making positions.

A'ida emphasizes that women in Yemen play diverse roles in multiple peace processes as active parties due to their roles and experiences in promoting societal peace and peaceful dialogue, in addition to conflict resolution, presenting local women's peace initiatives, and participating in preliminary consultations and understandings for the peace process as a second track, while being excluded from the negotiation table. Activists in women's issues affirm that empowering Yemeni women in the peace process requires significant efforts, especially with significant challenges that hinder their participation in negotiations, conflict resolution, and decision-making.





# Harnessing Social Awareness: Empowering Yemeni Women's Engagement in Peacebuilding

*Yemeni women are recognized as vital pillars for work and development within Yemen, possessing indispensable skills and capabilities that can drive transformative change and contribute to the attainment of enduring peace. To ensure this potential is fully realized, concerted efforts must be directed towards raising awareness, educating society at large, and implementing diverse programs aimed at empowering Yemeni women. By enhancing their participation in the peacebuilding process, these initiatives can unlock the full potential of Yemeni women and pave the way for a brighter future.*

By: Alia Mohammed  
Women in Development and Peace

## Social Awareness

Sana Jameel, a social activist and deputy head of community mediation in Al-Shaikh Uthman directorate, believes that women have the right to fully participate in achieving peace due to their significant role in society. She emphasizes that social awareness is a necessary and effective means to eliminate social, cultural, and political challenges acquired from customs and traditions that vary from one region to another.

She adds, "The importance of awareness lies in removing the negative image of the role of women and highlighting the positive image to enhance their active role in society and their participation in development. Thus, social awareness achieves goals that serve the community, portrays a positive image of women's role, reinforces a culture based on gender equality, and enhances their role as half of society."

In a related context, Ellen Al-A'bd, a feminist and social activist, points out that social awareness of the participation of Yemeni women in peacebuilding is fundamental and decisive, as it plays a major role in enhancing the role of Yemeni women in peacebuilding. She emphasizes, "The more women have sufficient information about the decisions, treaties, and agreements related to peacebuilding, the more they can contribute to pressuring the government to end the conflict."

She emphasizes that Yemeni women are one of the most affected segments of society and are most familiar with the effects caused by the conflict, which necessitates their full awareness of international decisions and treaties in order to convey decision-making and voice their demands.

She explains that women have a positive role in advocacy and pressure, especially female

workers in civil society organizations who are leaders and activists.

"Women are an essential component of society, and they have the right to enjoy all human rights on an equal footing with men," emphasized social activist Shakib Al-A'amri in his speech. He also stated, "The participation of women in public life is of great importance, no less important than peace itself; women are mothers, wives, sisters, and teachers, and the more they mature and become more involved in building peace, the more they contribute to reducing men's tendencies towards violence."

He added, "Yemeni women have played leadership roles in peacebuilding and have occupied a very important position in peacebuilding."

He explained that the lack of awareness of women's rights, laws, and supportive decisions leads to the absence of justice and hinders the path to reaching a safe and stable society.

## Means of Social Awareness

There are several strategies, methods, and tools through which we can increase the effectiveness of social awareness and influence public opinion to support women's participation in peacebuilding.

Regarding the most important social awareness methods, Ellen Al-A'bd said, "Schools and universities can provide youth with awareness



Sana Jameel

programs on the importance of Yemeni women's participation in peacebuilding through workshops and lectures to introduce the achievements of Yemeni women in the field of peace, cooperation, and reconciliation, in addition to teaching lessons on women's rights and their importance in religious and legal contexts, and how Yemeni women can be active participants

in peace processes."

She added, "Government and private institutions should organize conferences, seminars, and workshops aimed at exchanging experiences and knowledge among participants on peace-related issues and the role of women in it, in addition to activating the role of art by presenting films and plays that enhance the role of women and portray them in a positive light."

On the other hand, social activist Layal Mohammed emphasizes that utilizing media to raise awareness in the community about the importance of Yemeni women's participation in peacebuilding is one of the most effective methods.

She said, "Media awareness campaigns can increase awareness of the importance of available opportunities for women to achieve peace and stability, and television programs, radio shows, and articles can be used to highlight the successes of women in this field by hosting a number of experts and workers in civil society and women's associations to present different insights and ideas."

She continues: "Implementing awareness and educational programs, as well as organizing training courses and awareness seminars through social media, and providing information on how to participate in decision-making and work for peace, increases women's participation in peacebuilding."

Shakib Al-A'amri agrees with this opinion and emphasizes the importance of community committees and direct communication in gatherings and social events.

He explains that community committees are effective means to build societal awareness that rejects all forms of marginalization and exclusion faced by Yemeni women in decision-making and peacebuilding.

It is worth noting that community committees are small groups consisting of both men and women, offering various awareness and educational programs on assigned issues.

## Impact of Social Awareness

Sana Jameel points out the positive effects of community awareness on the necessity of women's participation in peacebuilding and achievement. She emphasizes that community awareness works to promote gender equality, achieve social justice, and empower women to make balanced and fair decisions, increasing their opportunities for participation in political, economic, and social processes. She adds, "Community awareness contributes to reducing violence rates and creating a positive change in society. The issue of women's participation in peace requires societal attention and comprehensive efforts to encourage and empower women in the community, enabling them to make peace-related decisions."

# Women and Peace in Yemen: Criteria Warranting their Empowerment

By: Haneen Al-Wahsh  
Women in Development and Peace

Setting standards and requirements is crucial for accurately defining workflow, ensuring efficiency, and avoiding accidents. This is the essence of the importance of establishing standards in any aspect.

The significance of setting a standard to enable Yemeni women to engage in the peace process is no different, with a key distinction being that Yemeni women make and practice peace within their homes. Beyond that, some values and standards serve to limit women socially, unrelated to the precision of the work assigned to them and its assurance.

## Women & Peace

Regarding the values of peace from her perspective, Hooria Mashhoor, a founding member of the National Reconciliation Bloc, former Minister of Human Rights, and head of the guidance committee for the Women's Solidarity Network, explained that peace is the feeling of security and safety for oneself, family, property, and the enjoyment of basic human rights to preserve dignity, freedom of expression, mobility, and access to essential necessities such as food, drink, medicine, shelter, education, training, and decent work

for income.

She further emphasized that the values and standards of peace do not differ between women and men; both require these elements associated with peace, which may not be fully available during conflicts and violence, and the fundamental right to life may be violated, leading to killing, torture, or inhumane treatment.

## A Vision for the Future of Peace

Regarding her vision for the future of peace in Yemen, Mashhoor says, "Everyone is looking forward to peace in Yemen, especially those affected by the conflicts and their consequences, the majority of whom are Yemeni people whose lives have turned into hell because of this conflict."

She adds, "The only beneficiaries of the continuation of the conflict are those who stand as obstacles to any opportunity for peace. However, peace will be imposed because the forces opposing peace cannot endure long under the weight of human suffering, the economic and social destruction of the country, and its existential threat due to the ongoing fragmentation of the land and its people."

She continues, "The most active social groups in stopping the conflict and building peace are women, as well as the youth, espe-

cially those organizing in national networks and alliances. They have been able, within the available resources and sometimes with limited international support, to carry out activities and events advocating for peace, making the international community hear the voices of those suffering from the conflict. Many of them have also criticized the international community for being unable to protect people's security and safety, especially after placing Yemen under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter."

She elaborates, "Nevertheless, the responsibility for achieving peace lies with the Yemenis themselves, by realizing their national and ethical responsibilities towards their country and alleviating the suffering of their people."

She concludes, "Women have not hesitated for a moment to call for peace, and they will certainly have a role in the phase of building and consolidating peace after the end of this conflict, which we hope will be sooner rather than later, as the longer we delay in achieving peace, the greater the losses, the more complex the situation becomes, and the more difficult it is to resolve."

She emphasizes that the recent developments announced by the UN envoy's office in Yemen seem promising and open a glimmer of hope on the horizon.

## Participation Opportunities

In an article titled "The Power of Women in Building Peace: Achieving Excellence for Comprehensive Peace" by the author Ishraq Al-Sabri, she says, "Women must be granted equality in rights, opportunities, and political and economic participation."

She adds, "Women must be active partners in decision-making and shaping policies that affect their society. In addition, women's participation in peace processes, mediation, and negotiations should be enhanced, as they possess unique perspectives and effective communication skills that contribute to achieving understanding and fruitful dialogue."

She concludes that enhancing the role of women in achieving peace is not just a matter of social justice, but also a strategic necessity for achieving stability and sustainable development.

This requires integrated efforts from governments, civil society, and international organizations to ensure the empowerment and full participation of women in the peacebuilding process. When women have equal opportunities and participation, justice and comprehensive peace for all will be achieved.

She also adds that we must work together to achieve this goal and advocate for wo-

men's rights and positive change. By enhancing the role and effective participation of women, we can build more peaceful and prosperous communities for everyone.

## Women, Peace & Security

A report from the Office of the UN Special Envoy states that Yemeni women are effectively involved in peace, security, and governance issues despite being marginalized and excluded from official political work and institutions.

The report also highlights the increased participation and civil engagement of Yemeni women during the National Dialogue Conference, which has continued despite the conflict.

It mentions that Yemeni women significantly contribute to peace-making at local, national, and international levels, from evacuating civilians and the wounded from conflict-affected areas to negotiating humanitarian aid access, opening roads and crossings, releasing and exchanging prisoners, and calling for a nationwide ceasefire.

The report emphasizes that the contributions of Yemeni women are essential for ensuring the continuity of their families and communities amid the collapse or destruction of vital services and infrastructure due to the conflict.

# Resolute Women Peacebuilders in Yemen: Navigating Social Confrontations with Determination

*Over the past decades, Yemeni women have witnessed a remarkable evolution in their societal status. Once confined to challenging social conditions, where they were perceived as weak and in need of protection and guidance, they have transcended such limiting stereotypes. In a changing world marked by shifting social, cultural, and educational norms, Yemeni women have emerged as vital contributors across various sectors and have become key pillars of their society.*



*Women are half of society in words and actions and are complements and solutions to life's problems from all aspects*

By: **Ahmed Bajoaim**  
Women in Development and Peace

Women peacebuilders have taken center stage, navigating numerous obstacles to challenge societal stereotypes. They have not only worked towards transforming unjust perceptions but also exercised their professional autonomy, striving to reshape the societal narrative in a positive light. Through their dedicated efforts, Yemeni women are actively shaping a better future, both in peace negotiations and in various fields of endeavor.

## Social Perspective

Peace mediator and political and social activist Madina Adlan believes that society still misunderstands the meaning of peace and the areas of work within it. She adds, "Women working in the field of peace are more than men, but the societal view is still narrow. Women are naturally connected to society and what is happening within it. They are the most affected by conflicts and disputes. Therefore, they participate in negotiations and conflict resolution from their sense of harm and their ability to deal with the parties, as they are not a party to the conflict."

Adlan continues, "Women are the primary beneficiaries of resolving any conflict. Their patience and resilience, created by their nature, help them endure and be patient in problem-solving. Therefore, women's participation in all aspects of life is the best way to create societal peace, and their pursuit of education raises societal awareness."

On the other hand, the director of Al-Mukalla Government Radio, Dr. Duaa Bawazeer, points out that society's view of women varies in all activities and events they engage in, including their participation in the peace process. While some see women as qualified for this work, others have opposing views. However, everyone realizes that at some point

in her life, a woman becomes a peacebuilder in her home when she can contain and resolve the problems of the young, thus promoting peace and harmony in a simplified form of her small world.

Women are the ones who pay the heaviest price for the ongoing conflicts in society. Therefore, involving them in the negotiations to resolve the Yemeni conflicts gives them a social dimension that men may not be aware of. This is because women face double the risks that men face, in addition to the impact of these risks on their family environment due to the conflict between local armed factions in the country for nearly nine consecutive years.

Social activist Husain Bawazir says, "Society perceives women as not having sufficient capability to achieve peace or contribute to resolving conflicts; because they are considered weak regardless of their knowledge or leadership status."

He continues, "Some political blocs support the presence of women in leadership positions not to hear their opinions, but to comply with laws that mandate women's participation in all fields and grant them their constitutional rights, while their positions remain rigid, as in the case of women's involvement in peacebuilding."

It can be said that the societal view, in addition to the approach taken by parties and political components at the current stage, has severely limited the positive impact of women and has not allowed them to be effectively involved in resolving the ongoing conflicts in the country.

It is emphasized that women are the cornerstone of participation in conflict resolution and negotiations for peace. Their participation is linked to indicators of democracy and societal growth, making women one of the most important forces in society, and they must be given the right to participate in conflict resolution for peace.

In contrast to the above, the head of the

Women's Department in the "Youth of Tomorrow" Union in Al-Mahra, Professor Nora Balhaf, believes that our society has become conscious and women have a very active role in peace processes.

There are natural societal norms, and if a woman is required to travel from one province to another or from one country to another for participation, she must be accompanied by a male relative as our religion has urged. Her role in conflict resolution is to be a support for her husband, father, brother, and the entire tribe, and to instill mercy and love in the hearts of the conflicting parties.

Balhaf elaborated, saying, "When we talk about international conflicts, women have also played an effective role. They have a wise policy in resolving conflicts, with various dialogues and different methods. Women constitute half of society in words and deeds; they are the complement and the remedy for life's problems from all angles. We notice their current presence in the practical field, whether in the governmental or non-governmental sector, to the extent that many women today have become the breadwinners for their families."

In the same context, the political activist A'tiyat Badhawi stated, "Women are largely excluded from participating in peace processes due to social, cultural, and political barriers in a society that limits their involvement in mediation and negotiations, despite the enormous role women play in promoting peace, peaceful dialogue, and conflict resolution."

She pointed out that the local community's belief that men are more capable of negotiating and making peace than women has led to diverse roles for women in complex and

multi-track peace processes that the current society may not fully comprehend, and women can also be outside the conversations and engage as active parties in the community.

## Challenges

Adlan explained the main challenges facing Yemeni women and preventing their participation in peace negotiations, saying, "The societal outlook has affected the political parties and components' participation in peace negotiations, as political parties did not nominate women within their delegations. Most parties do not have women at their helm, and Yemeni parties did not give women their political rights."

Adlan further discussed the challenges, stating, "The current outlook towards women's participation has allowed some to doubt women's capabilities to keep up with the complex developments in the Yemeni file during peace processes or to hold sovereign leadership positions. These are the main challenges facing Yemeni women, hindering their political and social activities alike."

She continued, "Therefore, the role of the United Nations, its envoy, and office requires them to fulfill their mission of implementing UN resolutions regarding women's fair participation, including UN Resolution 1325, which Yemen has ratified."

Bawazir expressed that the challenges facing women in participating in the peace industry lie in several points, the most important of which are: the gender discrimination that women have suffered from in the past decades, in addition to the social customs and traditions that act as the first obstacle to empowering women in all aspects of life, including politics and participation in conflict resolution. Furthermore, conflicts, crises, and economic challenges are also significant difficulties in this regard.

On the other hand, Balhaf adds: "The union is an independent entity aiming to represent young people, adopt their interests, opinions, and aspirations, and work on promoting the concepts of freedom, justice, and equality. Women face tough challenges in their involvement in government work, major leadership positions, and high-status roles; this is almost non-existent in giving them their rightful rights or positions, and in not providing opportunities for clear participation and expression of their opinions in peace negotiations. These challenges, along with the armed conflict between Yemeni factions, are the biggest problems that women must intensify their efforts to overcome."

## Solutions

Adlan has developed several solutions

and approaches to elevate the social status of women and engage them in peace processes, believing in their significant role in conflict resolution, including at the local community level. These solutions include addressing the media's weak portrayal of women working in civil society organizations, as they lack the courage to demand their rightful participation in the peace process. Additionally, empowering educated and qualified women to engage in party politics is proposed to overcome societal misconceptions about the role of parties and political work, perpetuated by conflicting parties and entities.

Adlan further adds that this work requires raising awareness in universities about the nature of party pluralism and proper political practice. It is also suggested that women in parties and political components should be given real political roles among women, as one of the reasons for restricting women's activities and participation in decision-making lies in their confinement to the weakest decision-making positions, such as heading the women's department in the party, which distances them from the decision-making positions predominantly held by men.

It is emphasized that selecting positive female role models during work and representation in negotiations, conflict resolution, and peace processes is crucial.

Bawazir also lists some measures to enhance women's political participation and presence in peace processes, such as raising awareness about the importance of women's involvement in peacebuilding, encouraging their engagement in political parties, and increasing their representation in decision-making and sovereign positions.

Additionally, she stresses the need to actively work towards changing the reality for women, expanding their leadership roles, and integrating gender equality and women's issues into peace negotiations.

Similarly, Badhawi emphasizes the need to consider multiple factors to increase the presence of Yemeni women in peace processes, including integrating women into peacebuilding efforts, focusing on rural women's empowerment, and addressing all forms of violence against women while providing protection and shelter.

It is also essential to highlight the roles of women in times of conflict and peace, to enhance women's participation in the workforce, to raise awareness about the importance of girls' education, and to promote the integration of social gender justice and equality.

In conclusion, there is a need to intensify international and local efforts to raise societal awareness about the importance of women's participation in peace processes and stability preservation and to overcome narrow perspectives by targeting all segments of society through educational campaigns and outreach using all available means. Additionally, programs should be established to qualify and enhance women's experiences in all areas of life.





# Women in Yemen: Victims of Conflict and Makers of Peace

*In the midst of the ongoing conflict and the crises caused by armed confrontations, the situation has worsened and contributed to an increase in violations within society. With each party firmly holding its position to end the conflict, the civil society has remained targeted by all conflict parties. Due to the pressures experienced by citizens, there are numerous reasons for the escalation of local conflicts among communities, which have destabilized social security and led to instability.*

**Sara Al-Fa'iq**  
 Executive Director of the Civil  
 Alliance for Peace  
 Advisor of  
 "Women in Peace" Issue

Years of negotiations have allowed all parties to monopolize peace talks, noticeably excluding women at both the local and national levels, despite consensus on their leading role in mitigating the repercussions of armed conflict on Yemenis. The pivotal role of women's daily "hidden" practices—such as childbirth, daily routines, caregiving, meeting basic humanitarian needs, negotiating to reduce inequality, social relationships, and conflict resolution—has not received the recognition it deserves or been adequately addressed in research.

The years of conflict have exacerbated the suffering of women in Yemen and deprived them of many rights they previously enjoyed. However, this has not prevented them from assuming non-traditional roles, breaking the stereotypes of their traditional roles, and demonstrating their capacity as peacebuilders and mediators within communities. They have successfully carried out several mediations to settle and resolve conflicts in the second and third tracks. Although women's mediation in Yemen is informal, it serves as a gateway to comprehensive peacebuilding that leverages local resources and respects the cultural specificity of Yemeni society,

allowing for broader participation of women in the peacebuilding process and the continuation of their leadership roles in the future.

Throughout the nine years of armed conflict, Yemeni women have participated in a wide range of activities that contribute to social cohesion and informal community peacebuilding. They are already laying the foundations for sustainable peace through their daily practices, which help change the overall landscape in the post-conflict period. Recognizing the role of women works towards improving social cohesion, economic stability, and human security to achieve sustainable peace.

Yemeni women have actively participated in peacebuilding at the local, national, and international levels, including evacuating civilians and wounded individuals from conflict-affected areas, negotiating humanitarian aid access, opening roads and crossings, releasing and exchanging prisoners within the country. These significant contributions made by Yemeni women add to their foundational roles in ensuring the continuity of their families and communities amidst the collapse or destruction of vital services and infrastructure due to the conflict.

The collective achievements and extensive experiences of Yemeni women as peacebuilders qualify them to be at the forefront of all the tracks that will shape Yemen's future. These women have worked towards providing peace and stability

to society. In addition to facilitating prisoner exchanges and opening humanitarian corridors, they continue to mediate local ceasefire agreements and provide essential services to the local population. However, the essential contributions of Yemeni women in achieving peace on the ground have not yet granted them a seat at the official negotiation table. Instead, their participation in the formal peace process has been limited to unofficial consultations in the second track.

Furthermore, women and civil society organizations operating at the grassroots level (third track) face difficulties in engaging with stakeholders in the second and first tracks of the peace process. This means that the current framework of the peace process has not adequately incorporated the needs and perspectives of Yemeni women, who hold the key to establishing more locally embraced peace.

Yemeni peacebuilders demonstrate exemplary strength as they work towards bringing peace and stability to their communities. They have built resilience primarily through self-help strategies and personal, familial, and societal networks. However, recognizing Yemeni women as leaders in efforts to mitigate the consequences of the armed conflict on Yemenis necessitates their meaningful inclusion in peacebuilding discussions and negotiations to end the ongoing conflict that began in 2015.

## Suggestions & Recommendations

*There are crucial recommendations that require attention to ensure the increased involvement of women in peacebuilding and the post-conflict period. Despite the numerous challenges they face, women have managed to make a significant impact. By providing support and embracing the following recommendations, their potential can be further harnessed:*

- Monitoring and documenting the efforts of women mediators in the second and third tracks is essential. It is important to share their successful experiences and establish communication channels between them, international peace organizations operating in Yemen, and political forces engaged in the first track.
- Building the capacities of women and creating secure spaces for the exchange of experiences are paramount. Additionally, empowering women at the grassroots level in Yemen should be a priority, recognizing their day-to-day peacebuilding practices.
- Identifying community initiatives that address specific conflict issues and involve or are led by women is crucial. These initiatives should be linked with the ongoing efforts in the first negotiation track.
- Ensuring the inclusion of women in the peacebuilding plan resulting from negotiations between the parties is imperative. Their active involvement in all committees and bodies formed during the transitional phase is essential.
- Expanding consultations with women's groups, both internally and externally, is necessary to incorporate their issues and interests into the negotiation agenda. Drawing on the experiences of women's groups and networks, such as the Yemeni Women's Consensus for Security and Peace, as an advisory mechanism, is beneficial. Identifying their strengths and positive attributes, as well as those of other active women's groups, and working on strengthening them within new women's groups and networks is crucial.
- Finally, supporting and endorsing the promotion of women's mediation in Yemen is vital. This can be accomplished by advocating for women's participation in peacebuilding processes, raising public awareness about the importance of women's political involvement, and facilitating coordination among civil society organizations and women working in the field of peacebuilding.



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# 93.5% Believe that Yemeni Women are Capable of Achieving Change and Bringing Peace to Yemen

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Women in Development and Peace

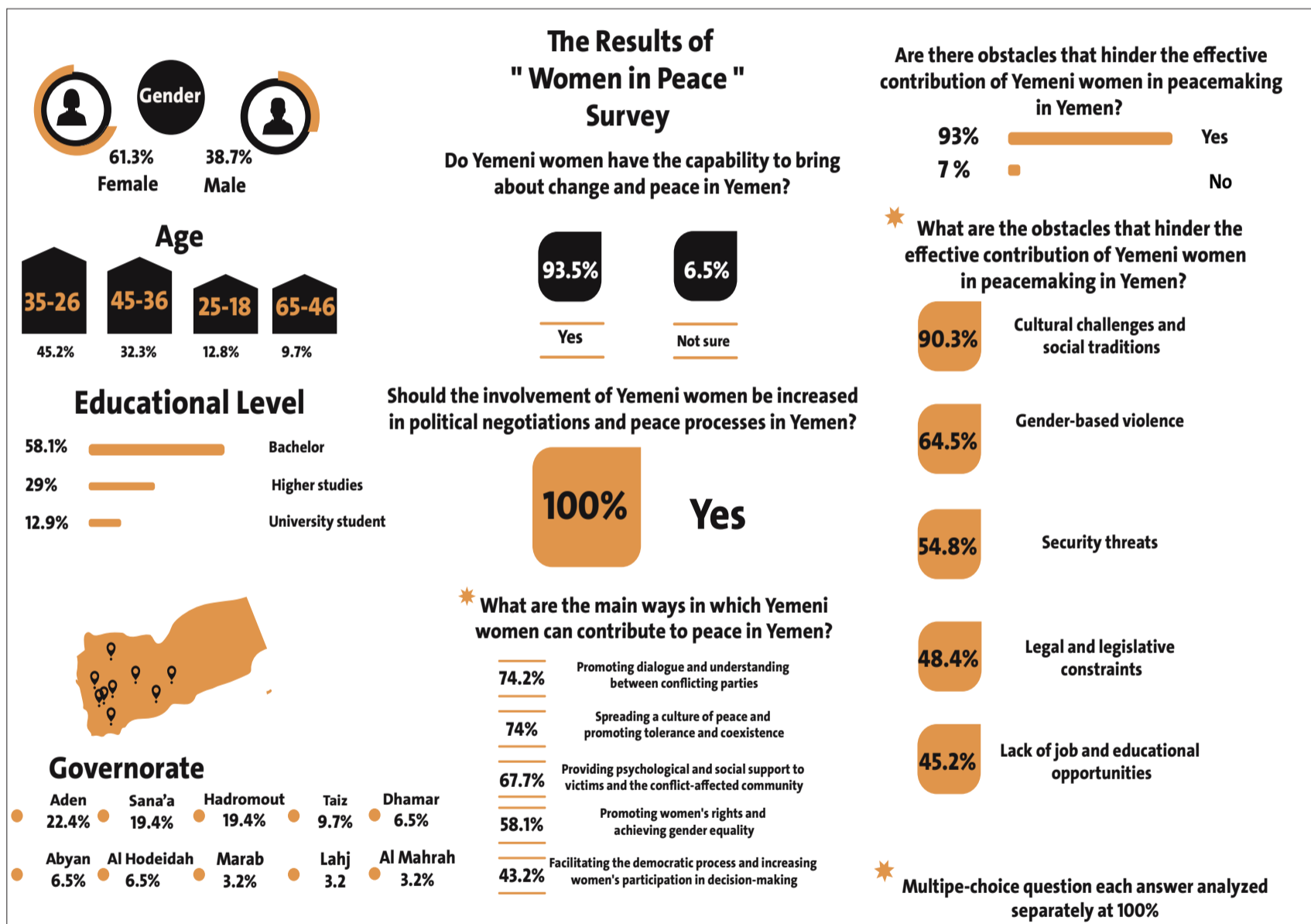
Yemen has been suffering from the effects of the conflict for nearly nine years now, which has greatly impacted its infrastructure, economy, and basic services. This ongoing conflict has exacerbated the humanitarian crisis, with Yemenis experiencing food and water shortages, limited access to healthcare, high unemployment and poverty rates. It has also resulted in a large-scale displacement of the population and the displacement of many families. Additionally, numerous vital facilities such as hospitals, schools, and factories have been destroyed, weakening their ability to meet the population's needs and making the humanitarian situation even worse.

This highlights the necessity of finding a solution to end the conflict in Yemen and initiate the rebuilding process. In this regard, the role of peacemaking and the inclusion of women become critically important.

It has been proven that women's participation in peacemaking enhances stability and national reconciliation, leading to more sustainable and inclusive outcomes. By involving women in the peace process, their presence is strengthened, emphasizing the importance of their opinions and expertise in achieving sustainable peace. Women are essential members of society with the ability to bring balance and oversee political and social processes. Through their participation in peacemaking, comprehensive and sustainable solutions can be provided to meet everyone's needs and promote justice and reconciliation.

Furthermore, the role of women in peacemaking enhances fair representation and active participation in decision-making. Therefore, platforms and opportunities should be provided for women to express their opinions, guide their voices, and play an active role in shaping Yemen's future policies and plans. Achieving peace in Yemen should be closely linked to the participation of women and the continuous promotion of their role in rebuilding the country, ensuring equality and inclusivity in dialogues and decision-making processes.

Based on this, the Information and Opinion Survey Unit at "Yemen



Information Center" conducted a survey on the role Yemeni women may play in the peacebuilding process in Yemen, resulting in a range of answers and opinions.

It was conducted on a sample of 196 individuals, with a participation rate of 61.3% females and 38.7% males. The age groups of the survey participants varied, with 45.2% of them belonging to the youth category, aged between 26-35 years. 32.3% of the participants were in the age range of 36-45 years, while 12.9% were between 18-25 years old. Participants aged between 46-65 years accounted for 9.7% of the total.

Regarding educational qualifications, the majority of participants held a bachelor's degree, comprising 58.1% of the respondents. Those with higher degrees accounted for 29%, and 12.9% were university students.

As for the geographic distribution of the survey, the sample was drawn from ten governorates, namely: Aden 22.6%; Sana'a 19.4%; Hadramout 19.4%; Taiz 9.7%; Dhamar 6.5%; Abyan 6.5%; Hodeidah 6.5%; and Marib, Al-Mahrah, and Lahj each representing 3.2%.

### Main Results

While 6.5% of the survey participants were unsure whether Yemeni women are capable of achieving change and bringing peace to Yemen, 93.5% of the participants stated that Yemeni women are indeed capable of doing so. This belief is based on their capabilities and capacities, and it can be achieved through the following\*:

Promoting effective dialogue and understanding between conflicting parties (74.2%).

Spreading a culture of peace and achieving tolerance (74%).

Providing psychological and social support to victims (67.7%).

Promoting women's rights and achieving equality (58.1%).

Facilitating the democratic process (54.8%).

All participants (100%) agree that the presence of Yemeni women in political negotiations and peacebuilding operations in Yemen should be enhanced.

However, 93% of the surveyed sample believes that there are many obstacles hindering the effective contribution of Yemeni women in peacemaking in Yemen. These obstacles are identified as follows\* :

Cultural and societal challenges and traditions (90.3%).

Gender-based violence (64.5%). Security threats (54.8%).

Legal and legislative restrictions (48.4%).

Lack of employment and educational opportunities (45.2%).

Meanwhile, 7% of the participants believe that Yemeni women do not face any obstacles to their effective contribution to peacebuilding in Yemen.

In conclusion, the survey participants agree that the presence of women in all fields is important for achieving social equality and enabling sustainable development. Specifically, the inclusion of women in peacemaking processes will significantly contribute to bringing peace to Yemen.

\* Multiple-choice question, with each answer being analyzed as a separate sample, with a percentage of 100%