

Women in Security and Defense in Yemen

Yemeni Women: A Vital Safety Valve in Security and Defense Amidst Conflict

Strength and Challenges: The Role of Yemeni Women in Security and Defense

WDP

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WDP Interviews
Yemen's
Highest-Ranking
Female Security
Officer



Yemeni Women Prove Themselves in Security and Defense Positions

Boosting Women's Presence in Security & Defense: The Vital Role of Civil Society Organizations

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Psychological and Physiological Capabilities of Women Working in Security and Defense

Yemeni Women's Capabilities Qualify Them for Security and Military Work

Najwa Ali (pseudonym) tried to convince her family to join the military field after she graduated from high school. However, one of her brothers refused completely and threatened to lock her up in the house and prevent her from going out if she insisted to be a policewoman.

By: Yasmine Abdulhafeez
Women in Development and Peace

Najwa said, "since my childhood I have had a passion to be a policewoman to serve my country and be known to all. I wished to support Yemeni women, but the social customs and traditions and the patriarchal society restricted women from working in this field. Women are seen as weak and unqualified to work in security and military institutions."

Najwa lives in the city of Hodeidah. Her conservative family believes that girls and women should only work in the fields of education and medicine, and that they are best fit for household chores, food preparation, child rearing, etc. Due to her lack of family support, all of Najwa's attempts to join the military and security field failed.

Jassim Abdullah Awad Bousbaa, a professor of psychology, confirmed that Yemeni women have capabilities that enable them to make many changes in community life. They have always played an important role in the

service and advancement of their country and helped support men in various situations.

He added, "Yemeni women have played vital roles in the various stages that our Yemeni society went through, whether in the armed struggle or in the construction and reconstruction of Yemen. Moreover, they have capabilities that help them engage with distinguished competence in the field of security and defense or in any other field."

He emphasized, "despite the marginalization and exclusion of Yemeni women from participating in political action, they could

actively and significantly participate in establishing security and peace in our society. Despite the worsening conditions resulting from the ongoing conflict, Yemeni women's political presence has increased, especially since their participation and success in the National Dialogue Conference."

Women's Psychological and Physiological Formation

Society's attitude towards women's work in the police varies between support and opposition. Those who reject women's work believe that a woman's psychological and physical formation does not allow her to join the security and police fields. As for the supporters, they believe that the security handling of women necessitates the presence of female police or officers.

Some psychologists spoke about the psy-

chological and physiological formation of women working in security and defense. Psychologist Sakher Taha said, "women are characterized by many physiological and psychological capabilities in the field of defense, most notably the intensity of attention and observation which enhances the level of preparedness and alertness."

As for the other physiological aspects, Taha believes that women can acquire them through training and rehabilitation which help strengthen women's capabilities in the field of security and defense. Throughout history, many Arab women could achieve great success in the field of security and defense, such as Khawla Bint Al-Azwar.

Taha emphasized that women's capabilities in the security field are enhanced through security and defense education as well as rigorous training pro-

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grams for defense readiness and other critical military skills.

Taha added, "self-confidence and self-esteem of women who wish to join this field of security and defense must be enhanced. Furthermore, the social perception of women's work in this field should be corrected. Furthermore, support and assistance should be provided to women to achieve great success."

Social Upbringing

Abdulkarim Ghanem, a researcher in political sociology, said that Yemeni women's capabilities in security and defense are no less than those of other women in other societies. The cultural formation of any society, including the major agents of socialization such as family and school, is primarily responsible for preparing the individual for specific jobs and not others.

Ghanem added, "until now, in our dominant Yemeni society, security and defense is still viewed as a male-only job. The textbook, for example, does not present women and girls as soldiers in the army or as officers in the security apparatus. Stereotypes always show girls and women mainly as housewives, which frustrates those who are looking to break this traditional division of labor."

Ghanem continued, "this situation is not an inevitable choice that is difficult to overcome. The rapid changes taking place in the



Jassim Abdullah Awad Bousbaa

world will positively impact society and its culture regarding women's work in security and defense. For example, families no longer oppose the idea of having female fighter pilots. The female pilot has gained a high status and a high level of financial income.»

Ghanem believes that the prevailing culture is falling behind, day after day, in keeping pace with society's needs for women in the security sector. Families nowadays allow their daughters to work in any formal



Sakher Taha

sector to help secure their livelihood, especially since the cost of educating girls is not less than that of boys.

Ghanem stressed that women need psychological and social support that enhances their self-confidence. This can be achieved either by changing stereotypes having to do with gender-based division of labor, or by having political will that leads to decisions and legislation that contribute to promoting equality between men and women.



Abdulkarim Ghanem

Ghanem said, "women are recommended to acquire means of power which can improve their competition opportunities with men and reinforce family and society's trust in women working in security and defense, including cognitive power through education and rehabilitation, physical strength through exercise, and moral strength."

Ghanem indicated that parents and society contribute to girls gaining confidence in their abilities to join the security and defense field.

This is through ensuring gender equality in upbringing, sparing girls from gender-based discrimination, and instilling self-control in them.

He concluded, "it is important not to limit the responsibility of preserving honor and reputation to women without men and girls without boys. Proper education is the safe gateway to the future, with its non-traditional jobs and tasks for women and girls."

Qualifications and Experience

The academic Bousbeia confirmed that Yemeni women possess academic, practical, and professional qualifications and have obtained many training, qualification, and empowerment opportunities in several fields, whether development, service, security, or others. As a result, they could engage in any field of work, including security and defense, and compete, succeed, and prove themselves.

He added, "there are many inspiring women who have been able to engage in work and achieve great success, especially in the fields of security and defense, judiciary, and human rights and freedoms. This indicates the importance of their participation in building society and maintaining its security and safety."

The patriarchal society's view of women's work in security institutions must be changed, as their presence in this field is extremely important for women and society as a whole.

Colonel Nadia Al-Maifai: Tireless Commitment to Safeguarding Battered Women in Society

In their quest for safety, many women in Yemen face various forms of violence. Seeking a secure platform to file complaints and ensure necessary legal action, Yemeni women have fervently advocated for a safe space. Colonel Nadia Al-Maifai stands out as a beacon of support for women, leaving an indelible mark on the realm of female empowerment within Yemen's security and police sectors.

By: Alia Mohammed
Women in Development and Peace

Born in Al-Houta District in Lahj Governorate in 1968, Colonel Nadia completed her elementary education at Al-Majali School and her secondary education at 13th of August School. Subsequently, she received a scholarship to study legal sciences in Kishinev in the Soviet Union for a year.

Upon returning to Yemen, Colonel Nadia ventured into various professions before her inclination towards the legal field led her to resign from the Central Agency for Price Review. She joined the security service in Lahj Governorate, followed by her enrollment at the Police College. Graduating as a Second Lieutenant, she ser-



ved as an investigation officer in the security of Aden International Airport for four years. Later, she assumed the role of director at the airport security director's office for an impressive tenure of 17 years. Following this, she took up the position of Director of the Office of the Director of Oversight and Inspection at the Free Zone Security in Aden.

Colonel Nadia's commitment to feminism extends to her involvement in various organizations, including the

Women's Consensus for Security and Peace, Women's Solidarity, the Coordinating Committee of the Network of Friends of International Humanitarian Law, and the National Accord Women's Movement. Her dedication and achievements earned her a place in the Encyclopedia of Leading Arab Female Figures, acknowledging her impactful contributions.

With over three decades of experience in the security and police sector, Colonel Nadia attributes her strength, sound judgment, punctuality, and patience to her profession. Despite encountering numerous challenges throughout her journey, she emerged stronger and more resilient, continually striving for balance.

Colonel Nadia's remarkable experience within the Women's Police and the Family Protection Department demonstrates her unwavering dedication to safeguarding battered women, in alignment with the Yemeni Women's Union. Beyond her local impact, Colonel Nadia actively engages in training courses, security workshops, and collaborative initiatives. She has participated in programs such as the Forgotten Women program organized by the SOS Foundation, acted as a facilitator for the International Humanitarian Law Network in partnership

with the BASMA Association and Geneva Call organization, and served as a decision-maker for empowering Radfan women within the Council of Local Authorities.

She also took on the role of facilitator for the International Humanitarian Law Network. She played a vital role in a workshop organized by BASMA Association, with the generous support of Geneva Call.

In 2020, Colonel Nadia was selected as one of 30 policewomen hailing from Abyan, Aden, and Lahj Governorates to undergo a comprehensive 10-day training conducted by the UNDP Rule of Law team. The training encompassed crucial topics such as gender-based violence, child protection, dealing with minors, human rights, investigations, and peacebuilding initiatives.

Colonel Nadia highlighted her extensive experience in various external posts, including attending coordination meetings of the Women's Consensus for Security and Peace and the Peace Mediators Conference in Jordan. She also completed a security reform training course in Jordan and conducted a gender analysis project with Oxfam. As a consultant and project coordinator, Colonel Nadia worked in Aden and Taiz and participated

in workshops sponsored by Operation 1325 and Geneva Call in Egypt and Jordan, respectively.

In her latest position as Assistant Director of Khor Maksar Police Station, Colonel Nadia initially felt hesitant due to her rank and experience, but accepted the role to support women and vulnerable children in society.

She praised the support of Khor Maksar Police Commander, Jalal Al-Subhi, in carrying out legal procedures related to women and gender issues. Colonel Nadia emphasized the importance of women's participation in the security and defense sector, citing their role in protecting themselves and their families.

She highlighted their presence in police stations as a support for women who may hesitate to report abuse and violence. Colonel Nadia Al-Maifai expressed her deep concern about witnessing the abuse of women and children, which she found extremely distressing. Despite the difficulty of the situations, she made persistent efforts to provide assistance and support to those affected.

Furthermore, Colonel Nadia strongly believes that Yemeni women have been subjected to systematic exclusion and marginalization. Despite the existence of references such as the National Dialogue's Outcomes and UN resolutions advocating for a minimum of 30% participation of women, these measures have unfortunately been neglected. In light of these challenges, Colonel Nadia stressed the need for pressure and advocacy to ensure women's participation in decision-making processes. She emphasized the importance of upholding women's rights, rejecting any forms of discrimination, and working towards preventing violence against women. She called for active involvement from party members and human rights activists in both internal and external forums to address these pressing issues.

Colonel Nadia sees Resolution 1325 as a strong support for women's participation and empowerment in decision-making. She hopes for an end to the war and the establishment of peace, security and stability for Yemeni society.



Deteriorating Economy Burdens Women in the Security and Defense Sector

By: Alia Mohammed
 Women in Development and Peace

The Yemeni economy has experienced a decline in growth and a significant increase in unemployment rates, which has had a profound impact on the economic situation of numerous women working in various sectors. Reports indicate that women in Yemen receive low wages and often bear the primary responsibility of supporting their families due to many job losses resulting from the country's conflict. Women working in the security and defense sector in Yemen face additional economic challenges due to the ongoing conflict, displacement, and overall economic instability.

According to Walid al-Athuri, a researcher in security sciences, the economic conditions have had a considerable impact on women working in the security sector. He emphasizes that women were not active participants in the conflict and have not been involved in the decision-making process for peace. However, they are burdened with the consequences of not receiving their salaries and working in an unsafe environment. Al-Athuri further adds that Yemeni women working in security and defense experience adverse economic conditions due to irregular payment of salaries and the lack of a secure working environment.

Low Wages

Policewoman (N.A.L.) highlighted the challenges faced by women in the security and defense sector and expressed concerns about their financial situation. Since 2014, women in the sector have been receiving small salaries, estimated at sixty thousand Yemeni riyals (less than \$50), with approximately two thousand riyals deducted for pensions under orders from the Security Department. Despite working seven hours a day, women in the sector do not receive incentives or rewards. Pro-



motions to the rank of corporal bring no significant privileges other than the title itself. Policewomen who wish to pursue further education and seek assistance from their employers often find their requests rejected.

Furthermore, it was noted that many women in the security sector refrain from discussing their situation due to fear of accountability and punishment. Policewoman N.A.L. called upon the authorities to recognize the importance of improving the income of women in the sector and to consider them as a vital segment in society responsible for maintaining state security.

Regarding wage disparities, Policewoman N.A.L. highlighted the differences between men and women in the same sector. These disparities are influenced by connections, nepotism, and the reliance

on personal relationships when determining wages. Unqualified individuals, both men and women, with influential connections tend to receive higher pay than others. Biases affecting hiring, promotion, and salary decisions were also mentioned, with some individuals receiving preferential treatment and greater opportunities for advancement. Despite holding university degrees, women in the sector still receive wages comparable to those of lower-ranking positions. Their continuous calls for higher salaries have not been met with any indications of change.

Thikra Abu Talib, Secretary-General of the Women's Development Association (Shabwa), emphasized the need to provide job opportunities for women in the security and defense sector, increase their representation in leadership and decision-making

positions, and work towards achieving income equality. She expressed concern over the extremely low wages for Yemeni women in the security sector compared to their counterparts in third world countries, citing a lack of protection for women's rights and public welfare.

Moreover, the absence of laws and ineffective implementation of regulations further marginalized the role of women in a patriarchal society. Limited job opportunities in certain sectors force women to accept lower wages.

Arwa Fadhil, a human rights activist, highlighted the continued dominance of customs and traditions, negatively impacting women in the security sector. She noted that wages in security sectors often rely on connections, nepotism and tribal and sectarian affiliations, resulting in higher wages for men. Many women voice concerns about low wages and are even compelled to seek additional work to improve their income.

Solutions & Treatments

According to human rights activist Arwa Fadhil, the economic empowerment of women in the security field can be enhanced by implementing specific programs. These programs should focus on supporting women in increasing their income levels, improving their access to resources, and providing support programs for working mothers. Additionally, it is important to take measures to achieve gender equality in the security and defense sector and ensure a policy of non-discrimination in wages.

Similarly, Thikra Abu Talib highlighted several steps that can be taken to improve the status of women working in the security sector. This includes encouraging women's participation in decision-making processes by providing equal job opportunities, ensuring their access to education and training, and raising awareness about the importance of women's economic empowerment through media and educational campaigns.

Successful and Strong Women Are the Ones Able to Overcome Obstacles

Women's Police: Unexpected Success Stories

By: Hanan Hussein
 Women in Development and Peace

Working in the police requires courage, commitment, and dedication to serving people and maintaining order and security. Policewoman Aida Hammoud Abdullah is an inspiring role model for others for her willpower, dedication, and excellence in this field. She has endured and overcome many obstacles. She was courageous and persistent in the face of challenges. In 2000, a special security unit for women, represented by Women's Security, was established in the Ministry of Interior. Women's presence in the Ministry of Defense was in early 2009. As there was great encouragement and welcome, there was rejection and condemnation as well. However, a sense of patriotic duty motivated them to continue striving to defend their country.

We will shed light on the success story of the policewoman Aida Hammoud. We will learn about the challenges and difficulties she faced and how she was able to overcome them and achieve great success. We will also touch on the lessons and principles that she drew from her own real-life personal experience so that others can benefit from them in achieving their professional goals.

Her Beginning

In 2009, the number of women enrolled in the Ministry of Defense was 50, but then decreased to 20. These 20 policewomen were trained and rehabilitated and then distributed to the various security units.

Aida Hammoud Abdullah, first sergeant in the Military Police in the Ministry of Defense, was assigned as a security official in one of the tourist cities in Sana'a. When Aida finished high school in the city of Taiz, she moved to her sister's house in Sana'a where she joined a summer center. As the days went by, one of the officers came to the center looking for girls to join the military police. It was something new and unexpected at that time.

She added that the officer left a number to contact him in case one of the girls wanted to join and fill out the registration form. Aida contacted him, and the next day she went with her nephew to the Ministry of Interior. There, she discovered that they want female policewomen for the Ministry of Defense, not the Ministry of Interior. She then went to the Ministry of Defense and filled out the registration form. Days passed and no one contacted her. As a result, Aida felt despair and started thinking of returning back to her village in Taiz.



On the night of her travel, they contacted her that a bus would pass in the morning to take her to the police academy. This is how she began her journey in the Ministry of Defense.

Fields of Study

Aida indicated that among the courses at the Ministry of Defense were the English language and computer science. At that time, they were to be employed in the administrative field. They were taught and trained by policewomen from the Ministry of Interior. They were taught both theoretical and practical aspects. They were taken to safe areas free of population and trained in the use of weapons by female instructors specialized in shooting.

Family Opinion

Aida's family were divided between supporters and opponents. Her father had great confidence in her. He gave her full freedom in making her decision and provided her with full support. Her brothers strongly objected, because, according to them, this field requires women to deal and mix with men freely, even though all female employees affiliated with the Ministry of Defense had offices of their own at the time. One of her relatives went to the police office and then told her family that their daughter works among men and lives in a very open environment. Her mother heard his words and his unfounded assumptions, and she became fearful of his account. Negative thoughts about her daughter's experience plagued her mind. How could she not, when he portrayed that she was living among monsters? The mother

insisted that Aida must stop working in this field in order to preserve her reputation and return with her to the village. Aida had no choice but to have her director meet her mother to explain to her the nature of the work as it really was. Aida said, "I took my mother to the director of investigations at the time, as we used to see him as our father for his support and assistance. He sat with her and reassured her that all policewomen were in a safe place, and that their work is a patriotic duty. He also told her that women are men's partners in all fields, and that women's presence in the security field is highly crucial. So, my mother felt relieved and reconsidered her decision."

Aida pointed out that she still faces many difficulties until now. The interruption of salaries made her look for other side jobs, such as a wedding security guard. In addition, returning home late from her side job caused her a lot of problems with her brother. Her brother told her to go to work with a mahram (a close male relative such as her brother). Aida objected vehemently, because her work does not allow this and because she is herself a security guard. She said that she would stop working, on the condition that her older brother give her a monthly sum of money.

Women's Presence and Society's View

Regarding society's view of her, Aida said that she received a lot of support and encouragement and also faced rejection, especially from male colleagues. At the beginning of her work in the Ministry of Defense, her colleagues said, "they brought us a woman officer!" They disparaged her and belittled her abilities. However, she faced them

with confidence, did her utmost to serve her country, and proved her competence. She could win everyone's respect. She believes that women, in any field of life, must prove themselves and gain everyone's respect. A woman's role is no less important than that of a man's, if not more important.

There are many successful military operations carried out by military police women, which proves to all that their participation in this field is highly crucial and effective. For example, there are some wanted men who disguise themselves in women's clothing, which make it difficult for policemen to catch them. Yemeni society has conservative customs and traditions that forbid men from inspecting women. Policewomen play a key role in sudden inspection raids on homes full of females. They enter before policemen. Likewise, policewomen are important for discovering wanted women if they cover their faces with veils. In view of the above, women could prove the importance of their role in the military and police. As a result, society began to accept and encourage their daughters to join the security field.

Aida said that she and her colleagues are currently working in administrative work and as security guards in a number of governmental places such as the Ministry of Defense and Al-Ardhi Hospital.

Final Message

Aida said that great attention should be paid to educating members of society about the importance of women's participation and presence in all fields, and that their role is not limited to caring for their husbands and children. Serving their country as military police women does not diminish their status as members of society. Their role is considered supportive and complementary of the men's role in the military police. She also addressed all her colleagues and those who wish to join the field of security and defense to be confident in themselves, ignore all discouraging words and criticism, not to seek to please everyone, as this is an unattainable goal, and never give up their ambitions to establish security and safety and protect Yemen and its people.

Aida is an inspiring role model for her willpower, dedication, and great success. Her story motivates other girls and women to strongly adhere to their dreams to join the security and defense field.

Aida is a living example of a successful, strong woman who is able to overcome obstacles. She has proved to everyone that hard work and persistence can lead to great success. She has inspired us to continue pursuing our dreams and achieving our professional goals.

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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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Society's View of Women Working in a and Defense ..

A General Societal Conviction of the Importance of Women's Presence in Security and Military Fields

Yemeni society is divided between supporters, opponents, and neutrals to women's work in security and defense. These views are influenced by several factors, including education, culture, religion, customs & traditions, and the economic and social conditions.

By: Hanan Hussein
Yemen in Development and Peace

The Importance of Women's Presence

Lieutenant Mona Al-Maamari said that society's view of women in security and defense is one of intolerance. Initially, the idea was not accepted by society, but after women worked in the security field, proved their competence, and solved many problems within the community, society's view began to shift towards them.

She added, "women's presence in the security field is significant in investigations, criminal cases, family and child court cases, and inspection in some sea, air and land ports."

Um Hussein Fouad, a 44-year-old citizen, said that women working in security and defense as policewomen are brave women with strength and determination to help their country and society. She said that she hoped that her daughter would join the police force in the future, because it is a field to be proud of.

Hanan Al-Hassani, a photographer, said, "the role of policewomen has become an urgent necessity. Policewomen are no less important than policemen in implementing security measures in land and air ports and prisons, and in combating violent crimes against girls and women."

Great Success

Radhya Abdullah Rawah believes that women's presence is an urgent necessity. The morally, psychologically and religiously qualified policewomen are an influential and positive factor in providing services to women in any security, service, or rehabilitation field, including correctional facilities, civil status authority, passports authority, or rehabilitation centers for those who have committed any felony or crime. As long as society is made up of men and women, the two parties need each other's services.

In her opinion, Rawah said that society's view of women working in the field of security and defense is positive. Our Yemeni society is well aware that women need women in many fields of service.

She added, "it is very comfortable for me to deal with women in any field of service. A working woman must thus be aware of the nature of her work, her role, and how she deals with those around her."

Yemeni journalist Abha Aqeel said, "Yemeni women have proved their success in every field they enter, whether old or new. They are fighters by nature, so I am not surprised at their success in the security field. Regardless of the crises sweeping the country and overshadowing any apparent success,



Yemeni Women Have Proved Their Success in Every Field they Enter



Afaf Al-Haimi

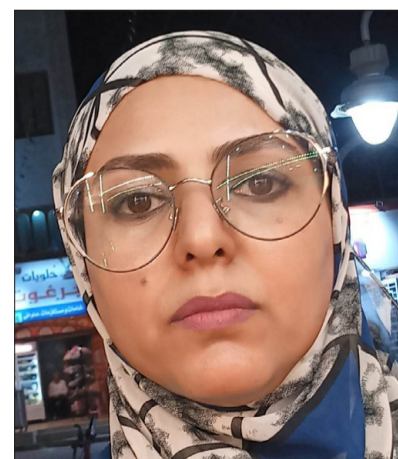
women have excelled both administratively and in the field."

Qamar Badr, a societal activist, added, "I was against women working in some jobs, including security jobs. Such jobs strip women of their femininity. However, I had the opportunity to visit the women police's headquarters in Mualla in Aden Governorate. I discovered how important the presence of policewomen is. Unlike men, women are wiser and are

more skilled at dealing with others and at justly solving disputes through reconciliation."

She added, "I visited a policewoman at her home. She was a housewife in the truest sense of the word. She cooked, fed her children, and prepared herself amazingly for attending a women's gathering. I was amazed that she balanced between her job as a policewoman with her responsibility as a housewife. Her personality was different from what she was in the security department in the morning. She was firm in making crucial decisions and solving problems. This made me change my mind about women's work and femininity."

Qamar praised women's emotional intelligence in general. The female models she met were able to make decisions wisely and in a balanced manner between rationality and emotionality. She said, "On that day, we handled a sibling dispute (between a brother and sister) over family inheritance. The policeman just heard them, but the policewoman listened to them and told each of them the mistake they had made and advised them to resolve the dispute amicably. Being a woman like her, the policewoman could



Abha Aqeel

gain the trust of the sister, and this is what the policeman could not do. We do not underestimate anyone's role here. Rather, it is to clarify that the role of women is complementary to the role of men in the security field."

Societal Difficulties

Policewoman Belqis Al-Hawsali said, "some people look at her positively and encourage her, as they recognize her role

at maintaining security, safety and stability, and in reducing crimes and combating and arresting female criminals. Crime is not only associated with males, but also with females. Here lies the importance of women's work in security."

There are also those who look at her work in the security field in a negative light due to the customs and traditions known to the Arabs in general and to Yemenis in particular. They know well the importance of the role of women in establishing security, safety, and stability in offices, hospitals, companies, and airports, and in organizing women's marches, religious events, and celebrations, such as the Prophet's birthday and national and community events among others, and in participating in special missions, including incursions and raids.

Afaf Al-Haimi, a professor of sociology at Sana'a University, confirmed that the negative view of policewomen was closely linked to the female wardens in what was known in the past as Beit Al-Zouqbi prison in Sana'a, Al-Midan neighborhood. The presence of female wardens was an imperative necessity at that time to guard female prisoners and maintain order in the prison. Female wardens have thus been associated with prisons and everything that happens inside them. This has made society look at them with negativity and in denial.

She added, "society does not see any benefit in women's work in general, let alone their work in the military field. They do not realize the importance of women in maintaining security and enforcing the law in the different institutions, including civil society institutions. Al-Haimi added, "all segments of society must be made aware of the importance of women's work and their role in society as mothers, workers, policewomen, journalists, etc.

Male-Only Roles

Rawan Al-Hamdani, a 25-year-old employee, views that not all jobs may be suitable for women. According to her, security and protection is a man's job, because women are not suited physically and mentally for hard labor. However, Issa Nasser, a 44-year-old citizen, agrees with her to some extent. For him, women could be policewomen and police officers. However, there are other strenuous and arduous security roles that do not suit women's nature.

Abdullah Al-Hajj, a 55-year-old citizen, said that women are not suited to work in security and defense. Women's work in homes is the best thing they can do. Protection and security are men's responsibilities, as they are physically and psychologically best fit for such roles.

Abdullah Jawad, a freelance worker, commented, "I cannot allow my daughter, sister, or any of my female relatives to enter this field. I will not allow them to go out for long hours, let alone days, in remote or unknown places, in addition to not knowing with whom they are going and what kind of work they are going to do. There is a tribal system ruling us."

I do have sisters who work in administrative positions. Yet, their workplace and working hours are known.

Yemeni society is taking steps towards strengthening the role of women in the security field. Recent years have witnessed an increase in the number of women working in the armed and security forces. This indicates a gradual change in the Yemeni society's view of the role of women in security and defense.

Yemeni Women: A Vital Safety Valve in Security and Defense Amidst Conflict

Women's Involvement in the Army and National Security is Limited to Checkpoint Inspections and Security Measures

Yemeni women are one of the most affected groups by the ongoing conflict in Yemen. Their participation in many fields, including security and defense, has been hampered by the difficult circumstances that Yemen has been experiencing since the eruption of the conflict. Violence and threats against Yemenis, including women, have increased and are on the rise, making it very difficult for them to obtain safe and stable job opportunities. Before the conflict, the presence of Yemeni women in security and defense positions was very limited. Despite the ongoing conflict, they are striving hard to contribute to the security and defense of their country.

By: Hebah Mohammed
 Women in Development and Peace

Evaluation of Women's Presence in the Security and Defense Sectors During Conflict

Yemeni women face many challenges caused by misguided societal customs and traditions. These challenges have been further exacerbated by the conflict events in Yemen. Yemeni women have entered a narrow circle in which social discrimination widens and the difficulties facing them increase, limiting their roles to certain jobs and excluding them from serving in military sites and security checkpoints, especially during the conflict. Joining the army is still restricted to men in Yemen. According to a study conducted by Yemen Polling Center in 2014 on women's role in Yemen's police force, Yemen's police forces currently contain 168,996 men and 2,868 women (or 1.7%).

Regarding the extent of Yemeni women's presence in security and defense positions, journalist Majed Al-Daari said, "Yemeni women have historically proven that they are capable of assuming leadership positions in the army and security. Before the ongoing conflict, there were women who played an active role and were more present than today, whether as policewomen or as participants in military and security brigades. Since the outbreak of the conflict, their roles and numbers have declined. They themselves have sided with one of the parties to the conflict. Currently, the role of women in the army and national security is almost negligible and is restricted to inspection and security measures at military checkpoints, in addition to carrying out some security missions related to going on home raids to search and inspect wanted women in certain cases."

Slow Progress in Involving Women in Security and Defense Positions

Yemeni women face great challenges in joining the security and defense sectors due to gender, cultural, and social discrimination. However, some reports indicate that there is

slow progress in Yemeni society with regard to the employment of women in security and defense positions. For example, in 2010 the Yemeni government issued a decision to increase the number of women in the police, army, and civil defense and strengthen the role of women in criminal security, borders security, and combating terrorism. However, these decisions did not receive full support from the local and international authorities. Rather, the situation has turned upside down, and the employment of women in all sectors has stopped due to the events of the conflict that has been going on for years.

Ahlam Nasser, an academic and specialist in women's issues, believes that the involvement of women in security and defense is an inevitable and obligatory necessity, and must be purposeful. Their involvement must lead to agreements, reforms, and successes, create stability in societies, and enhance communication between the security and defense institution and society regarding protecting the country and developing and expanding the capabilities and skills of women participating in this path, and empowering their role in security.

On enhancing women's participation in defending their country and preserving its security, Ahlam added, "women's participation in security and defense is a fundamental human right. Women's participation in this field should be viewed from a participatory perspective. Women wishing to join this field should be supported and assisted through edu-

cation, training, and rehabilitation. They do possess tremendous capabilities that enable them to be on the front lines for homeland security. Yemeni women have a stronger sense of patriotism than men, and are fervent and sincere in their loyalty and proud of their nationality."

The Disappearance of Women's Presence in the Security and Defense Sectors

A female police officer, who declined to be named, said, "I joined the Women's Police when the government announced that women would be welcomed to join the Women's Police, and I graduated at the end of 2003. The encouragement and support of my family members gave me a strong motivation to face the great societal rejection of women working in security at the time. Many girls and women were subjected to family and societal harassment, as women's work in security and defense is considered a shame and a major offense that contradicts their customs and traditions."

She went further, "before the conflict, Yemeni society had gradually begun to accept women's presence in the security and military sectors. Many women appeared in police stations, security departments, and in the military army. However, since the conflict broke out in Yemen, the women's police has been neglected, and some policewomen and female police officers have completely suspended their security activities. Furthermore, no one wants to join the security sectors any more. Yemeni women once more returned

to square one after they made great strides to impose their presence in security and defense."

Different Opinions

Yemeni society is divided in opinion regarding women's work in the security and military, especially in the current situation in Yemen where conflicts and insecurity continue to persist. For Yemeni women to restore their rights and take part in state institutions, journalist Majed Al-Daari maintained that the ongoing conflict must stop and peace must prevail. With the cessation of conflict, social and economic conditions as a whole will improve. This would enable Yemeni women to participate more in the fields of security and defense. He also stressed the need to provide Yemeni women with more education, training, and rehabilitation, in order to acquire the necessary prerequisite skills to work in different security and defense positions.

Al-Daari asserted that women cannot assume leadership positions in light of the conflict, nor can they actively participate in enhancing aspects of security and national defense unless there is a real government strategy to achieve a quota for women in the army and security. Furthermore, to encourage others to join the army and security ranks according to strict controls that take into account our societal values, the door to security and military recruitment should be opened and the former military women shall be given all the rights and promotions they deserve.

Ishraq Al-Sabri, chairwoman of the Sky Foundation for Development, confirmed that in light of the ongoing conflict, Yemeni women are suffering greatly from violations of their most basic rights. They are exposed to sexual violence, murder, and displacement, and are denied leadership positions in security institutions such as the police and military. They are also experiencing social marginalization and conflict conditions. There must be joint cooperation from local and international organizations and stakeholders to qualify and train women, address the effects of conflict, achieve equal opportunities for both sexes, and involve women in all sectors, including the security and defense sector.

On the reasons for the lack of a real and effective presence of Yemeni women in security and defense positions, Ahlam said, "Yemeni women are treated in terms of customs and traditions, not in terms of religion and law. When Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, embarked on a battle, he took with him one of his wives, such as Aishah bint Abi Bakr Al-Siddiq and Umm Amarah Nusayba bint Ka'ab. To those who object, using the argument of the differences between that time and today, I say that such differences only exist in the minds that do not desire the presence of women, in the ethics that do not appreciate their status, and in the souls that belittle them. Like everyone else in society, Yemeni women today are in dire need to defend themselves and their country, and have the right to join the security and military field."



Demands for a Legal Amendment that Guarantees Women's Participation in Security and Defense

In recent years, Yemen has witnessed major political, social and economic transformations. They have affected public life in general and directly impacted women's participation in various fields, including security and defense. Several laws and legislations were issued to enhance the role of women in security and defense, including the law for army recruitment and military service among others. Despite the existence of these laws that protect women's rights, women still face many challenges and difficulties in reaching security and defense positions.

By: Hebah Mohammed
 Women in Development and Peace

The Legal System Is a Stumbling Block

Yemeni women have equal rights with men, as the Yemeni constitution guarantees women equal participation rights in all fields, including security and defense.

Legal advisor Abdulrahman Al-Zabibi said, "the first batch of 200 policewomen in Yemen graduated in 2002, and the second batch of 370 policewomen graduated in 2005. In 2010, the first batch of women police officers graduated. However, the national legal system stands as a stumbling block that impedes Yemeni women's work in the security field. Women's police in Yemen still lacks legal legitimacy, as the law did not explicitly provide for the establishment of women's police with legal duties, powers and rights.

He confirmed that the only law regulating police work in Yemen is Law No. 15 of 2002. Article 158 of Law 2000 stipulates that women's work in the police force is restricted to women's affairs, and that assigning women any military missions is forbidden.

Al-Zabaibi explained, "this legal provision hinders the role of women in the police, in addition to the absence of a clear-cut law for the establishment of women's police. Human rights activist Qasim Al-Jaafari believes, "the current legal system is not up to expectations and does not meet the urgent and hoped-for need for women's participation in secu-

urity and defense. The current legal system must be amended to ensure women's participation in security and defense without discrimination or disparagement of their abilities, taking into account the nature of women and their innate characteristics.

Lawyer Waleed Al-Thawri said that Yemeni laws did not do justice to women clearly and explicitly. Yemeni laws are in line with the unfair customs and traditions of society.

Lawyer Ilham Senan said that the Yemeni laws and regulations related to the equality of women's rights with men in all jobs have remained ink on paper. They had no role in enhancing the presence of women in military and security positions on the ground. These laws were governed by men's view of women, which goes in line with social customs and traditions. This has caused women to remain marginalized in society and dependent on men.

Society allows women to work in keeping order in women's prisons or at women's checkpoints, when necessary, completely far from leadership positions.

Laws Lack Privacy

Al-Zabaibi pointed out that the Po-

*The First 200
 Policewomen in Yemen
 Graduated in 2002, and the First
 Women Policewomen with the
 Rank of Officer Graduated in
 2010*



lice Authority Law applies in all its articles to both males and females. He believes that despite the legislative obstacles that impede women's presence in security and defense, reality has surpassed those obstacles and demonstrated the importance of the female police force, its necessity, and the need for its activation and development.

He added, "in fact, women have overcome these challenges, and have proved the importance of women police especially in the absence of the House of Representatives which is concerned with issuing a law regulating the work of the women's police. Empowering Yemeni women in the field of security requires presidential and cabinet decrees as well as a female undersecretary of the interior minister for the women's police."

Lawyer Al-Thawri added, "it is necessary to issue laws relating to women's right to hold public office in civil, military and security institutions."

Human rights activist Qasim Al-Jaafari believes that the Yemeni legislative system in force did not explicitly refer to the right of women

to join the security and military institutions, but only set a number of requirements for those wishing to join these two institutions. However, the laws for compulsory army recruitment and military service explicitly indicate in the third article that this duty is restricted to males without females.

He added, "in light of the urgent need to enhance women's participation in defense and security, the Women's Police Department was opened in the Police Academy in the capital, Sana'a, from which many policewomen graduated. They were employed in state police and security institutions implementing specific, unchanging tasks. As for work in the military institution, it is still reserved for men. For women to work in the military, laws must be amended, policies that encourage women's active participation in the military must be developed, and women's social and economic conditions must be improved to be able to join the military."

Societal Changes

Al-Zabibi finished, "society's view of women's work must also be changed, awareness of the importance of women's work in all sectors must be raised among Yemeni society, and women must be supported financially. In addition, policewomen's roles should not be limited

to inspecting women at checkpoints and facilities."

Lawyer Al-Thawri claimed that the social, economic and cultural challenges prevent women from obtaining jobs in the security and military institutions. Yemeni traditions have hindered women from playing roles other than those assigned to them by society, and prevented the implementation of laws guaranteed by the Yemeni Constitution, which ensure women the same employment rights and opportunities as men without any discrimination.

He stressed that Yemeni women can play a vital role in building a better future for Yemen, and achieving security and stability in conflict areas. To improve the status of Yemeni women in security and defense, the government must work to provide them with training, education, and financial and technical support. Women should also be encouraged to participate in security operations, and their awareness of their rights and duties must be enhanced. Moreover, local communities and NGOs must work to change society's perception of women's participation in defense and security.

Human rights activist Qasim Al-Jaafari pointed out it is necessary to encourage women to join the military and police service, and to provide them with equal opportunities for training and promotion to higher positions. He added that clear criteria for promotion in military and police positions must be set, and their implementation should be ensured without discrimination.

Lawyer Ilham Senan said that women's participation in the security and military institutions does not need a law as much as a genuine political orientation by all state institutions and the competent authorities to allocate women a quota in leadership positions in security and defense and open the door for admission and registration for women to join the Police Academy.

In general, the legal system in Yemen should seek to achieve parity between men and women in terms of opportunities, rights, and duties. Furthermore, it should guarantee the protection of women's rights and enhance their participation in all fields, including security and defense.



Strength and Challenges: The Role of Yemeni Women in the Security and Defense Sector

Despite the myriad challenges faced by women in Yemen due to the current circumstances, many have taken initiatives to empower themselves through capacity building and training in the realms of security and defense. This equips them with the necessary skills to actively contribute in this field. Yemen, sadly, remains one of the countries where women endure significant sexual discrimination, rendering them more susceptible to violence, discrimination, and marginalization.

By: Ahmed Bajoaim
 Women in Development and Peace

Chief among the factors exacerbating the plight of women in security and defense is the relentless conflict, which has precipitated political and economic instability. This, in turn, heightens their vulnerability to sexual abuse and domestic violence. Compounded by diminishing infrastructure and limited resources, accessing fundamental security and defense services poses a substantial challenge for countless women.

Despite these adversities, Yemeni women have demonstrated remarkable progress in this domain. They have fortified their roles within civil institutions and organizations dedicated to security and defense. Additionally, both local and international women's human rights organizations and institutions conduct programs aimed at promoting and safeguarding women's rights across diverse arenas, including security and defense.

Women in Security & Defense

Women play a pivotal role in the realm of security and defense, utilizing their unique capabilities and diverse skills to fortify stability and foster peace within the country. Their presence within the security and military sectors contributes to a balanced and inclusive societal voice, granting them active participation in decision-making processes and the development of security policies.

Mona Al-Nubi, the senior assistant and director of the women's prison in the Mukalla directorate of Hadhramout Governorate, highlighted the significance of women's presence in security. She emphasized that it engenders a positive and enduring transformation in Yemen's security infrastructure, warranting the strengthening of women's role in security and defense. This can be achieved through equal opportunities for training, education, promotion, and the recognition of their invaluable contributions to realizing security and sustainable peace in the country.

Al-Nubi further underscored the vital importance of women in various fields, including operating centers, checkpoints, interrogations, investigations, and addressing women-related issues within prisons. The involvement of women in security and military services, alongside their male counterparts, greatly contributes to establishing public tranquility for all citizens and fostering sustainable peace.

Perceptions & Opinions Surrounding Women in Security

Soldier Hazem from the second military region highlighted that the perception of women working in the security and defense sectors has evolved over time. Nowadays, military women are accepted and respected in society due to their crucial role in upholding security and stability. In fact, many parents encourage their daughters to join and enroll in the military and security services.



When asked about the recruits' perspective on their female colleagues working in security and defense, Hazem stated that women who join these fields are held in high regard and appreciated by their fellow colleagues. He emphasized that they all serve a common purpose, which is to preserve security and public tranquility within the local and Yemeni society as a whole.

Similarly, Corporal Yasser Al-Dini, who serves in a security patrol alongside female soldiers in Mukalla, expressed a positive view towards female soldiers and the respect they receive from their male colleagues. He emphasized that the work carried out by both genders is complementary, and the completion of tasks requires the collaborative effort of men and women. He further noted that the previous societal and field-specific perceptions towards women recruits have significantly changed. On the contrary, there is now a noticeable encouragement for women to join the military and security forces, driven by both feminist ideals and societal support.

Al-Dini continued by stating that Yemeni society as a whole recognizes the importance of women's presence in security and defense, as it helps to address the sensitive issues and daily challenges faced by women. This fundamental belief has been a pivotal factor in transforming the negative perception society once held towards women joining these fields. Now, there is a great level of respect for the valuable service women provide to both women and society as a whole. He emphasized that women play a significant role in uncovering various groups aiming to disturb public tranquility and undermine security and stability.

Moral Support

Earlier this year in 2023, the National Women's Committee in Hadhramout organized an educational lecture focusing on the dangers of violence against women and the role of the Women's Police. This lecture was part of the 16-day campaign aimed at combating violence against women. The committee collaborated with the Security and Police Department of Hadhramout Coast and the Office of Social Affairs and Labor in the governorate to organize this event, as reported by the committee's media center. The lecture aimed to support women police officers in carrying out their duties in serving women and addressing various women-related issues. It also aimed to raise awareness about wo-

men's rights in government institutions and civil society organizations.

Mona Al-Nubi, the Assistant Director of the Women's Prison in Mukalla, emphasized the significance of boosting the morale of female recruits by enrolling them in the Military Police College and providing support. Additionally, she mentioned the importance of conducting rehabilitation courses and workshops to enhance practical experience and its application in real-life situations. Al-Nubi also emphasized the need for women to assume high-level military and security roles suitable for their capabilities and stature, while also working towards promotions within the military ranks.

Skills Enhancement

According to an unnamed military officer in the second military region, women who are recruited into security and defense need to focus on skill development to effectively carry out their work in accordance with the current stage. One crucial skill for women in security and defense is the ability to handle significant and sensitive tasks, deal with unconventional situations, and actively contribute to the formulation of security or military plans and programs. By engaging in these activities, women can enhance and refine their skills in the field.

The military officer also emphasized the importance of academic development and qualification for women. He called upon relevant authorities to facilitate the participation of girls in police academies located in various governorates and provide scholarships for postgraduate studies abroad. These educational opportunities can enable women to obtain leadership positions and make significant advancements in the field of security and defense.

Yemeni women have made notable progress in the realm of security and defense, thanks to the ongoing efforts of local and international organizations, as well as increased community awareness about empowering women and their participation in the security and defense sector. This progress marks a significant step towards strengthening the role of women in security and defense.

Despite the existing challenges and complexities faced by women in the field, it is essential to continue raising public awareness about their rights, self-protection, and active involvement in nation-building through decision-making processes and the preservation of peace and stability in Yemen.



“Women in Development and Peace” Interviews Yemen’s Highest-Ranking Female Security Officer

Brigadier Alia Saleh Omar: Women’s Police Play a Crucial Role despite the Challenges they Face

According to Alia Saleh Omar, Director General of Family Protection at the Ministry of Interior in Aden, policewomen have experienced gradual improvement in their ability to handle all security tasks. Carrying out their duties is not challenging for them due to the wide range of skills they have acquired throughout their work experience. Additionally, they possess the necessary qualifications that enable them to actively contribute as members of society.

By: Haneen Al-Wahsh
Women in Development and Peace

- How would you assess the current level of women’s participation in police and security services?

In the Republic of Yemen, women’s police play a crucial role despite the challenges they face in a multicultural society shaped by traditions, customs, and regulations, as well as the circumstances of the ongoing conflict. However, it is evident that policewomen are progressing towards expanding security work and assuming positions that contribute to public safety and peace.

Alia Saleh Omar further explains that women working in the security field demonstrate their capabilities and make substantial contributions through their presence in various institutions, security departments, and sectors designated in the Ministry of Interior’s organizational structure. They consistently prove their ability to handle assigned tasks, be it public or private, depending on the nature and requirements of the task.

Two distinct types of performance exist in this context. The first type encompasses organizational, legal, and administrative activities, involving those working in administrative, executive, or legal offices. The second type is field performance, where both men and women participate. Policewomen are not excluded from any security-related fields, with exceptions only arising due to their biological status.

Alia emphasizes that policewomen possess exceptional qualities, such as proficiency in their performance and patience in dealing with various circumstances they encounter. They acquire these characteristics from their ini-

tial experiences, particularly concerning women’s issues, gender-related matters, and children’s affairs. Their involvement in the juvenile police further enhances their skills. Additionally, they play significant roles in security checkpoints, detention facilities, judicial proceedings including investigations and arresting female offenders, as well as service areas like immigration, passports, civil status, and airports.

Alia Saleh Omar affirms that female police officers have continuously improved their capabilities over time, enabling them to handle all security tasks effectively. Their wide range of skills acquired through experience, coupled with their qualifications, positions them as valuable and active members of society.

- Based on your experience, what are the key requirements to increase women’s participation in security bodies and the judicial authority?

In my perspective, one of the most crucial factors for increasing women’s participation rates is the implementation of policies that allow for a significant number of women to be employed in the security industry. This will ensure gender equality by balancing the representation of female and male personnel. It is essential for institutes and schools, such as the Police College, to strive for equality in percentages between genders, or at least maintain a close balance.

Furthermore, it is imperative to pay attention to the Police School and modernize its curricula to align with international standards upheld by academies in other countries. Additionally, the implementation of Resolution No.1325 should be prioritized to em-



power women and enable them to hold leadership positions. This will provide women with the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to society. However, despite this resolution, some security leaders have been reluctant to grant women access to these positions.

A current initiative being undertaken to boost women’s involvement is the integration of policewomen in operational tasks. This follows advancements made in the implementation of the security, women, and peace plan, as well as their inclusion in the Ministry of Interior’s overall framework. Efforts are also being made to expand and activate the concept of gender across all security fields, ensuring that policewomen contribute to achieving justice.

- Could you provide an overview of government efforts and initiatives aimed at encouraging and enhancing women’s participation and performance in the judiciary and security sectors?

It is unfortunate that women have not been given adequate support in terms of government representation and assistance from both governments and donor organizations. The absence of a female minister in the government highlights the neglect of women and undermines the importance of their roles. Despite historical participation by women in justice and judicial bodies, their performance has reportedly

presence of women in the judicial authority?

To address the existing challenges, several key measures should be implemented within the judicial apparatus. Firstly, it is essential to provide broader opportunities for women’s participation by enabling them to qualify for higher studies and benefiting from the experiences of other countries dealing with laws, particularly within Arab societies.

Furthermore, there is a pressing need to increase the representation of women in judicial and security meetings, conferences, both domestically and internationally. By doing so, we can foster inclusivity and allow for diverse perspectives to shape the decision-making processes. Confidence should also be instilled in women working in the field of justice, leading to their appointment to higher judicial positions.

It is equally crucial to encourage women of justice to contribute to legal research that strengthens the judicial structure. Continuous motivation and recognition should be given to their work, whereby they can be granted opportunities to participate in appeals courts, thereby enhancing their capacities. This will also serve as a platform to review existing laws and replace outdated articles to address contemporary issues effectively.

- Drawing from your personal experience, what advice would you offer to Yemeni women working in the legal and judicial systems to support their professional growth and success?

It is imperative to offer guidance and support to notary women who aspire to judicial positions. It is important to acknowledge that relying solely on others, particularly individuals in leadership positions or of a different gender, may not always provide equal opportunities for success. Hence, notary women should focus on proving themselves through rehabilitation and professional development endeavors. By doing so, they can efficiently fulfill their goals and contribute to the realization of justice.

- In your opinion, what measures and recommendations should be proposed to official authorities or supporting international bodies to enhance the capabilities and

Women in Security: Enhancing their Role & Increasing Representation

Improving Infrastructure, Providing Training Courses, Transferring Leadership Expertise, and Covering Operational Expenses

The concept of security is often associated with male police officers, which marginalizes and neglects female security personnel. Despite their importance and diligence in creating a safe environment, female police officers are limited in number and often confined to specific roles set by society and officials. This raises questions about the reasons for this limitation and the solutions to expand their role. Why are female police officers not given more opportunities to contribute their skills and capabilities to the security sector?

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

Aisha Falah, a secretary in the Sixth Security Region and an investigator in Sheikh Othman Police, shared that her decision to join was driven by economic necessity. "The reason for my entering the security field was the deterioration of the family's economic living situation, which forced me to register in the security field. I studied law because it is a legal specialty that goes hand in hand with security work," she explained. Fortunately, new opportunities for women to enter the security field arose in 2016, and Aisha was accepted as a female soldier affiliated with Aden security in 2017.

Speaking about her experiences as a female soldier in the security sector, Falah shared that she faced challenges due to societal attitudes towards women in the military. "There are difficulties I encountered when society did not accept the work of women in the military and some were surprised," she explained. "Especially since this new environment requires rigor and strength to prove oneself and confront various types of crimes."

When asked about how her work has affected her personally, she shared that it has had a significant impact on her personality and lifestyle. "Working in the security field affected my personality and lifestyle in general," she explained. "But society started to accept the idea of women accomplishing many tasks, especially those related to women, children, and family protection."

Regarding the potential solutions to the challenges facing women in the military, she shared some personal strategies that have helped her cope, such as maintaining a safe space at work and separating her work life from her home life. She also emphasized the importance of changing societal attitudes towards women in

the military by highlighting the positive impact they can have in protecting families and communities. "Wherever women are present, vitality and positive change thrive, leading the community towards a phase of recovery and improvement," she said.

Roles & Responsibilities of Policewomen

When discussing the role of female police officers within institutions and centers, Brigadier General Alia'a Saleh explained, "Despite the historical presence of women in this field, with only ad hoc exceptions based on biological factors, they fulfill diverse roles and responsibilities. They encounter various challenges stemming from societal expectations and armed conflict situations. However, despite these obstacles, they play a vital role in executing their security responsibilities. Female police officers contribute significantly to various services by being present in different institutions. They have demonstrated their competence in handling tasks across legal, administrative, executive, and even field aspects."

Outcomes for Improving Women's Security

The General Department for Family Protection and the Criminal Reform Organization for the Ministry of the Interior recently held a workshop on the "Project to Strengthen the Role of Women Police in Yemen." The workshop focused on identifying and addressing obstacles to integrating and increasing the number of policewomen in police stations. One of the key outputs of the workshop was the need to educate the population about the organizational regulations and tasks assigned to women police officers, as well as creating a database of policewomen for better tracking and coordination.

The outputs also include the development of infrastructure that accommodates their needs,



military rehabilitation courses designed specifically for female officers, regular visits from women police leadership to the police stations, and the sharing of experiences from experienced police commanders. Additionally, the distribution of policewomen will take into account their areas of residence, and independent operating expenses will be provided to support their work in the police stations.

The workshop also aimed to enhance the representation of female police officers across various governorates by identifying their numbers through reliable statistics and assessing the specific needs of each governorate. To support this, specialized programs will be established to provide tailored training and rehabilitation for female police recruits. Additionally, the family protection departments will undergo rehabilitation and necessary procedures will be completed. The structure and regulations related to women in the police force will be reviewed and updated. Furthermore, capacity building and skills refinement initiatives will be implemented for female police officers to keep them informed of the latest developments in their field. The appropriate working environment for women in police stations will be defined, ensuring that they have enough space to work comfortably and efficiently.

The output file emphasized the crucial need to enhance security measures for women, tailored to the requirements of police stations in various

governorates and the overall work environment. It also highlighted the significance of community education, clearly defining the role of female police officers, advocating for their presence in police stations, and fostering collaboration with civil and international organizations. The objective is to expand job opportunities for women, empower them in decision-making processes, facilitate the training of female recruits based on job requirements, and leverage local and international laws to augment their representation.

It also entailed the establishment of a dedicated Family Protection Department within police stations, specifically focusing on investigations involving women. It suggests an increase in the recruitment of women to serve in various roles such as administration, inspection, investigation, and care specialists. Furthermore, it advocates for the presence of female experts and social researchers, as well as the provision of a shelter room for cases requiring immediate intervention. To ensure an efficient workforce, it recommends replacing inactive personnel with qualified individuals and enhancing training centers for continuous professional development in all specialties. Additionally, the allocation of an operational budget is proposed to support the department in carrying out its assigned tasks effectively.

Solutions & Treatments

According to Colonel Baraka Saleh, there

are potential solutions to enhance the representation of policewomen within police centers. One proposed solution is appointing assistant directors of departments to provide leadership opportunities for women who aspire to grow in their careers. Additionally, there is a suggestion to expand the recruitment of specialized female staff across all disciplines within police stations, including those involved in evidence gathering and referrals to relevant agencies such as prosecution or courts.

In emphasizing the significance of establishing dedicated spaces for women in the police force, she highlighted the need for designated areas to accommodate women officers and their duties. Moreover, she called for the provision of comprehensive training and rehabilitation programs tailored specifically to equip policewomen with the skills necessary to handle female-related issues. This training should encompass both administrative security training and specialized knowledge in this field. Additionally, she stressed the importance of furnishing women officers with a dedicated police vehicle.

Despite the undervalued role of women and their underrepresentation compared to men in the security field in Yemen, female policewomen have managed to overcome numerous obstacles through resilience and perseverance. Their steadfast determination has not only proved their capabilities but also paved the way towards a future where they can emerge as leaders in this field.

Security Women.. Taking Confident Strides Towards a Brighter Future in Security

Increasing Shifts in Societal Perception of Yemeni Women Highlight Remarkable Progress in Recent Years

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

Reality of the Situation

Samira Salam (pseudonym), employed as a policewoman at a police station in Aden, specifically in Sheikh Othman, shares her challenges in pursuing a career in the security sector. Samira recounts the numerous obstacles she encountered, especially her family's disagreement with her choice of this profession.

Salam firmly asserts that her family and society held the belief that the field of security was exclusively for men, and that entering it would compromise her feminine attributes. However, she defiantly stood her ground, defending her deep love and passion for working in the sector of security and protection. Salam views it as both a social responsibility and one of the crucial occupations that ensure the stability of the country. Driven by this conviction, she embarked on her professional journey and diligently endeavored to persuade her family and those in her social circle.

Gender & Security

Colonel Nadia Hassan, the Assistant Director of Police for Family and Child Pro-

tection in Khormaksar in Aden, emphasizes the significant changes in terms of security and gender. She states, "In the aftermath of the conflict, we focused on addressing gender-related matters, and security women were integrated into police stations. Presently, there are women stationed at all police stations, dedicated to handling all communications associated with women and gender-related concerns."

She further emphasized that it necessitates dedication, sincerity, and passion in order to make significant contributions and attain remarkable achievements, even in the face of challenges. Working under demanding and extraordinary circumstances, where danger and confrontation are commonplace, requires resilience and the ability to overcome obstacles.

No Differences

Major Laila Al-Nashiri acknowledges the representation of female policewomen and highlights their active participation across various departments. Despite the current situation imposing restrictions and limiting their scope of work, women continue to fulfill their roles to the best of their abilities. Major Al-Nashiri emphasizes that they face these challenges with determination and persistence, driven by a sense of humani-

tarian responsibility and their patriotic duty towards society's diverse segments.

Major Al-Nashiri openly expresses her discontent with the narrow-minded societal perspective that outright rejected the inclusion of women in police work, deeming it as exclusively reserved for men. This biased viewpoint has presented numerous hardships for them during their service. However, she confidently asserts that the future holds promise for change and increased awareness, enabling women to carry out their duties with greater ease. Their undeniable presence and tangible accomplishments will gradually shift society's perception, leading to a more inclusive recognition of women's achievements.

Leading Roles

In regards to the recruitment of women, Colonel Nadia Hassan shared, "There was a substantial number of applications from women seeking to join the security service. I had the privilege of leading the committee responsible for distributing the first salaries to these women upon their enrollment. Subsequently, I was appointed as the deputy director of the Model Juvenile Center in Aden. A year later, I became a member of the Women's Consensus for Security and Peace. From there, I began collaborating with civil

society organizations, working as a human rights and security advocate, specifically focusing on supporting victims of domestic violence. This work was conducted in tandem with my role in the security sector and in coordination with the Yemeni Women's Union."

During her attendance at the "Women of Peace" conference in Amman, alongside the UN envoy to Yemen, she emphasized the importance of empowering security women by advocating for their involvement in external conferences and capacity-building courses. Furthermore, she called for the implementation of UN Resolution 1325, which aims to promote women's participation as decision-makers in leadership positions, ensuring their protection during armed conflicts. Her efforts extend to actively participating in various internal and external conferences, workshops, and panel discussions.

Continuing her impactful efforts, Colonel Nadia played a pivotal role in ensuring the success of women's participation in the security sector and highlighting their significant contributions. In collaboration with the authorities in the Radfan district, she facilitated the assignment of two women as decision-makers within the local authority. Additionally, she actively engaged with Lahj women's second track, consisting of

media professionals and influential leaders in Lahj Governorate. Together, their primary focus revolved around the women and peace project, aiming to promote social empowerment and uplift the status of women within the local authority.

Colonel Nadia mentioned, "We initiated a project in collaboration with the "Search for Common Ground" organization to amplify the voices of women within the security sector and other diverse domains. Initially, I attended several workshops; however, due to prior commitments, I had to decline further participation. Nevertheless, by the end of December, I signed a contract with the School of Peace organization to serve as the project coordinator for women's empowerment in decision-making and peace-building."

She elaborated, "This ambitious project involved the participation of 210 women who partook in various courses aimed at enhancing their ability to make informed decisions and contribute to peace-building. The courses explored compelling and valuable topics centered around women's empowerment and fostering a culture of peace. As a result, we witnessed remarkable outcomes, including the establishment of the Peace Mediators Network. The project culminated with a highly significant Peace Conference."

Yemeni Women Prove Themselves in Security and Defense Positions

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

There are a lot of brave and inspiring Yemeni female activists who encounter a lot of challenges in improving the reality of women and strengthening their role in society and political life, among whom is Amal Al-Khawlani. She is the head of Ahwal Al-Thalth Neighborhood in Ibb Governorate. She has worked to improve the living conditions of many Yemeni families, and has supervised the implementation of many development projects during the conflict.

Officer Amal Al-Khawlani was famous for her strong personality and great rigor in solving many social problems and issues. This qualified her to take up positions in security and defense. Al-Khawlani said, "I started my community work as Aql Hara (neighborhood head) in three areas (Al-Dhubab, Ahwal Al-Thalth, and Al-Mandhar) in Ibb Governorate. As the former neighborhood head was wanted by security authorities, I took charge of my neighborhood and district. Hence, I became the first woman in Yemen to hold the position of neighborhood head. I contacted the former head of the Security Department and asked him if it was possible for me to run for the position of neighborhood head. "There is no problem," he replied. I thus continued my work to spread security and peace in those areas, provide gas to all homes, and deliver food aid to all those affected by the conflict in those areas."

Al-Khawlani maintained that her family and her husband were her first and main supporters to hold the position of an officer in the Criminal Investigation



Amal Al-Khawlani

Department. She also received support and assistance from the leaders and concerned authorities in Ibb Governorate. She was the only woman working within the Criminal Investigation Department as a morality officer. She is currently working as the head of the women's prison in the Central Correctional Facility in the Central Prison in Ibb Governorate.

Developmental Achievements

Her ambition and persistence helped her achieve many accomplishments that she is proud of. She said, "during my professional career, I have solved many cases of injustice to Yemeni women and reduced many issues related to morals in Ibb." She added, "I am so proud of the achievements I have made, namely paving and restoring many roads, including the road to the Al-Mandhar and Al-Dhubab area, with the support of some social personalities, as well as solving and ending revenge issues among members of society and establishing peace and security through reconciliation."



Belqis Al-Hawsali

Reasons for Women's Low Presence in Defense and Security

Yemeni women's participation in maintaining security and peace is essential and indisputable. Women are peacemakers and social protection providers for many Yemeni families in different places and circumstances. A woman needs a woman like her in many positions. Al-Khawlani regrets the absence of Yemeni women in police, security and defense positions. She attributed the reason to women themselves. For a woman to be present in the criminal investigation, she must be rational, efficient and qualified, and of a strong and rigorous personality. All of these traits cannot be met in Yemeni women in light of the ongoing conflict. Yemeni women's real presence in security and defense necessitates all the competent authorities to jointly work to promote and support women's participation in security and defense. Women are more disciplined in maintaining order and law. Al-Khawlani indicated that the current situation that Yemen is going through prompted her

to continue working as the head of the women's prison and as an officer in the criminal investigation. The ongoing conflict has made her presence imperative to building peace and establishing security. She seeks to prove that Yemeni women are truly strong in the face of adversity, and are capable of facing all challenges to establish social justice and spread the culture of love and peace.

Different Challenges, One Goal

Policewoman Belqis Al-Hawsali faced many societal challenges when she decided to join the Military Criminal Investigation in Sana'a. Her family and society strongly reject women working as policemen, lawyers, or the like. However, the passion of working as a policewoman contributed to making her personality strong. About joining the security work, Al-Hawsali said, "when I was in high school, I joined the Military Police School in 2005 amid strong opposition from my family and the surrounding community. At the same time, I was studying in high school and in the Police School. I ignored all the hurtful words and criticism I heard as I continued my educational and professional journey."

Al-Hawsali graduated from the Police School in 2019. She also studied at the Department of Investigation and Crime Scene. As a result, her confidence and courage increased. She realized her dream and gained the acceptance of her family. She proved to her family that it is not shameful for

*The Invaluable
Importance of Yemeni
Women's Presence in Spaces of
Peace and Security*

a woman to maintain her country's security and stability.

Different Positions

Al-Hawsali got many jobs in the military field, as she proved her efficiency, love and dedication to her work. Al-Hawsali said, "I first worked in the Ministry of Defense and then moved to the Military Police as a delegate in the ministry. After that, I moved to work in protection, security and investigation in Al-Aradhi Hospital in Sana'a in the western and eastern gates."

She continued, "after two years, I worked in the military hospital in the investigation and inspection authority, after which I worked in 26 September newspaper in investigation and inspection, specifically in moral guidance. After that, I worked in the economic institution. In 2019, I got a military promotion to work in house raids. My work in all these positions was crowned with success and accomplishment."

In conclusion, Al-Hawsali gave some advice to all the women and girls who have a passion to join the military. She said, "working in the military requires strength and rigor, so one must be strong enough in order to face the patriarchal society first and successfully accomplish one's own security work. In addition, women's work in security and defense requires credibility and honesty. You must overcome all the difficulties and challenges and strongly prove and assert yourself. It is neither shameful nor forbidden for women to work in peacemaking and security. Working in security and defense is something honorable."

Empowering Women: The Crucial Role in the Security and Defense Sector

The Privacy of Yemeni Society Necessitates the Presence of Women in Security Institutions as an Imperative Necessity



The inclusion of Yemeni women in the security and police sectors is essential to meet the needs and interests of female citizens who regularly visit these institutions for various reasons. This is especially important given the cultural norms and traditions that emphasize women's privacy and restrict direct interactions with men.

By: Yasmine Abdulhafeez
 Women in Development and Peace

The significance of women's presence in security institutions arises from various factors. Primarily, when investigating cases involving women who have experienced security issues, particularly instances of rape and harassment, it is crucial to have female investigators who can empathize and understand their perspective. Additionally, women's presence is essential in community engagement and monitoring, as they possess excellent powers of observation. This proves instrumental in regulating societal behavior and undertaking other tasks that necessitate the involvement of female personnel in security institutions for effective resolution and handling.

Although women's work in the security field has often been undervalued, there is growing recognition among members of society of its vital significance in both security and police institutions. This awareness is demonstrated by the increasing number of families who now actively seek out female security personnel to safeguard their special occasions and celebrations. Moreover, women are now being employed in a wide range of private and public establishments, including facilities, shops, gardens, and parks, to ensure the safety of women in these places. They contribute greatly by conducting thorough searches, apprehending violators and suspects, and implementing other essential security measures associated with their profession.

The Utmost Importance

Ahmed Naji, who is particularly interested in the security and military field, strongly emphasizes the significance of having women actively involved in security and military institutions. He believes that their presence plays a crucial role in supporting girls who may encounter issues or crises. Women hold a unique position within our societies, allowing them to relate and understand the concerns of other women. When faced with a problem, women often hesitate to share it openly or file a complaint with the security authorities.

He further emphasizes, "The presence of women in the security field is particularly important due to the prevailing lack of awareness

among Yemeni women regarding their rights. They are vulnerable to various pressures and exploitation, often becoming victims within society." He goes on to say, "Moreover, Yemeni women have limited opportunities to actively engage with societal institutions. They face restrictions on their freedom and are unable to express or disclose the pressures they endure."

According to him, there is a grave concern regarding the persecution faced by Yemeni women in certain closed communities, where prisoners are involved. Furthermore, these women encounter limitations that prevent them from fully engaging in their professional pursuits. The situation forces them into a state of isolation and repression, possibly leading to severe psychological distress.

He also emphasizes the importance of supporting women and taking action against individuals who attempt to expose crimes within society. He calls for the apprehension of anyone found guilty of dishonorable acts or criminal behavior, ensuring their referral to the appropriate legal authorities. Moreover, he stresses the need to assist individuals who have endured harm or violations and to

hold those responsible accountable for their actions.

When it comes to the significance of women in the police force, he asserts that they are uniquely equipped to connect with women within society and preemptively identify potential crimes. Moreover, civilian women exhibit a stronger inclination to confide in women police officers about their personal crises and problems, as they believe these officers are better positioned to ensure justice and uphold their legitimate rights. This level of trust surpasses what they might be willing to share with a male officer in the same situation.

He emphasizes that the establishment of a women's police force has become essential in today's society, recognizing the significant roles women play in various aspects of life. Stressing the urgent need for an independent and competent women's police force in Yemen, he highlights the importance of this organization being equipped with the necessary skills and qualifications. Furthermore, it should fully grasp its vital role in the community, ensuring it remains impartial and free from any external influences or biases. Failure to meet these criteria renders it ineffective.

Community Encouragement

According to Ali Nasser, a Yemeni citizen and a father of three daughters, the presence of working women in the military and security institutions helps to reassure parents about the safety and protection of their daughters in case they face any injustices or violations of their rights. Nasser believes that the traditional societal norms in Yemen often make girls and women feel embarrassed and ashamed when interacting with men.

Nasser notes that many girls and women in Yemen have been subjected to injustice,

but they often feel reluctant to report these incidents or seek help from police stations or security departments in their areas. However, Nasser believes that the presence of women working in these institutions has changed this dynamic by providing a sense of safety and comfort for women in these settings. When women file complaints or search for their rights at these institutions, the presence of female police officers can make a significant difference. Nasser points out that society has also begun to look positively at women who take these steps, as they have someone to support and speak up for them, if needed, even when dealing with male security personnel.

Nasser also notes that even when a woman enters prison, her family can feel reassured knowing that the warden is a woman. Nasser believes that the presence of women in these institutions has made society more accepting of women seeking justice and filing complaints. As a result, many have come to realize that the inclusion of women in these fields is crucial for protecting and assisting women in Yemen.

Omaima Ali Mohammed, an employee in the Security Department of Lahj, shares the belief that the inclusion of women in the security field is crucial, particularly in Arab and Islamic societies. Mohammed notes that religious and societal culture has provided women with a unique advantage in dealing with others, including those who may be in need of assistance or protection.

She also believes that the inclusion of women in the military is necessary to provide better care and support for female criminals who may be arrested for crimes that violate public security or criminal offenses. She notes that even in prisons, it is important to have female cadres to deal with female prisoners ac-

ording to the conservative societal conditions and Sharia law in Yemen.

Significance & Hardship

Suhaila Saeed (pseudonym), a security woman who works in a private hospital, shares the responsibilities required to provide security in the hospital. She explains, "My job is to stand at the building's gate all day and search women's bags to ensure nothing is brought in that can pose a security risk. It can be a stressful and tiring task, but it is necessary to keep everyone safe."

Suhaila explains that her job is crucial to ensure the safety and security of everyone who visits the hospital, whether for treatment or visits. She notes that some patients may be at risk of being harmed by enemies who may try to smuggle weapons into the hospital. Since women are not subject to inspection by men, it is important to have female security personnel like her to conduct thorough and effective inspections.

Suhaila acknowledges that women in security roles face many risks while on the job. She shares an incident where a man attempted to bring a weapon into the hospital to harm a patient, but was unable to pass through security. Instead, the perpetrator turned to a woman to smuggle the weapon into the hospital. Upon requesting to inspect her bag, the woman refused and fled outside the hospital. Suhaila followed and a confrontation ensued, leading to the intervention of male security personnel in the hospital. The woman and the man were subsequently arrested and referred to the appropriate authorities for justice.

Suhaila points out that besides facing physical attacks and assaults, female security personnel also encounter mistreatment from some husbands of women who feel that their privacy is being violated when their wives are searched, even if it is by a female officer. In addition, women themselves may sometimes mistreat security personnel by reacting negatively to searches or inspections. This mistreatment can take the form of verbal abuse, insults, and accusations of theft.

Suhaila acknowledges that it can be challenging to educate people about the importance of their work and how it benefits their safety. Although they try to explain the reasons behind their actions, only a few people, about 50% of the women they meet, genuinely comprehend the necessity of the security measures.

In conclusion, Suhaila emphasizes the importance of having women in the security field and stresses that society must support and cooperate with them. She believes that her work is crucial not only for the benefit of society as a whole but also for women's safety and security.

Numerous security personnel believe that it is their national duty to support and encourage their wives to work in the security field. They recognize that having more women in the security field is crucial to combatting crime and promoting safety in Yemen.



Women's Effective Role in Maintaining Security

Increasing Women's Participation in the Security Field

Women are the basic nucleus of any society. They play an indispensable role as mothers, teachers, lawyers, journalists, doctors, engineers, and judges among others. Thus, women have become active partners alongside men in society.



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

Despite the cultural and social challenges, the necessities of life allowed women to greatly and effectively work in many male-dominated institutions, such as the security and the military institutions.

Women's Prominent Role

Cultural openness with the world contributed greatly to women's participation in the security apparatus. It helps enhance their role in achieving security and stability in society.

A security officer in Yemen, who preferred not to be named, has worked for 25 years in many government security institutions. He said, "in light of my experience, there were only male officers and security guards at airports and institutions. We encountered a lot of difficulties with regard to searching and inspecting women. Since the involvement of women in maintaining security, our work has been improved. Many female colleagues have a stronger sense of security than some men. A colleague of mine jokingly said that women's sense of security is stronger, because they are suspicious by nature."

He added, "women's participation in all fields has increased dramatically. Today, they work in criminal investigation, service institutions, universities, and others. They took on both administrative and field work."

Rania Abdullah, a female soldier in the Yemeni Ministry of Interior, said, "the role of policewomen is important in inspecting women, and in discovering and arresting male criminals disguised as women."

She added, "policewomen also work to provide guidance and instructions to girls and women, whether at parties, meetings, or hospitals, among other services."

A Legitimate Right

Arab women in general, and Yemeni women in particular, face many social difficulties, such as customs, traditions and legal restrictions, and lack of support from official authorities.

Human rights activist, Alhan Al-Shaibani, said, "the role played by women in most Arab societies is weak. This delays the process of comprehensive reform to allow women's participation in all fields. Gender equality, which is a human right guaranteed by all monotheistic religions and stipulated in many international laws, is necessary to achieve peace in societies and unleash their members' full potentials."

Al-Shaibani explained that women's participation in various fields in general, including the security field, is a right guaranteed by Islamic law and its principles. Women in the early days of Islam and during the era of Islamic states participated in political life and battles. Khawla bint Al-Azwar is the most prominent example. Women's participation in various fields continued until recent times.

Lawyer Khaled Al-Nasser said, "women's participation in the security sector and in various other fields is one of their legally guaranteed rights." Yemeni Constitution's Article 31 states that "women are the sisters of men and have rights and duties guaranteed and assigned by Islamic principles and prescribed by law," and Article 48 stipulates, "the state shall guarantee to its citizens their personal freedom and preserve their dignity and security. The principle of legitimate and legal protection of the individual means preserving their rights in every field. The principle of legal protection of human rights ensures the individual freedom of thought, expression, movement, work, ownership, and privacy. Providing regular legal protection to all members of society would enhance a sense of their worth as human beings, develop in them respect for the rights



Lawyer Khaled Al-Nasser

of women in all different fields, including security and defense, and enable them to think, meditate, develop, and perform their full service to the public in the most satisfactory manner."

Al-Nasser added, "Islamic law gives women a special status, and is keen to protect their persons, their property, and their honor, and preserve their rights and dignity. Consequently, one of the most important factors that necessitate the presence of women in security is the inspection of women. This includes criminal inspection, preventive inspection, and administrative inspection. Due to the nature of females, which requires privacy in their inspection procedures or the inspection of their belongings, it becomes extremely challenging for a male security officer or judicial officer to conduct such inspections."

Employment of Female Inspectors Is a Must

Al-Nasser continued, "the search and inspection of females must be conducted by a female inspector, whatever the type of inspection conducted, whether criminal, preventive or administrative. Article 143 of the Code of Criminal Procedure states, "no woman shall be searched

except by a woman. Whoever carries out the search shall record the name of the woman the inspector is searching and her ID card number in the report, and the search shall be conducted in the presence of two female witnesses." Such a search must be done in a decent manner, and women's modesty and dignity must be preserved. Here lies the importance of the role of women in society in general and in the security apparatus in particular."

Al-Nasser explained that there are certain jobs in the various security, preventive and administrative fields that require women. He said, "women's work in security is to search any woman who has been arrested or suspected of criminal cases, and to assist the judicial authorities during the implementation of sentences issued against convicted women."

Women's work in preventive inspection includes inspection of women at checkpoints, ministries and public facilities. Women's job in administrative inspection includes ensuring the implementation and application of laws and regulations, examining personal documents and academic qualifications, and matching faces of veiled women to photographs on these documents.

In light of this, many security jobs require the presence of women, especially since the Islamic and Arab laws require the preservation of the dignity and privacy of women.

Difficulties and Challenges

Since Yemen is among the countries in need of women in the security field, women have been minimally employed in security jobs in the main cities. Yemeni women's presence in the public security apparatus, the women's judicial police and private companies among other places as security guards is still not enough. This is due to many factors related to the nature and culture of Yemeni society.

Lawyer Khaled Al-Nasser said, "the tribal nature of Yemeni society constitutes a major challenge for women's work in public spheres in general and in the security field in particular. Yemeni society views women's work as a shame. Moreover, in Yemen, girls and women are denied the right to join the security and service agencies and the right to education, especially in rural areas."

Al-Nasser further added, "working in agriculture, doing housework, and raising children constitute a major obstacle to women's work in the security field. Furthermore, the ongoing armed conflict has complicated matters even more. The circumstances of the conflict pose an additional challenge to women's work in the security field. Families fear losing their daughters under the current fragile security situation."

Researcher Yahya Ahmed talked about women's work in the field of defense and security, and the challenges they face. He said, "Yemeni women's presence in security and defense is too limited due to social, cultural and legal challenges. Despite all the challenges, women have made some achievements in this field in recent years. Some security and defense institutions in Yemen have witnessed the employment of women in some non-combat military jobs, such as training, management, health and others. Some initiatives and campaigns have also been made to increase women's participation in these fields, such as Women's Voice campaign." Yahya said, "Yemeni women in the defense and security sector face many social, cultural, and political challenges and obstacles. The social and cultural challenges have to do with society's view of women and their roles. The role of women in Yemeni society is limited to traditional roles, such as working in agriculture, doing housework, and rearing children among others. In addition, women are not fully accepted in the defense and security sectors due to their lack of proper training and qualification in such fields. Moreover, the severe lack of job opportunities constitutes another major impediment to women's employment."

He went on, "the political and security challenges, the ongoing conflict in our country, and the severe shortage of resources and capabilities have reduced women's employment opportunities in the security sector."

Women's presence in security and defense is very important, as they contribute to protecting the security situation in many government facilities and universities. The most prominent challenges that women face in the security sector is that society members treat them badly and eye them suspiciously. They also receive a lot of criticism and reprimands, whether within or outside the work environment. This affects women's psyche greatly and makes them suffer from mental disorders, such as depression, stress and anxiety.

Entisar's Inspiring Journey: From a Cook to a Second Lieutenant..

A Tale of Resilience and Determination

Born out of adversity, success emerges triumphant. This is the captivating tale of a woman whose life has been marred by hardship from a tender age. Undeterred by the challenges she faced, she navigated through them with unwavering determination, propelling herself towards her cherished aspirations. From her humble beginnings as a cook in police stations, she charted an extraordinary course that ultimately led her to become a second lieutenant. This remarkable narrative epitomizes the indomitable spirit, persistence, and relentless pursuit of goals in the face of adversity. Through her professional and personal journey, we gain valuable insights into the depths of her remarkable accomplishments, serving as a testament to the resilience and triumph that await those who dare to strive for greatness.

By: Ahmed Bajoaim
 Women in Development and Peace

Entisar Confronts Challenges

Amidst the trials and tribulations faced by women in societies entrenched in customs, traditions, and arduous living conditions, resilience and unity prevail. Entisar, in her interview with Women in Development and Peace newspaper, wholeheartedly shares her perspective on life.

Residing in the city of Mukalla, nestled in the southern governorate of Hadramout, 38-year-old Entisar candidly recounts her journey. Having discontinued her education after primary school, she entered into matrimony at a tender age of merely 16. Blessed with five children, she found herself separated from her husband after approximately 11 years of marriage, assuming sole responsibility for her offspring. Bereft of a provider, neither her own family nor her children's circumstances were any more favorable. Driven by the necessity to support her children and foster independence, she embarked on a relentless pursuit of employ-

ment, determined to ensure their self-sufficiency without reliance on others.

Her Early Years in the Police

Continuing her narrative, Entisar further revealed, "After an arduous quest, I stumbled upon a job opportunity at a police station, where I became a cook catering to the needs of over 40 individuals. This new role demanded immense effort and unwavering perseverance as I prepared meals for the police personnel and their distinguished guests. The station's entire staff commended my exceptional culinary skills and impeccable service. However, the financial compensation for my strenuous endeavors was meager, barely managing to meet our fundamental needs. As time passed, a turning point arrived when I secured a position as a recruit in the police force. It was then that the seed of ambition flourished within me, spurring a longing to attain higher qualifications and ranks."

Entisar's unwavering determination stemmed from her profound love for her homeland, her profound attachment to the land that nurtured her, and her dedication

to serving her fellow citizens. Nevertheless, within the confines of a local community clinging steadfastly to customs and traditions, the notion of a woman enlisting in the security and police forces faced staunch opposition. Such an act was seen as a departure from the norm, disregarding the perceived exclusivity of the profession solely for men. However, in recent years, as societal awareness has grown, many have come to recognize the pivotal role women play in the security and military domains with regard to issues concerning their fellow women.

Dream Realization

In 2016, Entisar's journey took a significant turn as she progressed from being a regular female soldier to assuming the role of a clerk and organizer for women's issues. Throughout her months-long commitment, she encountered numerous challenges along the way. However, she refused to succumb to despair and instead worked tirelessly to confront and conquer these obstacles head-on. During this period, she diligently acquired essen-

tial knowledge in criminal investigation, consistently applying it to real-life situations on an almost daily basis. It was during this time that she harbored the audacious dream that would ultimately propel her out of her difficult economic circumstances.

By late 2016, her outstanding leadership and organizational abilities earned her a promotion to the rank of "second lieutenant." Tasked with overseeing human resources and managing work teams within the women's police division, she embarked on a fresh journey teeming with responsibilities and challenges in her commitment to serving and safeguarding the community alongside her male counterparts. She exhibited remarkable competence and dedication in her new position, quickly establishing herself as a successful leader in the fields of management and leadership. Furthermore, she skillfully nurtured and motivated her team, fostering a collaborative spirit to achieve collective goals.

Lieutenant Entisar currently holds the esteemed position of female police officer at the Mukalla Security Directorate, a role she has maintained since 2020. She takes immense pride in the significant role she plays in serving her community, especially women. Moreover, she endeavors to impart the wisdom and experience she has gathered throughout her years of service in the police force. She continues to work with female recruits and trainees, offering guidance on how to confront challenges and adversity while striving to realize their ambitions.

Lieutenant Entisar's ascent to a leadership position within the women's police force played a pivotal role in encouraging



Entisar Al-Asad

the enrollment of numerous girls into the security and police sectors, which had long been monopolized by men. Today, many young women hold prominent positions, whether at districts or governorates, thanks to their inspirational efforts.

The tale of Lieutenant Entisar epitomizes a resilient and esteemed figure. She transformed her passion into a catalyst for change, development, and the fulfillment of her dreams. Her story serves as a reminder that with unwavering determination, self-confidence, and perseverance, nothing is beyond reach. It is through this extraordinary journey that she inspires us, providing a beautiful testament to her achievements. Lieutenant Entisar urges us to believe that through hard work and unwavering resolve, we can traverse the path towards our own dreams. Success awaits those who dare to seek it.

Major Leila: An Inspiring Story of Overcoming Challenges

By: Afrah Borji
 Women in Development and Peace

Although Yemeni women are restricted to certain leadership positions, they make every effort to have the right to decide the matters which affect their life. It is noticeable that women have recently occupied many high leadership positions in ministries, and their presence in the judiciary and the police has increased widely.

52-year-old Major Leila Mohamed Nasher, from Taiz Governorate, graduated from the Police Academy with a master's degree in business administration. After the government issued the first decision to allow women to join the police, she left her job as a teacher to work in the police. She was 30 at the time. Leila said, "my aspiration to serve the people prompted me to leave the field of teaching and turn to the police, in addition to other reasons, including improving my living situation."

Great Challenges, but Strong Will

Despite the criticism she was receiving for her decision to join the police, her insistence was the master of the situation. Women's presence in this field is important for the sake of women and children. Hence, I worked as the director of the Family Protection Department. Despite her diligence in her work, she said, "I am not

satisfied with my work, as it is restricted to women and children only."

Obstacles and Work

Major Leila confirmed that her work was not easy at first. She faced many obstacles. She said, "the beginning of my work in this field is very difficult. Family and society reject women's work in the police and security due to customs and traditions and society's negative perception of this field."

Leila continued, "before I worked as the director of the Family Protection Department, I had worked as a secretary to the Director of Security and Director of Officer Affairs. I then worked in the Women Police's Office and then held the position of Deputy Director of the Women's Police. Currently, I am the director of the Family Protection Department, which includes the juvenile police in Taiz (the city center)."

The Importance of Women's Presence

Women's presence holds significant importance in all the tasks they undertake, whether they are policewomen, doctors, or engineers. So, what is the importance of women working in the police?

Major Leila said, "since there was no one else to fill the position of the director of the Family Protection Department, I had the opportunity to occupy this position. Moreover, my



presence in this position is highly crucial to serve women and children and protect their rights."

Difficulties and Challenges

Leila faced many challenges when enrolling and training in the Police Academy. She said, "I experienced great suffering, even from colleagues. I could not help but ignore them. I endured society's unfair view of women's work in general and in the military in particular, because I had a dream to achieve. Our society was extremely reluctant to allow women to hold significant roles in security and defense and wear military uniforms."

Leila said, "a lawsuit was filed against me by my ex-husband to get the custody of my daughter because of my work in the security field."

Leila managed, with the cooperation

of the police, to drop the case and keep the child with her. She said, "I used to give her part of my food while she was sitting under the bed in the ward."

She continued, "I suffered greatly as a result of the ongoing conflict, the siege, the high cost of living, the negative perception of working women in the police, and the exclusion of women from leadership and decision-making positions in the Ministry of Interior, and the lack of financial and moral support."

Imperative Necessity

Women's work in social, economic, cultural, scientific life and in all public and private institutions has made women's work in the security field an inevitable necessity.

In this regard, journalist Nabil Al-Amiri said, "women's work in se-

curity and defense (police) has become crucial. They help achieve security and provide protection for people and police members. This is a shared responsibility, not limited to men without women."

Al-Amiri added, "women's work in the police and their involvement in the security process enhance their role in social and economic life and support development paths. It is necessary to have female staff who help in completing procedures related to women, whether in prisons, passport authority, educational facilities, banks, or others. Many women avoid giving men precise details in matters affecting women, such as extortion and other things. Moral principles and social values in the Arab and Islamic countries do not allow men to perform their security role with women, whether in investigation or inspection."

Al-Amiri explained the role of women in the police sector. He said, "some may say that a man is able to achieve this without the need for a woman, but reality tells otherwise. Having policewomen, such as Major Leila is very important to women's issues."

Anything in life is difficult at first, but with persistence, one can overcome many obstacles. One of the women who defied the odds was Major Leila. Despite what she went through, she achieved great success in the field she has always dreamed of.

Yemeni Women on Social Media Platforms

As there are girls who received support and assistance when they joined the security field, there are also others who entered into a bitter conflict with their families and the whole of society. However, "today society recognizes more fully than ever before the importance of women's role in safeguarding the sanctity of their homes," said Aida Al-Bajl.

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

Modern media is any internet-related form of communication, including digital communication technologies such as personal computers, mobile phones, advanced digital devices and iPads. They enable access to newspaper articles, blogs (including micro-blogs such as Twitter), music, podcasts, streaming websites and apps (such as YouTube), etc.

Modern media is an effective means to promote women's participation and presence in the field of security in Yemen.

Audio-Visual Media Research Centers

In general, modern media plays an important role in enhancing women's presence in the field of security in Yemen and contributes to addressing women's issues, encouraging society to recognize their important role in this field. Modern media can also facilitate public debates and professional discussions through radio and TV programs on topics related women's work. Such programs can foster understanding about the importance of women's role in security and defense.

Modern media can raise public awareness of the critical role that women can play in the security and defense sector. Some media outlets have presented awareness-raising programs on women's work, and some others highlighted the challenges women face in all fields. There have been also radio success stories programs featuring inspiring women in the security and defense field.

In this regard, Walid al-Dhifi, the director of a local radio, commented, "we support women in general and dedicate special programs to their issues." However, according to journalist Abdulrah-

Local radio stations lack a targeted media message, instead relying on advertising accompanied by materials of very poor quality

man Bagash, "the support provided by modern media to women is still not enough. There is no media outlet that specifically targets women and their issues."

He asserted, "FM broadcasts had the same topics. Local radio stations do not provide meaningful messages, but only poor radio advertising flashes. I do not think that the media has played its role as it should in supporting women and enhancing their presence in security and defense."

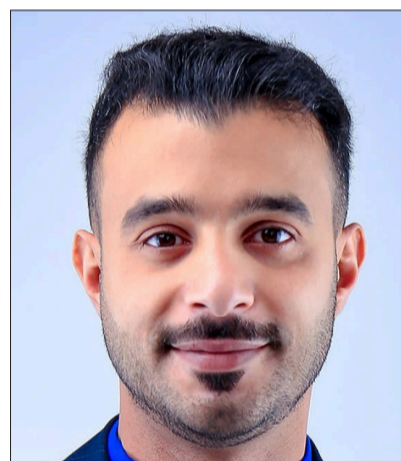
Social Media

Modern media provided opportunities to present success stories for inspiring women in the security field, such as Pilot Lieutenant, Rahma Ezzedine Al-Hushabi. Traditional and media platforms circulated the news of her graduation from the College of Aviation Sciences from Sudan. She was the first Yemeni woman in the field of military aviation.

Although the world's view of women has changed, some Yemenis still view women negatively. Samah Al-Dhabhani, a Yemeni activist and media personality, confirmed that the role of policewomen is very important in society. They contribute to providing protection to citizens, resolving their problems and conflicts, and solving sensitive issues that women cannot disclose to policemen.

Samah added, "women's presence is very low in the security field. This is probably due to the lack of awareness among society

as well as the social customs and traditions against women's work and their participation in public life."



Omar Al-Warafi

as well as the social customs and traditions against women's work and their participation in public life."

Al-Dhabhani indicated that when searching for women's police in Yemen in the search engine, the majority of sites are blocked. There is no access to information in this regard. She maintained, "I think this is due to the customs and traditions of society that often restrict women from working in certain jobs designated to men. However, as the days passed, people began to accept women's involvement in traditionally male only jobs."

Journalist Omar Al-Warafi believes that we need women's participation in many non-traditional professions. Women in the police force play a major role in maintaining security and safety alongside men. Yemeni society in particular needs women's presence in security for several considerations, the most prominent of which are the conservative customs and traditions that require hiring policewomen to deal with girls and women. Unfortunately, the same customs and traditions hinder women's work in many professions. This is one of the



Abdulrahman Bagash

contradictions in which awareness must be raised.

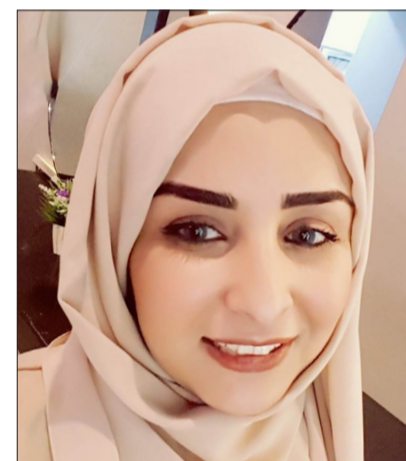
Women should resort to social media to enhance their presence in the field of security by publishing their personal success stories and real experiences. They can obtain new opportunities in this field.

Women's Crucial Presence in Security

Trainer Mansour Al-Jaradi believes that women's participation in the security field is important in establishing peace in conservative societies. Experience has shown that women have demonstrated great success in various fields.

He added, "Modern media has both negative and positive roles. As for disadvantages, it is not possible to control what is published on social media. Perhaps what is published does not always help support women's work in the security and defense sector."

"Nevertheless, modern media continues to play a pivotal role in demonstrating the importance of women in establishing peace, advocating for the rights of women and children, and protecting them



Samah Al-Dhabhani

from violence. Furthermore, it contributes to raising awareness of the role of military policewomen in peacekeeping in conflict areas," he added.

He further said, "Modern media, especially social media platforms, have contributed to supporting women and raising awareness of their intellectual and mental capabilities and practical experiences that are no less than men, and of the importance of their participation in negotiation and peacebuilding especially at this stage that Yemen is going through."

He recommended, "special platforms on social media and websites on the internet should be dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of women's participation in peacemaking. In addition, the United Nations should implement comprehensive awareness programs in this regard."

Yemeni women in general have so far faced many internal and external challenges in all fields, from the family to the whole society. They endured harsh criticism and disparagement of their abilities and skills. Despite all obstacles, Yemeni women have proven their worth with confidence and determination.



Shaping Perceptions: The Media's Impact on Women's Role in Security and Military Sectors

Among the most sensitive and significant issues in the security field are those concerning women, and there are a variety of issues pertaining to women employed in the security and defense sector. Thus, these issues need to be widely covered by the media in order to support them and present them in different spaces and programs.

By: Alia Mohammed
Women in Development and Peace

The way that security women are portrayed and represented in Yemen's media varies, as some media outlets might focus on discussing the accomplishments and success stories of women in these professions and their achievements, while others may present the experiences of women working in the security and police sector and highlight their struggles and needs. On the other hand, we may discover that there are some shortcomings in dealing with such issues.

Donia Farhan, a journalist, believes that women's work in security and defense is a sensitive subject that requires courage and great effort in covering its topics and issues.

"Everyone is aware of how difficult it is to work in the security and military fields. Thus, the majority of people lack this skill, which is more related to the nature of men in our society because they are more capable of handling a variety of tasks. However, we find that there are many women who join the security sector. Consequently, women were able to cope with the pressure of work and enter the field of security, whether it was in a police station, in a security department, or even in a camp. We also find that many women have successfully succeeded in this field better than men," she added.

She emphasized that the media focused on women working in the security field through writing success stories on the nature of their work, in addition to making reports that monitor and show the role of women in the field of security and defense. Therefore, we hope that that interest in this area will grow in order to promote and encourage women to enter this field.

Nasser Al-Shuaibi, a journalist and human rights activist, confirmed that the role of the media in supporting women's participation in

security and defense was completely absent during the past years. Due to a number of factors, the most significant of which are the security and political difficulties the nation is currently facing, there was neglect and a lack of interest in discussing women's participation in the security apparatus and the police.

"The situation is different now," he said, "as through our follow-up to this subject, the media began to grant women their rights in general and support women participating in security and defense in particular, almost two years ago."

"The media made great efforts to highlight the participation, difficulties, and accomplishments of women working in the security and police apparatus, as Yemeni women began to join the women's police, public security, counter-terrorism and drug control," he added.

He explained that due to the importance of women in the security and defense sector during the current and upcoming stages, Yemeni media has started to focus on and highlight the role of women in this field by 60%. He wished that the media and competent authorities would show more interest in the work and activity of women in the security and defense sector.

Challenges of Media Coverage of Women

The percentage of women working in the defense and security sector varies from one media outlet to another as a result of a number of different factors, such as customs, traditions, as well as social and political orientations, which affect the percentage of media coverage of women. However, many media outlets are making an effort to balance their coverage of women's involvement in this sector.

Ali Hassan Al-Khuraishi, a journalist and researcher in humanitarian and societal affairs, confirmed that the local media did not care about women's work in the security field. He believes that different types of media outlets did not highlight the security role of women, given



that work in this field was previously restricted to men, and there are those who oppose the presence of women in such work.

"We have begun to seek the presence of women in the security and defense sector, and their presence is urgently required, particularly on the security side," he added.

Al-Kharbashi indicated that the presence of women in the security field is beneficial, especially in conservative societies that need a safe space for women where survived and battered women may discuss their suffering with other females of the same gender.

Haroun Mohammed, a filmmaker, said, "Women's participation in the security service is

affected by a lack of awareness. Thus, it might have an impact on how the media covers women and its ability to shed light on this important aspect."

He pointed out that many media professionals may be exposed to danger if they report on the participation of women in the security services, as many media professionals may be denied the right to obtain information, coverage resources, and access to areas with conflicts and security difficulties, which may limit media ability to cover the issue comprehensively and accurately.

"When covering the issues of women working in the field of police, media journalists must

be committed to doing so in a comprehensive and objective manner while simultaneously highlighting both their accomplishments and difficulties," he added.

Solutions and Treatments

Increasing awareness of the importance of women's presence in the security and defense sector plays an important role in increasing the percentage of Yemeni women joining the security service. Additionally, audio, print and visual media help spread awareness of women's rights and enhance their participation in society. Therefore, it is necessary for the media to enhance the presence of women in this sector by conducting a number of awareness-raising and educational programs, including organizing campaigns calling for the importance of the presence of women in the security sector, holding workshops, special seminars, and programs to encourage women in the security sector, in addition to providing support for leadership roles in this field.

Ali Hassan Al-Khuraishi, a journalist and researcher in humanitarian and societal affairs, emphasized how crucial it is for the media to adopt women's roles in security and defense and to highlight these roles as one of the cornerstones of social stability.

He explained that it is more likely that criminals and drug smugglers will take advantage of women in communities where women are underrepresented in security, defense, and community peace posts by using those women to smuggle contraband goods.

He believes that it is necessary for the media to adopt success stories of girls who were employed in the security sector and contributed to societal peace and security. He also emphasized the importance of having programs aimed at promoting equal opportunities between men and women in the security sector in cooperation with local private and governmental media. Additionally, it is crucial to make sure that women in this sector can develop and advance without facing discrimination or any other particular barriers.

He added that special women's academies should be established so that women can acquire security and defense techniques and obtain recognized certifications in these areas, assisting them in finding security positions in both the government and other sectors. Additionally, women's organizations should be encouraged to advocate for women's rights and encourage them to participate more actively in society.

Breaking Stereotypes: Women Shining Bright as Actors in the Security Field

Mona Salem: Exemplifying Challenge and Determination in Serving Societal Security

By: Yasmine Abdulhafeez
Women in Development and Peace

Mona Salem Mohammed Obaid, currently serving as a policewoman in Al-Houta Security Department in Lahj Governorate, located in the southern region of the country, has overcome numerous challenges in her life. Growing up in a family of ten siblings with both parents absent, Mona's determination shined brightly as she pursued her education. Tragically, her father passed away during her formative years while she was still in basic schooling, and her mother passed away the same year she graduated from high school.

Refusing to succumb to the difficult circumstances she faced, Mona made the decision to continue her studies and enrolled at the University of Lahj, Faculty of Arts, specializing in Sociology in 1997. Reflecting on her journey, Mona recalls, "After graduating from university, I found myself at home for four years without any activities or employment. Eventually, I participated in the elections in 2003 and later took part in the general population and housing census in 2004."

Mona's life took further turns as she got married and became a mother to a son and a daughter, only to experience divorce eight years later. Seeking stability, she returned to her father's house and explored different professional fields. She worked as a field surveyor, social worker for international organizations operating in Lahj governorate, and also ventured into teaching and correcting exams. Eventually, Mona made the decision to join the military service.

Despite the prevailing restrictions and limitations imposed on women in Yemen due to the country's current situation, Yemeni women have strived to break into the security sector, aiming to play a vital role in consolidating security within government

institutions, private organizations, airports, prisons, and beyond. Their efforts are dedicated to ensuring that Yemeni citizens can enjoy a secure and peaceful environment in this conservative nation.

The entry of women into the police force marks a significant milestone, granting Yemeni women the opportunity to actively contribute alongside men in securing peace and resolving conflicts. Encouraged by the presence of fellow women within law enforcement agencies, female citizens feel empowered to approach police stations to seek justice without hesitation or shame.

Echoing this sentiment, Mona emphasizes, "The involvement of women in security facilities and police agencies carries immense importance. Many female citizens feel uncomfortable entering such spaces due to societal norms and inadequate perceptions surrounding women accessing them."

Continuing her interview with Women in Development and Peace Newspaper, Mona explains, "Numerous women who come seeking assistance or filing complaints feel an instant sense of comfort in my presence as another woman. They are encouraged by this, and their fears and anxieties dissipate. Thus, the presence of women in the security field becomes crucial within a society governed by customs and traditions."

Furthermore, Mona highlights the necessity for a female workforce within prisons, considering the significant number of young women, often in their twenties, who find themselves incarcerated. As such, there is an urgent need for qualified women personnel, be it investigators or administrators, to work within these correctional facilities.

Her Early Career

In the early stages of her career, Mona reflects on the support she received from her close friend, Jawhara Moftah. It was Jawhara

who initially proposed the idea of both of them considering a career in the police field and applying to join the military. Fortuitously, they found themselves just in time as the Security Department had recently announced their requirement for women to fill roles in the security division. Fortunately, Mona and Jawhara managed to submit their applications just before the registration period concluded, securing their names among the final entries.

Recalling the subsequent events, Mona recounts, "Following the registration process, the Security Department contacted me for an interview, and I was fortunate enough to be selected for the position." Her journey commenced as a security guard stationed at the entrance of the governor's office, a role that carried substantial responsibility. After a year of fulfilling her duties at the governor's office, Mona then transitioned to Al-Houta Security Department, marking a significant progression in her career within the police force.

Achievements & Awards

Mona actively participated in various training courses within the military domain, as mentioned in her interview with the Women in Development and Peace newspaper. These programs proved to be highly beneficial for her, enabling her to acquire extensive experience, skills, and knowledge in the realm of security. The training covered a range of important aspects, including handling complaints and prisoners, conducting searches on women accused of crimes, and executing other security-related tasks. Additionally, Mona had the opportunity to undergo field courses in training camps, serving as a crucial foundation for her career in the police field.

Mona's dedication to her work, commitment to setting an exemplary role for women in the military and security sector, and her

efforts to enhance the quality of security services did not go unnoticed. She received numerous honors and recognition for her outstanding performance, such as being honored by one of her superiors.

Struggles & Setbacks

However, Mona and other women working in the security field face various challenges and obstacles that impede their full engagement in their duties. One major hurdle is the perception of society and families regarding women's aspirations and work in this field. Like many others, Mona experienced initial opposition from some members of her family when she expressed her desire to join the security and military services. Nonetheless, her determination and insistence ultimately resulted in their acceptance and support.

Mona believes that societal viewpoints are gradually evolving, and acceptance of women's presence within security and military institutions is growing. Criticisms that were formerly directed towards women aspiring to serve as police officers or security personnel are gradually diminishing over time.

The Husband's Perspective

Six years after her divorce, Mona found love and remarried a man who worked as her manager at Al-Houta Security Department. Her husband has been a source of support and encouragement for her, reinforcing her commitment to her work and endorsing the idea of women serving as police officers, security personnel, and in related fields.

Lieutenant Abdu Ali Qassem Al-Dhalei, Mona's husband, views her success as a triumph for the entire security system and for women who have aspired to similar careers but faced setbacks.

He provides Mona with both emotional

and material support, facilitating her administrative and field work, as well as any legal procedures related to women in the police force.

Despite being more experienced in the security field due to his seniority, Al-Dhalei recognizes that women are capable partners in any occupation, as long as they adhere to societal ethics and morals that safeguard their reputations. He describes women in various roles, such as being mothers in education and the bearers of compassion in medicine, emphasizing that in security, they serve as protective shields for oppressed and abused women.

Mona conveys a message to Yemeni girls interested in pursuing careers in the military and security fields, urging them to be encouraged and resolute in their decision. She highlights the importance of their dedication in contributing to peace and security for women who seek assistance from these institutions for any reason.

Furthermore, she calls upon Yemeni women to overcome their fears and societal barriers, emphasizing that this field is admirable and serves their country, city, and fellow women. Mona believes that there are circumstances specific to women that necessitate female intervention, such as conducting searches on women at military checkpoints, handling accused and incarcerated women, and conducting investigations pertaining to women's affairs.

Mona's personal journey exemplifies the challenges faced by women working in the security field, from opposition within their families to societal constraints. Nonetheless, her persistence and determination have been instrumental in overcoming these obstacles. The authority of customs, traditions, and societal norms cannot extinguish the aspirations of strong women, regardless of the field they choose to pursue.

Urgent Need for Female Security Personnel at Events and Celebrations to Enhance Security

By: **Afrah Borji**

Women in Development and Peace

Women have played a crucial role in numerous domains, particularly in the realm of security, where their presence holds great significance. This is particularly important in public and private celebrations and festivals, given our conservative society's preferences. As per cultural norms, a woman prefers to have her belongings searched or inspected only by another woman. Therefore, women are indispensable in collaborating with men to ensure security, arrangement, and organization for all occasions. Notably, women's participation is highly desired in weddings, both public and private events, as well as celebrations and festivals.

Shaima'a Al-Silwi, the director of the Security Services Office, emphasizes the utmost importance of having policewomen (security women) present at various events for several reasons, foremost among them being the efficient organization of celebrations and the maintenance of security and order. Shaima'a further emphasizes that without appropriate conditions and preferences, it would be impossible to maintain order during such festive occasions.

Security Women's Duties & Obligations

Shaima'a emphasizes the diverse responsibilities undertaken by security women during public and private occasions and celebrations. These tasks include safeguarding the belongings of attendees, ensuring the well-being of the event's hosts, and paying meticulous attention to every detail of the occasion.

Indeed, security women carry out various duties, as recounted by journalist Haitham Daoud. Firstly, they focus on organizing seating arrangements and preventing overcrowding among the female attendees. They diligently conduct searches of women's bags to ensure the safety of all participants. Additionally, they diligently search for any mobile phones equipped with cameras, preventing unauthorized photography of the guests. Lastly, security women intervene to resolve any disputes that may arise among women during the event.

Shaima'a Al-Silwi further adds, "The role of security women is essential in upholding the security of both public and private events and festivals. They confiscate phones upon entry to prevent unauthorized filming and prioritize thorough inspections at the entrance gate, thereby ensuring the absence of any potential suspects."

Security for Women's Ceremonies

Hanadi Hadi, a citizen and bride, emphasizes the significance of having security women present at events. She underscores their unique ability to fulfill the entrusted responsibilities with utmost efficien-



cy. Hanadi explains that delegating these tasks to acquaintances or relatives of the celebrants may lead to imbalances and a lack of efficiency. Conversely, the presence of a security woman ensures that everyone will listen to her instructions and respects her directives due to her professional role.

Journalist Kholoud Al-Hammadi further supports this notion by highlighting the specific tasks that are better suited for women in women's celebrations. For instance, during filming, it is crucial to have security women present to maintain the integrity of the images and preserve the cherished memories of the celebration. Additionally, the role of security forces at special occasions includes ensuring the well-being of children and preserving the decorative elements within the venue. The importance of having security personnel at women's celebrations has become a necessary security requirement. This demand stems from the women's own desire to have organized and secure celebrations.

Advantages of Having Female Security Personnel at Events

Lina Ebrahim, a security worker, emphasizes the essential role of secu-

urity women in preserving the safety and security of both public and private events and celebrations. Their duty includes preventing unauthorized individuals from entering the venue and maintaining public security by ensuring only invited guests are present. This helps create a controlled environment and ensures the smooth running of the event. In Yemeni society, there is a general fear regarding mobile phones equipped with cameras, particularly due to concerns about unauthorized photography at private and public gatherings. This fear arises from the potential spread of these images, which may impact the individual's privacy.

Photographer Nisreen Qashimah adds that although women in Yemen typically adhere to wearing niqabs, on special occasions among women, they have the freedom to wear whatever they like. However, the prevalence of mobile phones with cameras has raised concerns about the unauthorized dissemination of pictures, whether through social networking sites or by individuals seeking to discredit others or profit from selling the images. Consequently, some families hosting special occasions are forced to impose restrictions on mobile phones

to prevent such incidents. The presence of security women is crucial in this context due to societal customs and traditions that demand respect for women's privacy and the need to maintain their special status without transgression or interference from men.

Journalist Haitham Daoud emphasizes the importance of having women as security personnel, particularly in a conservative society. Their presence helps ensure the smooth organization of private and public events and celebrations involving women. Female security personnel create a sense of reassurance among attendees, considering the cultural context. Hiring male security personnel to deal with women or search their belongings can be challenging and may violate privacy norms. Therefore, respecting women's privacy becomes a crucial aspect upheld by the presence of female security staff.

Community Perspectives

The presence of women in secu-



urity roles can be attributed to various reasons, and opinions may differ on the matter. One reason is personal, where women choose to work in the security sector due to the current situation. Additionally, their presence is deemed necessary in events and celebrations due to the significant role they play in maintaining security.

Journalist Ala'a Faqirah highlights several reasons why women are increasingly working as security guards during occasions and celebrations. Firstly, it preserves women's freedom, allowing them to actively participate in the

The presence of female security personnel is crucial in maintaining security during public and private events and celebrations.

workforce. Moreover, the ongoing conflicts and economic effects that impact people's daily lives have pushed many women to seek alternative job opportunities outside their usual fields.

These circumstances have compelled women to work in security to meet their families' needs and improve their living conditions.

Faqirah emphasizes the importance of having female security personnel at parties and events. Their presence not only helps organize the celebrations but also ensures security measures are in place. Female security personnel are entrusted with various responsibilities such as preventing the entry of mobile phones and resolving any disputes that may arise within the celebration halls. Despite the challenges associated with these tasks, women are capable of fulfilling them effectively.

Viewpoints & Encounters

Mohsen Dosh, a human development trainer, acknowledges that the presence of security forces in events and festivals is driven by the need to prevent the misuse of devices that could pose a danger to society, such as taking unauthorized pictures or engaging in other potentially harmful activities. Dosh also points out that while some female security personnel possess natural skills and techniques in dealing with others, unfortunately, not all of them have received the necessary training in this regard.

The current reality we live in necessitates the involvement of women in the security field. Women are now active participants in various domains, whether as housewives, students, employees in different sectors, or security guards responsible for maintaining safety. Consequently, the presence of women in the security field has become crucial for ensuring security and protection during various occasions and festivals.

Yemeni Women in Security and Defense Overcome Numerous Challenges with Determination and Perseverance

10% of Security Service Personnel in Hadhramout Coast are Policewomen, in contrast to men

Women working in the security and defense sector encounter significant obstacles that hinder their ability to fulfill their roles effectively. Key challenges include a lack of recognition for their capabilities, inadequate training and equipment, as well as pervasive gender discrimination and unequal opportunities stemming from cultural and social biases pervasive in Yemeni society.



By: Ahmed Bajoaim
Women in Development and Peace

These challenges have a detrimental impact on their overall capabilities and performance, compromising their effectiveness in their respective fields.

It is crucial, therefore, to address these issues and create an enabling environment that empowers women in the security and defense sector. By doing so, we can enhance their capabilities, improve their performance, and enable them to carry out their duties with utmost proficiency.

Lack of Women's Military College Hinders Women's Inclusion in Security and Defense Sector

Social Challenges

According to First Assistant Mona Gharamah, Director of Women's Police and Family and Juvenile Protection in Hadhramout Coast Security, women face social challenges when it comes to joining the security and defense forces. These challenges primarily stem from entrenched family customs and traditions that often confine women to their homes and limit their visibility in certain professions. Additionally, certain segments of society hold misconceptions about women in security or military roles, further inhibiting their participation in advanced fields.

In an interview with the Women in Development and Peace newspaper, she emphasized the necessity of women's involvement in military and security forces. Women are uniquely positioned to handle issues and problems that specifically impact women, such as investigations, female inspections, working with female prisoners, and providing protection and care. To address these challenges, it is crucial to eliminate imposed restrictions and encourage girls to pursue careers in these fields, as their presence can have a positive impact on society as a whole.

Similarly, Fatima Al-Kasadi, head of the electronic extortion department in the Mukalla city directorate of Hadhramout Governorate, discussed the various obstacles that hinder women's participation in security or military service. These obstacles include societal resistance to accepting women in leadership positions within the security sector, particularly in conservative societies.

Families may also express concerns about the potential risks associated with women interacting with men and the impact on their reputation. However, it is important to recognize that women's presence in security forces is a means of self-affirmation, building strong personalities, and ensuring the safety of vulnerable women.

Cultural Challenges

In the realm of security and defense, women encounter significant cultural challenges stemming from entrenched beliefs and stereotypes that assign men as the sole bearers of responsibility for security affairs. Additionally, societal restrictions serve to curtail their participation in these sectors. Nevertheless, Yemeni women in security and defense exhibit resilience and determination when confronting these obstacles, striving to demonstrate their capabilities and make meaningful contributions to the nation's security.

Highlighting the most prominent cultural challenges faced by Yemeni women across all sectors, including security and defense, Gharamah focuses on the issue of gender discrimination. Certain family groups, influenced by long-standing cultural norms, prohibit their daughters from joining the Security and Defense Forces. Consequently, these negative cultural practices act as significant deterrents, quashing the aspirations of young girls who seek to shape their futures in domains such as the police service.

In her statement, Gharamah outlines various factors that can facilitate the inclusion of Yemeni women in the security service, simultaneously eradicating detrimental cultural ideas. These factors encompass providing women with the necessary support and training to enable their entry into the security and judicial services. It also involves raising awareness and challenging negative cultural beliefs that hinder wo-

men's involvement in security. Recognizing and amplifying the value of women's roles in society, underscoring their significance in upholding security and justice, and guaranteeing their protection and support are pivotal steps in this endeavor.

First Assistant Mona Gharamah emphasizes the importance of implementing measures to prevent discrimination and sexism, while concurrently providing essential protection and support for women. Encouraging men and society as a whole to endorse women's participation in security and recognizing the pivotal role women play in maintaining security and public peace are crucial steps. She emphasizes that success in attaining these objectives enables women to pursue their aspirations in security and defense while dismantling negative cultural barriers that impede their progress.

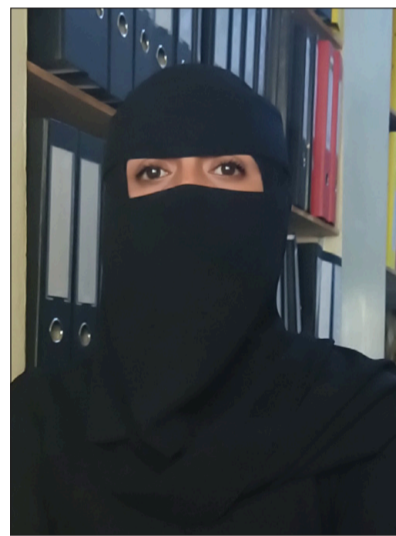
Educational Challenges

Yemen finds itself amidst continuous unrest and internal conflicts, impairing the stability of its security landscape. Consequently, the educational system struggles to adequately cater to the needs of women aspiring to work in the realms of security and defense. Furthermore, Yemeni women endure the absence of educational infrastructure in conflict-ridden areas. Overcoming this challenge entails ensuring safe and appropriate educational opportunities for women in these locations.

Addressing the issue, Fatima Al-Kasadi underscores the primary educational obstacles impeding women from pursuing careers in security and defense. The absence of a women's military college in Hadhramout and several other governorates is particularly concerning. Al-Kasadi views this omission as a form of underestimation towards women and their aptitude for security matters. Establishing a women's military college would facilitate career progression, enabling women to assume crucial positions and ranks within the security and defense sectors.

Work-related Difficulties

An unnamed female soldier serving in the Military Police in Hadhramaut shed light on the numerous challenges faced by female soldiers within the military and security forces. These hurdles encompass substandard trai-



Fatima Al-Kasadi

ning and qualifications, along with a lack of courses and workshops aimed at enhancing the experiences of women in this field. The soldier emphasized that the courses offered to them predominantly consist of theoretical content, lacking practical applications that would contribute to their growth while fulfilling their national duties.

Additionally, she noted that the process of promotions within the ranks is predominantly biased against women, often requiring an extended duration of service before advancement. This poses a significant obstacle for dedicated and ambitious women, deviating from the customary practice of promotions being granted after three years of service in the field. Concluding her statement, she expressed concern that the absence of opportunities for policewomen to develop their military experience and rise through the ranks reflects adversely on the system as a whole, extending beyond its impact on women alone.

Remedies & Recommendations

In terms of potential solutions and recommendations to elevate the status of women in the realm of security and defense, Fatima Al-Kasadi, the head of the electronic extor-

tion department in Mukalla Security, emphasized the need to acknowledge and appreciate the role of women in crime reduction, case management, and overall control of security affairs. It is crucial not to marginalize or underestimate their abilities. Al-Kasadi proposed the creation of educational materials to promote the military as a career choice for girls, which can be disseminated through radio and television platforms, thereby encouraging them to serve their country and fellow female citizens.

Furthermore, Al-Kasadi stressed the significance of involving security women in community committees, conflict resolution, and addressing family issues. This approach is considered one of the solutions to restore confidence in women and provide a strong incentive for their participation in this field. She also advocated for increasing awareness sessions within the community to underscore the importance of women's presence in security and defense for the establishment of public tranquility. Additionally, she highlighted the necessity of challenging societal traditions that diminish women's role in society.

Addressing the issue from a related standpoint, First Assistant Mona Gharamah demanded the admission of girls to the Military Police College in the forthcoming years to enhance their security and military capabilities. Gharamah called for the establishment of a dedicated headquarters and comprehensive management structure for women's police personnel across various governorates, while promoting equal opportunities for women to assume leadership positions. Gharamah appealed to the relevant authorities to facilitate women's entry into the security services due to the significant shortage of female recruits. Currently, the representation of female policewomen in Hadhramout coast's security service stands at a mere 10% compared to men.

To overcome these challenges, it is essential to foster a culture that promotes women's involvement in the security and defense sector. This can be accomplished by providing training opportunities and facilitating professional development for women engaged in these fields, given their valuable contributions to national security and the country's sustainable development.

Boosting Women's Presence in Security & Defense:

The Vital Role of Civil Society Organizations Women in Police: Striving for Support amidst Marginalization from Multiple Perspectives

Civil society is composed of informal institutions, including voluntary associations and non-governmental organizations, that work to promote and disseminate the values and principles that aim to develop and advance societies. These organizations play a critical role in achieving the principles of good governance, especially in the field of protecting human and women's rights and freedoms in all fields. One of the sustainable development goals is to ensure gender equality and empower women and girls. What is the role of civil society organizations in promoting and supporting the presence of women in the security and defense fields?



By: Haneen Al-Wahsh & Hanan Hussein
Women in Development and Peace

Four Years Back

Organizations continue to steadfastly and effectively support rights and freedoms, particularly in the governorate of Aden. However, the situation in Sana'a, Dhamar, and some northern regions has seen significant challenges since the beginning of 2015, as highlighted by Haifa Al-Matari, the Director of Yemen Family Care Association (YFCA) in Sana'a. Speaking from her experience in Sana'a and her role in managing the Family Protection Department, Haifa states that there is currently no support from internal or external organizations. Any existing support appears to be monopolized by general managers. However, in the past, there was extensive support, including a session held three to four years ago lasting four months. Unfortunately, responsible authorities subsequently banned such sessions completely. In some instances, a few short-term courses were conducted by human rights organizations, but these were also monopolized by the general managers.

During her speech, Haifa elaborated on the period before 2011, highlighting the abundance of training courses and workshops that offered consistent training and rehabilitation opportunities for women. Haifa herself served as a trainer at the police school, where she trained numerous policewomen in various skills, including weapon handling, disarming, and installation, among others. However, she expressed her concern regarding the dwindling number of women currently active in the field. She narrated an incident where she encountered new policewomen during her return from Aden Airport. Curious about the whereabouts of her former students, Haifa discreetly inquired about them, only to discover that the new recruits were unfamiliar with her trainees. This revelation left her contemplating whether the previous policewomen had been dismissed or if they had chosen to leave the field altogether.

Haifa further elaborates on the significant support that was available in the past. She recalls an instance in 2014 when a group of girls, including herself, received support from the French embassy to study at the French Academy. This support extended to Haifa as well, as she was granted assistance from the French embassy to travel abroad and study at the Higher School for Police Officers in Paris. In 2016, she worked as a translator in the office of the Minister of Interior, serving as a liaison officer between the Ministry of the Interior and the French Embassy. Additionally, she mentions her participation as a security officer for the UN during the National Dialogue Conference.

Haifa notes that numerous courses were previously conducted, focusing on women's and children's rights, legal matters, and empowerment. These courses aimed to educate women on their rights and enable them to express themselves and advocate for their right to a fulfilling life. However, she emphasizes that after 2015, the availability of such opportunities drastically declined, eventually leading to their complete absence.

In her statement, Haifa mentions that currently, most policewomen are primarily engaged in secretarial and administrative tasks, or involved in executing court orders related to seizing and evacuating homes. However, she notes that policewomen are no longer as visibly present as they used to be at various security checkpoints and entry points.

Supporting Courses and Workshops

According to the information provided, there have been numerous courses and workshops conducted by various civil society organizations to enhance the skills and knowledge of women police officers. One example is the Training and Rehabilitation Sector of the Ministry of Interior, which collaborated with the International Organization for Penal Reform in Aden to hold a specialized training workshop in July 2020. This particular workshop focused on equipping women police officers with the necessary tools and strategies to address and handle issues related to violence against women.

The workshop was organized as part of a project aimed at enhancing the capacity of women police officers in Yemen. This project, titled "Promoting a gender-responsive approach within law enforcement agencies," is funded by the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

During a three-day workshop in July 2020, fifteen female police participants were equipped with valuable skills and knowledge related to various topics. These included the understanding of domestic violence and violence against women, police procedures, safeguarding women and girls, standards for their protection and treatment, as well as techniques for interviewing female victims of violence.

In October 2020, the International Organization for Penal Reform initiated a project in Yemen with the objective of developing and strengthening women's police work. The project aimed to enhance the capacities of women in the police force and promote a gender-responsive approach within law enforcement agencies, and was funded by the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The project had the objective of enhancing peace and security in Yemen by strengthening the capacity of the women's police unit within the Ministry of Interior. As part of this effort, the project aimed to improve the skills and abilities of 700 policewomen in the women's police unit. Their training focused on maintaining law and order while upholding human rights standards and promoting justice. In addition to providing support to the Ministry of the Interior, the project focused on empowering policewomen through comprehensive training programs. It aimed to address the challenges faced by women in reporting crimes, emphasizing the need to remove existing obstacles. Furthermore, the project worked towards raising

international standards and implementing best practices to ensure gender equality and equal opportunities for women in police forces.

In August 2021, the Yemeni Women's Union in Hadhramout launched the third training workshop exclusively designed for female police officers in Mukalla, the capital of Hadhramout. This workshop was a crucial component of the "Enhancing Protection Against COVID-19" project, successfully implemented with financial support from the United Nations Development Program in Yemen and the Republic of Korea. During the training workshop, various important topics were covered. These included discussions on the role, rights, and duties of women in the police force, as well as the concept of community policing and its operational mechanisms. Emphasis was placed on highlighting the significance of partnerships between civil society organizations and security services. The workshop also delved into international and Arab experiences with community partnerships and how they are measured at the United Nations level.

The focus of the third workshop was twofold. Firstly, it aimed to empower female police officers and security personnel in the city of Mukalla. The workshop provided them with valuable knowledge, skills, and resources to enhance their capabilities in maintaining law and order. Secondly, the workshop sought to empower women by promoting gender justice and ensuring health security in both Aden and Mukalla.

In August of the same year, the Cultural Media Center, in collaboration with the Aden Security Department, organized a workshop in Aden. The workshop was attended by 20 employees from the security sector and women police officers in the governorate. The main focus of the workshop was to shed light on the crucial concepts of human rights and the significance of UN Resolution 1325, which focuses on women, security, and peace.

The objective of the workshop was to familiarize the participants with the fundamental principles of human rights outlined in international conventions and the United Nations' system for safeguarding these rights. Additionally, the workshop aimed to provide insights into the operational mechanisms of domestic institutions, along with the guiding principles that shape their work. Specifically, it aimed to highlight the importance of the Investigation and Inquiry Department as a humanitarian principle, designed to prevent any infringements of these protected rights.

In November 2021, the Basma Association for Development initiated a training course titled "Reducing the violation of women prisoners' rights and raising the level of prison performance." This course specifically targeted policewomen working in prisons. The training was organized in collaboration with Search for Common Ground (SFCG) and received funding from the European Union (EU).

The course was part of a broader initiative to support women's rights, combat gender-based violence, and amplify the voices of women in Yemen. Approximately 20 individuals from the districts of Al-Houta and Tuban were beneficiaries of this program.

The training course focused on enhancing the knowledge and skills of policewomen regarding their roles in addressing issues related to violence against women. It specifically aimed to educate them about the standards of treatment for women and girls within law enforcement agencies. The course aimed to refine and improve their capabilities in dealing with female prisoners held in detention centers, emphasizing the importance of humane treatment in various security locations.

In February 2022, a dialogue forum took place at the Yemen Center for Human Rights Studies. The forum focused on discussing the needs of women within the context of community protection, women's police, and law enforcement. This forum was conducted as part of a program aimed at enhancing security at the local level in Yemen. The program was implemented by the Yemen Center for Human Rights Studies in Aden, in collaboration with Resonate! Yemen.

At the forum, there were notable attendees who represented leadership positions within the women's police force. These included Colonel Wazira Mohammed Abdullatif, who served as the Director of the Family Protection Department in Aden Security, and Colonel Magedah Mohammed Mansour, who held the position of Director of the Juvenile Police. Additionally, assistant police leaders from various directorates, who had recently been appointed to their roles and responsibilities, also participated in the forum.

During the forum, an important proposal was put forth by the center, suggesting the empowerment and inclusion of women police officers in executive positions at the police stations located within the directorates of the capital, Aden. This proposal was presented to the director of security in Aden, who responded positively and swiftly. In light of this, the director made the decision to appoint competent women police officers as assistants to the security directors of police stations in the various directorates.

In March 2022, the Yemen Center for Human Rights Studies joined forces with Resonate! Yemen to host the third training workshop. The workshop focused on a range of crucial topics, including communication skills, identifying causes and sources of conflicts, effective methods of conflict resolution, guidelines for engaging with foreigners, addressing the needs of both legal and illegal refugees, and responding to social issues through a gender lens. Additionally, the workshop provided insights into the concept of gender and highlighted the significance of adopting principled approaches in responding to gender-based violence. Participants

also learned strategies for effectively supporting victims of social violence.

The second training workshop was designed as part of a comprehensive training program spanning nine days. Specifically, it aimed to enhance the skills and knowledge of 75 officers and security personnel from the women's police in Aden. This program focuses on strengthening local-level security in Yemen and is implemented in various regions, including Aden, Hadhramout, Shabwa, Ma'rib, and Taiz.

The course focused on enhancing and developing the relationship between members of the security services and women's police with the citizens. The objective was to foster a strong community partnership that promotes security, stability, and effectively addresses challenges, problems, and negative phenomena that undermine public life and citizen security. This approach aligns with the principles outlined in the constitution, national laws, and international humanitarian laws regarding human rights.

In December 2022, a graduation ceremony was held to honor the first batch of women police officers in the government facilities guard forces. The ceremony marked the successful completion of their training course, which took place at the Special Forces camp for facility guards.

The training courses were conducted in an intensive manner in Aden Governorate. In June 2023, several workshops were organized by the General Department for Family Protection and Women's Police at the Ministry of Interior in collaboration with the International Organization for Penal Reform. These workshops aimed to motivate and encourage the work of women's police, with the valuable support of the Government of the Netherlands. A total of 25 participants, including both male and female leaders from the Ministry of Interior, the National Committee for Women, as well as the Departments of Family Protection and Women's Police in the governorates of Aden, Lahj, Abyan, Hadhramout, and Taiz, actively took part in this workshop. The primary objective of the workshop was to foster gender equality within the Ministry of Interior and to encourage greater participation of women in various ministry agencies. Additionally, the workshop aimed to create opportunities for women to work in police stations across the governorates.

Dr. Shafiq Al-Wahsh, the head of the National Committee, emphasized the significance of women in the police force, emphasizing their pivotal role in safeguarding women from different forms of violence, particularly those rooted in gender-based discrimination. Dr. Al-Wahsh emphasized the crucial role of women's police, who specialize in investigating cases related to women. Their expertise helps overcome the barriers that women may encounter in communicating their complaints to regular police stations.

Despite facing challenges from customs, traditions, regulations, and the ongoing conflict, the women's police force in the Republic of Yemen continues to play a crucial role. They are taking positive steps towards the desired goal of developing security work and establishing their position in providing security and public peace.

Security Women: Embracing Their Self-Perception Over Others' Opinions

When examining the capabilities and contributions of women working in the security field, it becomes evident that they offer a wide range of services through their presence in various institutions and security sectors within the Ministry of Interior. They display their ability to handle entrusted tasks, both public and private, adapting their performance to the specific nature of each task.

Two types of performance exist in the women's police force. The first type is organizational and legal-administrative, encompassing those working in administrative, executive, or legal offices. The second type is fieldwork, which often involves collaboration between men and women. Policewomen are not excluded from any security field, with exceptions only arising due to their biological status.

It is worth mentioning that female security and military personnel demonstrate remarkable skill and patience in handling the diverse cases assigned to them. They acquire these qualities through their experience in addressing women's issues, gender-related matters, cases involving women and children, juvenile policing, as well as performing duties such as inspection, arrest, and detention of female offenders. Furthermore, they contribute to service areas, such as immigration, passports, civil status, and airport security.

Policewomen undergo comprehensive training that equips them to handle all security tasks effortlessly. They possess a wide range of skills and possess a cultural understanding that allows them to be effective in their role. To increase women's participation, it is essential to recruit more women in security work, striving for equal representation alongside men. Efforts should be made to ensure gender equality in institutes and schools, such as the Police College. Additionally, the Police School's curriculum should be updated to align with similar academies in other countries. The implementation of Resolution 1325 is crucial in empowering women and providing them with leadership opportunities. However, it is important to address the fact that many security leaders have not allowed women to attain these positions.

Currently, initiatives are underway to enhance women's participation, such as involving policewomen in day-to-day operations, integrating them within the Ministry of Interior's plan to activate security, women, and peace measures. Additionally, efforts are being made to broaden and implement the concept of gender across all security fields. By doing so, the role of women police officers aims to achieve justice.

The security woman possesses a multitude of qualities that set her apart from her male counterparts. She demonstrates high levels

of discipline, commitment, vigilance, and strength, particularly in challenging circumstances. Her work reflects a greater level of sophistication, accuracy, and attention to detail, highlighting her exceptional qualities as compared to her fellow male soldiers.

Women engaged in security or military roles play a crucial role in providing significant social services that should not be underestimated. They, like their male counterparts, adhere to regulations and legal systems. However, the security woman's distinguishing characteristic lies in her ability to combine strength, patience, endurance, risk aversion, wisdom, and the utilization of her extensive practical experiences.

Policewomen undertake multifaceted tasks within the security field, despite encountering numerous challenges in their day-to-day operations. They work across various departments, including land, sea, and air ports, as well as central and remand prisons. They accompany female prisoners during trials, work in hospitals, and serve in institutions necessitating continuous presence and care. The nature of their work may entail a range of assigned responsibilities, for which they receive compensation in the form of a salary.

In addition to their professional duties, security and military women hold a second job—taking care of their families. The well-being of their personal lives hinges on their commitment to fulfilling all familial obligations. Whether as a daughter, sister, wife, or mother, they take on domestic responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning, teaching, staying up late, and performing other tasks typical of women. Despite assuming these unpaid duties, they often lack the motivation, encouragement, and appreciation that acknowledges their substantial contributions to household chores and meeting the family's needs.

Despite juggling multiple tasks within the practical and familial spheres, the security and military woman assumes full responsibility for any shortcomings in both areas. This demonstrates her unwavering commitment, discipline, and selflessness, amplifying her dedication to her family and profession.

Despite the invaluable contributions made by women in security and military roles, there are still dissenting voices that oppose their participation in these fields, labeling it as a "moral breach" that contradicts customs and traditions. However, when the dignity of wives, sisters, and women in general is violated during armed conflicts or certain security operations, these very individuals often demand the presence of security and military women to address and prevent such violations. It is imperative that society recognizes this

necessity and extends support accordingly.

A policewoman epitomizes commitment and discipline, demonstrating even greater devotion while carrying out her duties. She stands apart from her male colleagues due to her capability to handle various tasks and responsibilities, as well as provide social services that are often beyond the scope of men. In addition to her responsibilities, she receives a salary for fulfilling her official duties.

The role of a wife and a mother, dedicated to serving her family, may be unpaid in financial terms, but it, in no way, diminishes the importance of family bonds. Nonetheless, it is crucial that these dual roles are not compromised from a legal, moral, or religious standpoint. Furthermore, there exists a third responsibility for women - pregnancy, childbirth, and nurturing. These roles demand immense effort, strength, and utmost care.

A woman holding a position in the security or military field is expected to be disciplined and accountable, adhering strictly to the law in all professional matters. In the event of any mistakes, she is subject to legal consequences and professional ac-

countability.

Despite their remarkable abilities, we occasionally encounter extremist viewpoints claiming that women are weak and incapable of contributing meaningfully to military or security work. These views also label women as fearful and unable to confront the dangers and difficulties associated with such tasks, despite possessing all the necessary qualifications that men possess.

Moreover, if we observe colleagues working side by side in the same department, we find women performing their duties with even greater efficiency and discipline, even when faced with formidable challenges. It is disheartening to witness campaigns or perspectives that harbor hostility towards their role, undermining and minimizing the importance of their work. Such viewpoints often manifest in disdain and underestimation of their contributions, particularly in the security and military sectors.

Drawing upon my specialization and extensive professional experience, I can unequivocally affirm that female workers in security and military fields are diligent and resilient, regardless of the conflicting



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societal opinions surrounding their role.

The reality is that they play a significant role in serving the community, protecting vulnerable women during conflicts, ensuring security in various locations, and offering vital social services within security institutions and organizations.

Recommendations & Suggestions

Based on my extensive experience and years of fieldwork, I strongly advocate the following recommendations and proposals to enhance women's participation in the justice system:

1. Qualifying women for postgraduate studies in the security and military fields should be prioritized. Learning from other countries' experiences and implementing legal frameworks that safeguard women's rights in these domains.
2. Increasing the representation of women in judicial and security meetings, conferences, and gatherings, both domestically and internationally.
3. Demonstrating trust and confidence towards military, security, and justice-oriented women by appointing them to senior positions.
4. Encouraging security and military women to conduct legal research that serves the judicial and security structures.
5. It is crucial to provide constant motivation and recognition for the work and achievements of security and military women, which can be manifested through financial and moral support.
6. Efforts should be made to enhance the capabilities of security and military women by organizing judicial, security, and military refresher courses. These courses can help identify and rectify any shortcomings within existing laws and provide opportunities to update materials in accordance with evolving developments and advancements in these fields.



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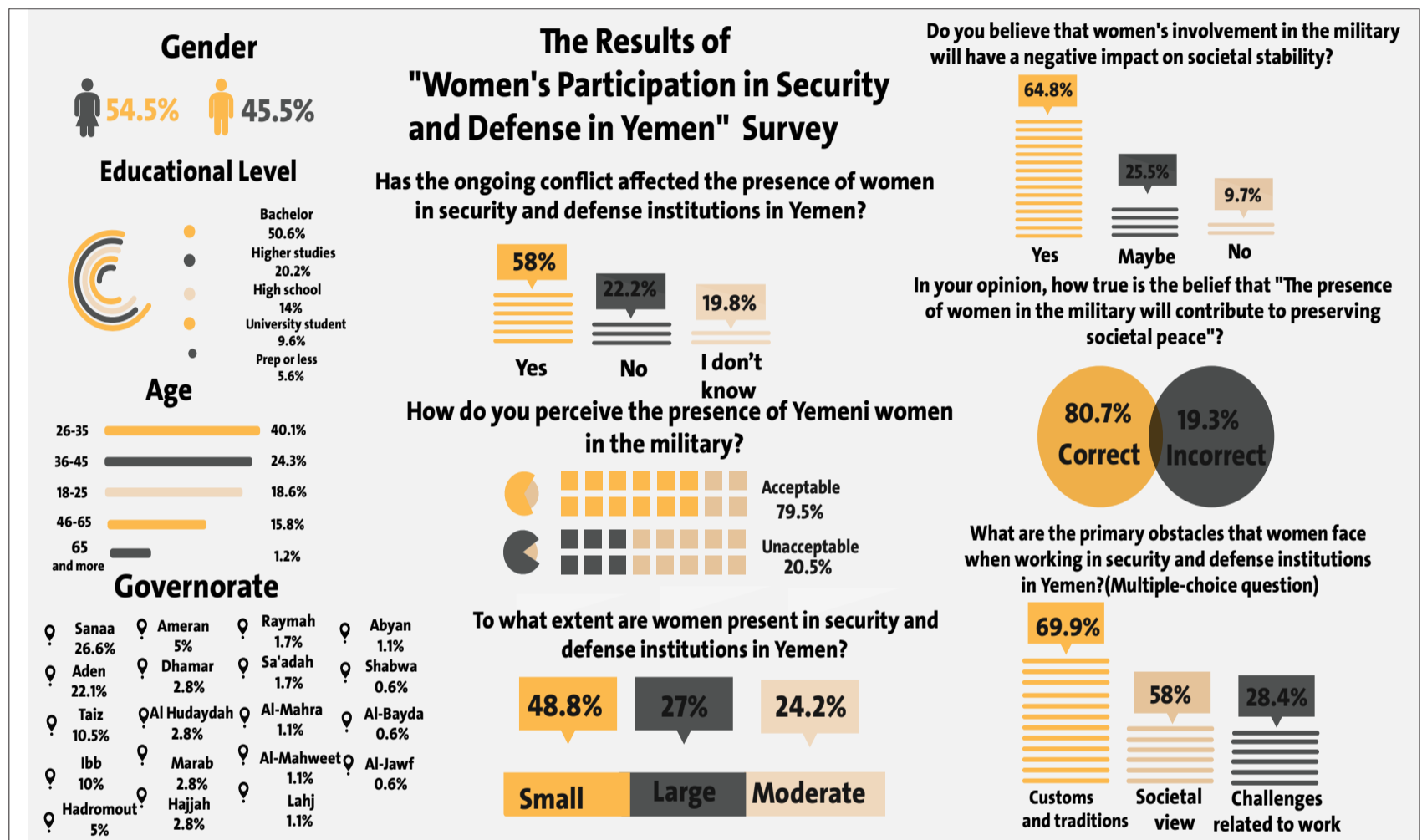
64.8% Believe that Inclusion of Women in Security and Military Corps Negatively Affects Societal Stability

By: Yomna Ahmed
Women in Development and Peace

Women are an indispensable pillar of any society, with their presence in various fields playing a crucial role in fostering a cohesive society, particularly in conflict-affected countries. Their contribution is integral to enhancing security, stability, and achieving sustainable peace. Yemen, facing prolonged conflict for over nine years, grapples with significant security challenges that necessitate the participation of all society members in maintaining security. Strengthening the presence of women in the security and military services is thus an important step toward addressing these challenges.

In Yemen, women hold diverse positions within security and defense agencies, including the police, army, and other security forces. Yemeni women in these roles possess several characteristics that enhance their effectiveness. They demonstrate the ability to address social issues and resolve conflicts, alongside possessing strong analytical and strategic skills. Additionally, their presence fosters trust-building between security forces and the local community, further contributing to the pursuit of social justice and human rights. Despite these positive aspects, women working in security and military roles face numerous obstacles and challenges, such as societal perception and gender discrimination.

In consideration of the aforementioned factors, Yemen Information Center's Information and Opinion Survey Unit conducted a survey to explore the importance of women's participation in Yemen's security and defense apparatus. The survey aimed to study Yemeni society's perspective on the extent of women's participation and to identify the significance of their involvement in achieving social justice and maintaining security. Additionally, the survey sought to uncover the prominent obstacles and pro-



blems that hinder women working in the military and security forces.

The survey encompassed 313 participants, with the majority (54.5%) being females, compared to 45.5% males. The respondents spanned various age groups, including 40.1% young individuals aged between 26-35 years, 24.3% aged between 36-45 years, and 18.6% aged between 18-25 years. Participants aged 46-65 years constituted 15.8%, whereas those aged 65 and above comprised only 1.2%.

Regarding academic qualifications, the majority of participants held a bachelor's degree (50.6%), followed by postgraduate degrees (20.2%), high school diplomas (14%), university students (9.6%), and individuals with a middle school certificate (5.6%).

The survey was conducted across nineteen out of twenty-one Yemeni governorates. The distribution of the sample reflects the following percentages for each

governorate: Sana'a (26.6%), Aden (22.1%), Taiz (10.5%), Ibb (10%), Hadramout and Amran (5% each), Hodeidah, Dharmar, Ma'rib and Hajjah represented 2.8% each, followed by Raymah and Sa'adah (1.7% each), and Al-Mahra, Al-Mahweet, Lahj, and Abyan (1.1% each). Shabwa, Al-Bayda, and Al-Jawf constituted only 0.6% each.

Main Results

Initially, 79.5% of the respondents expressed acceptance of women's work in the military and security services, while the remaining 20.5% held the belief that such work is not suitable for them.

When questioned about the extent of women's presence in security and defense institutions, the respondents' opinions were as follows: 48.8% believed that their presence is minimal, 27% considered it substantial, and the remaining 24.2% perceived the presence of Yemeni women in these institutions as average.

Regarding the impact of women's work in the security and military corps on societal stability, 64.8% believed that it would affect her societal stability, 25.5% thought it might have some influence but not a major one, and only 9.7% stated that it does not affect their societal stability at all.

Despite this, the participants believed that the presence of women in the security and military corps will contribute to preserving societal peace, with a majority of 80.7%, while only 19.3% held the opposite view. Regarding the conflict's impact on the presence of women in these institutions, 58% responded that the conflict had a significant impact, 22.2% believed it had no effect at all, and only 19.8% expressed uncertainty on the matter.

When addressing the obstacles faced by women working in security and defense institutions in Yemen, the respondents highlighted the following factors as major challenges (each

answer analyzed separately as a multiple-choice question with an estimated rate of 100%):

- 69.9% cited customs and traditions.
- 58% pointed to societal views.
- 28.4% mentioned the difficulty of work compared to women's psychological and physiological abilities.

In conclusion, the participants emphasized the essential role Yemeni women play in the security and defense apparatus, contributing to the country's security and stability. However, they also acknowledged the significant challenges that obstruct their progress and development in this field. To overcome these obstacles and promote gender equality, the government and local community must collaborate to provide equal opportunities and advocate for women's rights in the security and defense services.