

The Marginalized...

A Story Of Isolation Inside The Homeland

Racism, Marginalization, Discrimination, and Slavery in Yemen

Walls of Discrimination Surround the Marginalized in the Alleys of (Mahwa)

Young Marginalized... They Broke the Barrier of Isolation and Overcome Racism

Racism and Marginalization In Yemen: Confronting the Problem Before It Is Too Late



By: Abdul-Aziz Oudah

Some may find it strange, and others may denounce the newspaper's handling of racism, marginalization and discrimination in Yemen. Some may deny the existence of the problem at all, and some others may underestimate it and the extent of its spread. Regardless of the differing descriptions of the words between "racism", "marginalization" and "discrimination", all of them in the end pour into the same stream, leading to the same results: different social classes, infringed rights, unfair treatment, unequal roles and opportunities buried dreams, aspirations ending before they emerge, absenteeism and disappearance of principles, people doomed to stay in certain frameworks, and boundaries surrounded by barbed wire.

Marginalization leads to discrimination and discrimination as well as marginalization, means a distinction based on descent, color or occupation, and this is racism itself.

All these paths ultimately lead to an inconsistent society and unjust opportunities; they deny justice in rights and obligations, and undermine constitutional basis and values that the nation has contractually developed to exist in a single land called "homeland".

The problem exists in Yemen, and even more so, that it has not stood at the level of racism, marginalization and discrimination, but has moved beyond the stages to a worse and more declining phase, as there are still areas with slaves and maids. Yes, there are areas in which slaves and maids are passed down from generation to generation. They have no rights nor freedom nor education nor health nor individual ownership nor freedom of movement, and they are not even allowed to obtain identification papers such as identity cards and passports.

It is not a shame for us have problems, as the general conditions that the country has experienced during the various historical eras, long ago, have imposed many deep-rooted problems and differences, according to the political and social nature of the stage. This is not a specific case of Yemen, but it exists in all countries, but the same defect is to deny these problems, turn a blind eye to them, ignore them as if they were not, and claim that they do not exist.

Denial and turning a blind eye contribute to exacerbating problems from under the table, feeding their growth factors in a way that may explode, and will inevitably explode, when the appropriate conditions are created.

The problem must be highlighted, addressed, and the circumstances that contribute to its explosion in the future should be ended, because it is in the interest of the homeland and its future generations.

It is the duty of the press to show, clarify and publish the facts, and religious and social activists and advocates must play their part in raising awareness and mentoring. Civil society organizations analyze studies, propose solutions and projects and implement them. And on top of all comes the role of official authorities in enacting laws and monitoring the implementation of policies on the ground.

So the problem exists and is lived along the Yemeni geographical area, and the recognition remains as an entry point for finding solutions and ending the suffering.

It is not normal for millions of Yemenis to live in the isolation and exclusion imposed by class restrictions and discrimination, which force them to live on the margins of life.

Today, discrimination against marginalized groups in Yemen manifests itself in multiple ways, as factors of ethnic racism and class order are intertwined, forming a canvas of racism, casting a dark shadow over the future of the nation.

Given all of the above, the newspaper decided to open the file of racism, marginalization and discrimination in Yemen, and upon making the decision, there was a great concern about the ability to handle the issue in a way that would achieve an acceptable level of professionalism and vocationalism and we expected many difficulties in finding independent sources, reaching the target groups and achieving acceptable results.

And when the press team began to work on the ground, we did face what we had expected, and even more. Many deny the existence of the problem, and most, while acknowledging its existence, deny that it reaches what the words racism and marginalization mean.

And between denial, fear and unwillingness to speak, especially anonymity, we were able to access reports highlighting this problem in Yemen, and we distributed them between the two parts of this issue.

Sawt Al-Amal

VOICE OF HOPE



Independent - Newspaper (Twice a Month) Published by Yemen Information Center

1/4/2021 - Republish

www.sawt-alamal.net

Issue 5

Pages 12

Price Free

Bara'a, A Dark-Skinned Girl, Victim of Racism And Inequity

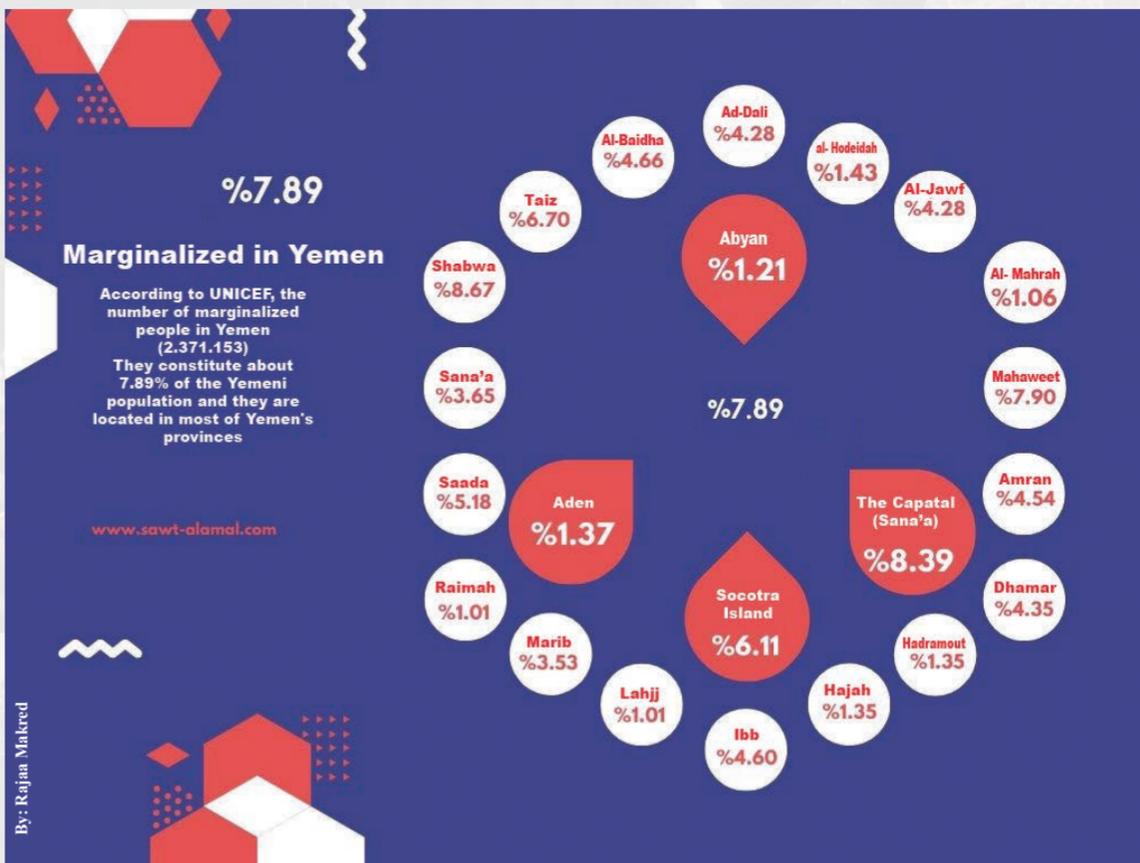
People Live In the Margins

The Weddings Of The Marginalized People: Hustle, Singing, Dancing and Parties Until Dawn

Minorities In Yemen Are Respected and Not Discriminated

Educating the Marginalized

Between the Devil and Deep Sea Regarding Discrimination and Poverty



Due to Economic Situation, Illiteracy Rate Among Marginalized People Reach

By: Manal Ameen
The Voice of Hope

A report issued by the Equal Rights Trust in December 2018 confirmed that there is discrimination against the marginalized group in schools in Yemen based on the race, lineage and inequality, by studying 103 (a hundred and three) cases in 16 (sixteen) Yemeni governorates who left their schools and were deprived of education because of their ethnicity or lineage and their exposure to harassment, abuse and discrimination by students and even school administrators.

President of the Union of the Marginalized Racial Discrimination is Inherent to Us From the Very First Moment We Are Born.

Exclusive: The Voice of Hope

Numan Al-Hudhaifi, President of the National Union of the Marginalized, confirmed that racial discrimination is inherent to the black marginalized people from the first moment they give birth. Al-Hudhaifi considered that Yemeni society is a traditional society, in which tribal, regionalist and Salafi affiliation represent the basis on which human relations based on differentiation are determined, and it is not strange for the society to deal with the marginalized from the angle of contempt and inferiority, which made them a social group rejected by Yemeni society.



12% of Yemenis Face Discrimination Because of Race and Lineage

The Voice of Hope Follow-ups

The marginalized group in Yemen is subjected to racial discrimination in personal treatment because of race, lineage and color despite their importance and influence in Yemen. They are located in the central and southern regions close to the coasts of the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea, especially in the governorates of Aden, Lahj, Abyan, Hodeidah, Taiz, and Ibb, and are among the poorest and most illiterate in the country.



“ Since dawn, Um Salem, a 48-year-old woman, part of the marginalized group, has been preparing and cooking sesame (i.e. Al Juljul) on her simple stove, in her home made of tin, some wood and tarpaulin, and packing it in small plastic bags, above a large plate, so that she could devote herself for housework until evening, heading afterwards from the Dar Sad district in Aden to a market to sell it.

By: Manal Ameen
Sawt Al Amal (The Voice of hope)

How Does the Society View the Marginalized at Work?

Um Salem bears many of the hardships, exhaustion, and harassment of people most of the time in order to provide a living for her children, who are deployed in various jobs in the streets. She returns home every night with a small yield, barely enough to buy some vegetables and simple supplies she needs to prepare her goods.

Lack of job opportunities

As a result of the high rate of poverty in the Yemeni society, the lack of economic opportunities, especially for the children of the marginalized group in Yemen, and the creation of racial and class discrimination in the distribution of appropriate jobs, both private and public ones, contributed to an increase in the unemployment rate among this group.

Samira Seoud, head of the “Aman Association for Developmental Disadvantaged Groups,” assures to “the Voice of Hope” that the extreme poverty that the marginalized group suffers from, and the societal discrimination practiced against them, has made many of them not interested in pursuing their studies, which has contributed to the lack of diverse job opportunities for them, thus limiting them to work for the Cleaning Fund, and some small and low-wage jobs in governmental and private institutions, as cleaners and correspondents only.

Seoud clarifies that discrimination in treatment has made and led to a significant gap between the groups of society, despite being citizens with equal rights and obligations by law. In order to get rid of this racist and class view, attention must be paid to educating them, integrating them in all facets of life, and making use of their abilities and capabilities in the service of society.

Double effort and lower wage

Marginalized women incur a lot of fatigue, effort and suffering at work compared to men, because they are subjected to many unacceptable behaviors in their workplaces, as correspondents, cleaners, or even during domestic service (domestic workers), in addition to being exposed to verbal, psychological and sometimes physical violence.

Fatoum Salem, a 34 year-old woman who works in a private hospital as a cleaner, says that she endures to get to work in the early morning, as she lives in Al Louhoum in Dar Sad area and her workplace is in Mansoura and she works two shifts with double effort. She is paid a lower wage, on the pretext that she does not have an academic qualification, which made her accept it without objecting despite her difficult circumstances.

On the other hand, the citizen Ahmed Abdel Rahman, stated to “The Voice of Hope,” that the marginalized people in our country are often subjected to a harsh treatment, which they do not deserve, from the society, despite the problems they cause most of the time because of ignorance, illiteracy, poverty and unemploy-



Samira Seoud <



Fatima Murisi <

ment that are widespread among this group.

He added: “The society has been dealing very carefully with this group, even at the level of work. There are good models that deserve praise and appreciation, but there are bad models that represent themselves, and no one denies their suffering at work and the difficulties they face especially those jobs that require strong and physical efforts. No one can bear it daily except for those who seek legitimate livelihoods, with a very modest return, which does not guarantee the individual a decent life as required”.

The absence of security

The director of the Women and Children Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor in Aden, Awan Omar, told “The Voice of Hope”: “Marginalized women, especially domestic workers (workers), are frequently subjected to unethical verbal abuse during worktime by their employers, which sometimes make them endure all these cruel treatments in order to provide their daily livelihoods”.

Omar noted that marginalized women are the ones who go out and seek jobs in comparison to the rest of society. They can bear the hardship of the road and the heat of the sun and look up for a few hundred Riyals to buy a simple meal to fulfill the hunger of their family as they have the ability to engage men in difficult jobs both inside and outside the house.



On the violence experiences by the marginalized people in the workplace, she clarifies that the absence and deterioration of the country’s security and economic situation has led to the emergence of discrimination in society towards this group, which is considered a member of the society, and has rights guaranteed by the Yemeni law and international charters, as do rest of the society.

Omar stressed that many joint efforts should be made with local authorities and relevant international organizations, to limit the spread of a culture of racial discrimination against the marginalized at work, and offer them better opportunities to project their abilities and capabilities in the service of the country.

No one accepted me

When we asked one of the marginalized sanitation workers (who refused to give his name) about whether he had applied for a job other than cleaning the sewage, he said, with an angry voice mixed with sadness: “I applied for many jobs in a hospital, a school, a company, a grocery store, at a Qat seller, and many other places more than a decade ago, but no one accepted me”.

This worker has completed his secondary school education with “wellness” - as he put it - and suffers from people’s contempt for his dream of working in a prominent place with a monthly salary through which he can guarantee his life and future. But he is now working as sewage cleaner for a daily wage, carrying the bad smell every day, and he just has to give in to this reality and remain silent, as he said.

The head of the Yemeni Women’s Federation in Aden, Fatima Murisi, clarifies to “The Voice of Hope” that “The repercussions and effects of the conflict we are experiencing in various fields in the country have reduced the scope for the marginalized groups, men or women, in

terms of job search, and if any, then in most cases, unfairness is practiced against them in paying their due wages, as a result of their hard work in a less unequal way with others”.

Murisi stated that marginalized women in our society suffer a great deal of unfair discrimination, although they are considered the sole support of their families, and they are viewed with racism which diminishes their humanity in most places while performing their work, and some see them in the cleaning sector only, and they are not entitled to work in another field, and this is a major mistake that we inherited years ago.

Regarding the federation’s role in curbing this negative perception, Murisi said: “The federation has approached the relevant authorities to prevent women from getting assigned to work in the cleaning sector on public streets, and to become accustomed to facilities and offices, far from being seen with contempt and inhumanity, as there is a number of marginalized women who have been able to transcend the challenges to prove themselves in education, and they reached a high level in some legal and social fields in this society.”

Human rights reports reveal that there is no legal text in the Yemeni constitution concerning the issue of the marginalized people in the country and the extreme discrimination they face in the treatment, causing a kind of gap between them and the rest of the society. Moreover, there are people who exploit the marginalized women’s need for money by begging on the streets or illegally trading them in different locations, or exploiting marginalized men in arduous and tiring work for a small amount of money, without any protection and legal deterrent that prevents the practice of these unethical and inhumane actions against them, which led to a more dramatic image of the marginalized.

A Racism View of the Marginalized Women at Work Reduces their Efficiency

Racial Discrimination Deprived them of their Rights

The Marginalized... Simple Dreams of Joining Public Jobs

By: **Mona Al-Assaadi**
The Voice of Hope

“The search for a source of income, from which a living would be made, was not easy for ‘‘Mohamed Ahmed’’, but it has become more difficult in recent years. Muhammad, in his mid-fifties, sits on one of the sidewalks at the entrance of the ancient city of Sana’a, accompanied by his needles and scissors, and around him the shredded shoes, and the deep scratches on his fingers reveal the difficulty and cruelty of his work.”

Despite the tiny amount of 500-1000 Riyals a day that he earns in exchange for eight hours of work between the freezing morning and the hot midday, the struggles of life for the man in his fifties forced him to work in patching shoes. However, Muhammad’s humiliation of labor and the outlook of discrimination that has been haunting him have become even harder. Muhammad describes his suffering to ‘‘The Voice of Hope’’ by saying: ‘‘I sit here for long hours waiting for the poor customers who are only the ones visiting us, throwing out what they may in return for patching their shoes. I sometimes come home with a small sum of money and at other time with none, which is tough for someone like me, who supports a family of nine, most of whom are girls’’.

He adds: ‘‘My suffering to provide a living did not intercede for me in the society which pursues me with words of shame wherever I go, because of the color of my skin and their disdain for this job, which makes me feel badly sad’’. Mohammed preferred to work away from begging, to become a productive individual, instead of remaining a burden on the society. However, the inherited racial discrimination and marginalization in Yemen remains the biggest obstacle facing him and others from this group. The issue of negative social discrimination in Yemen is one of the oldest and most common issues throughout this country’s past and present and its tribal nature has helped to divide the society into social classes, including those based on origin, occupation and color. Despite the balance that this difference creates in the society, some groups are perceived as disdain and contempt and this discrimination reinforces the rights of one party at the expense of another. The black marginalized are, therefore, the most marginalized group in the society.

Overcoming Social Inequalities

Jamal Silan, a professor of journalism at Sana’a University, believes that marginalization can only disappear through sustained awareness for a period of time until the social disparities that were formed as a result of wrong socialization are overcome. Efforts must be devoted to sensitizing people to the disadvantages of marginalization



on society and the marginalized groups.

In the same context, Dr. Hammoud Saleh Al-Oudi, a professor of sociology at Sana’a University, states to ‘‘The Voice of Hope’’: ‘‘The black marginalized group has gained much interest and social studies locally and internationally from the early twentieth century and after the revolution in Yemen but this has not changed much on the social level’’.

Ramzi Ahmed Saleh, a 23-year-old resident of Mahwa Al-Hasbah in Sana’a, expresses himself about the catastrophic situation in Al-Mahwa, where life’s most fundamental needs are missing. Ramzi collects plastic boxes, which are his only source of revenue. He says: ‘‘I hope I can get a simple loan to start up my own business, and

work to provide for my family’s needs’’. He affirms: ‘‘I suffer from discrimination, and no one accepts to hire me, since I belong to the marginalized group which remains a barrier between me and public jobs, and this is what made me think about self-employment’’. Ramzy continues: ‘‘Because of the trash that I work with, particularly with the spread of the pandemics lately, collecting plastic cans has affected my health’’. He added: ‘‘I once had dengue fever, and I could have lost my life after which I tried very hard to apply for work in the municipality, but I was rejected because there was no vacancy as they said’’.

Aisha al-Warraq, program coordinator at the Sana’a Center for Studies, explains in a study she has done in 2019 that the wide-

spread economic collapse has led to the loss of livelihoods, due to the ongoing conflict in Yemen since March 2015, which has created a competition for low-wage jobs between the displaced and the black marginalized people, which were previously reserved for the marginalized.

Maher Mohsen, a 16-year-old member of the black community, expresses his dissatisfaction with his work conditions, as he moves from one job to another.

He says: ‘‘My father passed away when I was 11 years old, so I had to leave school and work as a cleaner at an office in Hodeidah. The situation was fairly good, but with the unstable security situation in the area in which we lived, my family fled to the Beit Al-Faqih district, south of Hodeidah, and I left for Sana’a searching for work’’. Mohsen indicated that he started his cleaning career in one of the hospitals in the capital Sana’a. For 8 hours of stressful work, he was paid a meager salary of 40,000 Riyals per month, in addition to the harsh treatment he received by the hospital administration, which led him to leave work, and start collecting and selling plastic boxes.

We all aspire to a better future, but Muhammad like Maher, Ramzi, and many others have been hardened by life and the society did not feel their suffering and they are still waiting for their basic right to a better job opportunity. Will the dream come true one day?

The Marginalized Occupations: A Conviction or an Imposed Reality?

By: **Rajaa Mukred**
The Voice of Hope

“Faiza Al-Ansi leaves her home every morning to beg and get what people can spare to provide the living for her 16-member family, as well as her elderly and sick neighbor, and her cancer-infected mother.”

Faiza Nasser Al-Ansi lives in a refuge for the marginalized in Sawan, Sana’a, in one room with her elderly and sick husband, and 14 children, the eldest of whom is eight years old. She says: ‘‘The family’s income per day ranges from 400 to 600 Yemeni Riyals, which is sufficient for the day’s sustenance, cheese and tahini.’’ Faiza is the only breadwinner for her family. She saves from the begging work 200 Yemeni Riyals to pay off the grocery’s debt every month for the value of oil and flour, and confirms that she doesn’t receive any aid because she has traveled to Hodeidah to visit her mother, and because of the card problems. She also hasn’t received any humanitarian aid.

According to recent statistics conducted by UNICEF in December 2019, and which ‘‘The Voice of Hope’’ has obtained a copy from the organization media office Mr. Kamal Al-Wazizah, the number of marginalized people is 2,371,153 (two million three hundred seventy-one thousand and one hundred fifty-three) which are 7.89% of the total Yemeni population, and their proportions are distributed among the population of the governorates as follows: 1.21% of the total population of Abyan, 1.37% of Aden residents, 4.66% of Al Bayda residents, 4.28% of Al Dhale’e residents, 1.43% of Hodeidah residents, 4.28% of Al-Jawf residents, 1.06% of Al-Mahra residents, 8.39% of Amanat al-Asima residents, 7.90% of Al-Mahwit residents, 4.54% of Amran residents, 4.35% of Dhamar residents, 1.35% of Hadhramaut residents, 1.01% of Hajjah residents, 4.60% of Ibb residents, 1.01% of Lahj residents, 3.53% of Ma’rib residents, 1.01% of Raymah residents, 5.18% of Saada residents, 3.65% of Sanaa residents, 8.67% of Shabwah residents, 6.11% of Socotra island residents, and 6.70% of Taiz residents.

The Income of a Marginalized Family

The income of marginalized families does not exceed the sum of 500 to 1000 Yemeni Riyals for self-employed. Most of the marginalized are practicing the profession of begging. The sheikh of Mahwa al-Sa’wan, Majid al-Jamal, told ‘‘The Voice of Hope’’ that some of the marginalized are cleaning workers and some others are beggars. While Abdullah Saad Al-Jamal, the cleaning supervisor, considers that the marginalized in the refuge are 100% beggars, and the salary of a cleaner is 25,000 Yemeni Riyals.

The black marginalized group, also known as the ‘‘servants category’’, live under extremely dangerous and complex living, educational, health and demographic conditions due to the deterioration of their economic situations, especially because of their lack of all means and tools of economic production that enable them to enjoy decent living. The majority of the marginalized people depend on practicing professions that society perceives as despised professions, such as working in the fields of city cleaning, sanitary, shoe weaving, car washing and harvesting in agricultural areas, as well as collecting waste and plastic materials to sell them for recycling purposes. Many women and children of this group roam the streets and public markets and sit on the sidewalks for begging and the marginalized completely depend on all these works to secure their daily sustenance and survival, according to Noaman Al Hudhaifi, head of the National Federation of the Marginalized in Yemen.

The Occupations of the Marginalized and the Labor Force

The occupations of the marginalized vary among cleaners and construction workers, greengrocers and sellers of Qat in their own yards. And some of them work

as motorcycle drivers, carpenters, and shoemakers (shoe patching) and most of them beg – according to Abdullah Saad – as they go out in the morning and scatter around in tours and return late at night, around 10 or 11 pm. As for the labor force, it consists of children, women, and men of all ages. And he adds that there are qualified and university graduates ...

‘‘The professions of the marginalized are imposed on them, because no one is willing to go out to beg or clean. Among the marginalized, there are also educated individuals who have been rejected because of the color of their skin (racial discrimination), and intermediary plays a large role. Whoever has an intermediary and a well-known Sheikh is employed, but who does not will go through the profession of cleaning or begging’’, says Majid al-Jamal, the head of tribal cohesion for the marginalized.

Al-Jamal comments on his speech, considering that being a Sheikh and having intermediaries, his brothers and relatives have been hired in the police and at the airport. He also confirms that the government is responsible for the marginalized people vacating low-income jobs as cleaners or beggars.

In a survey conducted by the newspaper ‘‘The Voice of Hope’’ on the social networking site Facebook about whether the marginalized people vacate low-income jobs as cleaners with their conviction or the conditions are imposed on them, it was found that 82% agree that it was imposed by the situation, while 18% believe that it is with the conviction of the marginalized themselves.

The needs of the Marginalized

50 people live in two rooms, an indoor hall, another outdoor, one bathroom and a kitchen. The father is married to two women, and four of his children are married

and have children. Of course, the house cannot fit them all and they sleep in the kitchen, according to Abdullah Saad, the cleaning supervisor in Sawan, who believes that the marginalized need awareness on family planning.

On the other hand, Dr. Abdal-Ilah Abdullah al-Hakami, a specialist in the management of international and diplomatic relations, says that the occupations vacated by the marginalized are not by conviction, as he finds those with a desire to change their status, clothing, house, food, lifestyle, but the deficit is clear. And there is a deficit in financial capabilities and lack of awareness and interest, and there are several factors that may also have led to their current situation.

Al-Hakami adds that the basic principle in the human being is cleanliness, imitation of the best, and evolution, but when there are no ingredients, motives and awareness, these things remain just hopes and aspirations. Even a funeral upon death may be to some of the poorest (marginalized) just a hope they wish to fulfill upon their death, because the society often sees their funeral as marginalized servants who have died, so they stick to joy, release anecdotes on the life of the dead and list his lifestyle and how it had to be dealt with.

Solutions

There are no options to bring about the desired change among the marginalized, other than by forcing them to engage in education and vocational training in all its forms, while providing them with an appropriate educational environment that enables them to learn and work. Without that, the situation will remain unchanged and there will be no change in their lives in the present and in the future, according to Numan Al Hudhaifi, head of the National Federation of the Marginalized in Yemen.

As for Ms. Ashwaq Al-Faqih, an employee at the Ministry of Human Rights, she considers that the reality of social discrimination against the marginalized forced them to pursue these professions, which led to their non-enrollment in schools. The solution, then, is to prevent discrimination against them, integrate them into the society, and enhance their political, economic and social participation.





Islam: The Marginalized Protection Shield!

By: Mona Al-Assaadi
 Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

In Yemen, a culture of marginalization and discrimination is taking root, contrary to the equal sense of creation for all human beings as many community groups suffer from racial and class discrimination. Hence, the Blacks category is the most marginalized; It suffers from discrimination and racism which made it down the social ladder.

Islam is the religion of truth, the Quran brought forth verses that affirm the achievement of justice (the principle of justice and equality) among human beings and even fought against all forms of discrimination and racism, and brought the necessary solutions to obliterate them.

Dr. Abdullah Al-Darsi, Professor of Islamic Studies, at Arhab University, says to Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope) that the Islamic religion addressed the problem of racism and marginalization in the best way and took excellent steps to advocate these marginalized and vulnerable groups in the society. It distinguished from other religions such as Judaism and Christianity which did not pay much attention to this issue, and among these treatments are the following: it greatly cared for the interest of these groups, required zakat and charity for them as a source of strength that would prevent them from demand and need. It also exempted them from Hajj, which is one of the pillars of Islam.

Dr. Muhammad Al-Makhzi, Professor of Jurisprudence of Transactions at the University of Sana'a,

agrees with him, so he says to Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope) that the Islamic religion was clear and explicit on the issue of discrimination... it did not differentiate between Black and White except by piety. Islam has granted victory to the oppressed and commanded it and he inferred that is, according to the hadith of the Messenger of God {you are [...] helped through your weaklings}.

Has Yemeni Laws Marginalized Blacks?

In society, it is assumed that there are no marginalized groups (citizens from the second level), as everyone should be equal in rights and duties. According to the constitution, which is considered a social contract between the state and society, it states (in Article 24 of the Yemeni Constitution) that "the state guarantees equal opportunities for all citizens: politically, economically, socially and culturally, and it issues laws to achieve this," which means equal opportunities, non-negative discrimination, but rather, the marginalized groups must be afforded more rights in proportion to their status in order to achieve the principle of justice and equality for all. Unfortunately, no laws have been enacted and endorsed to address marginalization in the Yemeni society, and this constitution has remained a dead letter!



S.A, 23 years old, is one of the marginalized who have been subjected to violence more than once, but did not dare - in any of them - to file a complaint against his assailants; being one of the "richest" - according to his description and he says, while recalling what happened to him: "No matter how attacked and beaten I was, I could not file a complaint because being a servant, no one will ever do you justice, even if you file it while dripping in blood".

Despite all the human rights violations that happen to the marginalized, and in the absence of Yemeni laws that protect this vulnerable group, they still don't get fair.

Lawyer Abdul Al-Rahman Al-Zabib says: With regard to marginalization, there is a positive experience for southern Yemen: There were binding laws, and were applied, including the imposition of penalties and financial fines on anyone who used verbal abuse against this group and it was granted absolutely priority to anyone who belongs to the marginalized; therefore, a large group of them were educated people and doctors.

He confirms to Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope) that this positive discrimination that occurred tore apart the marginalization completely during that period but after the formation of a committee to harmonize legislation between the south and the north, the southern legal system was

completely abolished and the northern legal system was adopted, and paid little attention to the marginalized.

The National Dialogue and the Marginalized:

Yemeni political roles reflect a significant marginalization of this group. Since we do not find them a representative in any of them, not even in Parliament and here we can ask: If the owner of the right is absent, who will claim it?

Despite the participation of Numan Al-Hudhaifi, President of the National Union of the Marginalized, in the National Dialogue Conference, where one of its outputs was the allocation of 10% of government jobs to the marginalized, but nothing has yet been accomplished. According to the legal experts, the outputs of the National Dialogue are parallel to the constitution as a new social contract for the Republic of Yemen, and a constitution that is subject to its outcomes must be issued.

Solutions

Societal marginalization resulting from the accumulation of marginalization and exclusion, over the past long years cannot be addressed except by positive and fair discrimination for a group that has suffered from injustice and unfairness for many years, as well as their psychological and scientific rehabilitation, so that it raises the level of this marginalized group to become parallel to the rest of the citizens, and enjoy - according to the constitution - equal citizenship with all parties in order to remove the previous marginalization, because neglecting this group more, may lead to unplanned negative consequences.

Al-Zeebeeb asserts that if this marginalization is not addressed legally and socially, then we will be on a date with human mines that will destroy the future.

The Marginalized: Citizens without an Identity

By: Hanin Ahmed
 Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

According to what was mentioned by the President of the National Union of the Marginalized, Numan Al-Hudhaifi, the marginalized people in Yemen suffer from all kinds of racism and discrimination. Most of the time, they are stripped of all their natural rights guaranteed by the law like other citizens. On the level of identity, they do not have any documents or identity that identifies them in society, and they weren't even allocated places to live with dignity or accepted as important members of the society

Al-Hudhaifi explained that he is responsible for 3 million marginalized people distributed over several regions in Yemen. The majority of whom do not have the right to be engaged in any activity or work in any government agency or other facilities, except for those who are able to produce (personal proof documents), which may take a long time, due to the inability to pay the costs of obtaining the identity and facilitating the procedures to help them in that.

Society Disowned them; thus, the Street Adopted them

This group of people seeks to continuously and tirelessly gain their daily livelihood and double their efforts to ensure the subsistence for their family and provide the simplest needs to continue living. They held against all suffering (psychological, physical, economic and social, etc.), so their suffering may not be limited only to that, but it rather reached bullying and harassing them with racism only because there was no proof of their identity in the society.

Fouad Ahmed Saif Qaid, father of eight children, works as a car cleaner in one of the neighborhoods of Khormaksar District, in Aden. He belongs to the marginalized people who were disowned by society and had to continue their lives cleaning the streets, washing cars, begging and even working in the field of sanitation (sewage).

Fouad says that he has been washing cars for

eight years in the same place and he has not been mixed with the general public in a large way because he has no identity (proof documents) which caused him to fall into a lot of problems and suffering, being the weakest part of the society.

He adds, in despair and sorrow: "There is no one to support my family except me and we rarely receive any of the aids provided by the organizations (Bassma organization), although we are the most needed to such aid because we have no source of permanent income. Thus, the biggest thing we suffer from is our inability to face society and the future, as there is no identity that identifies us".

The Suffering of Education for the Marginalized

Ahmed Abdulqader, Director of Public Education at the Ministry of Education, confirms to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) that "all schools accept all students from all segments of society. There are no statistics for a specific category and there are no arbitrary measures against applicants for education, all schools follow its normal procedures for all students, without exception."

Abdul Qadir explained, "As for the marginalized children who have been registered since the first grades, they are assisted in obtaining a birth certificate, in order to continue their studies normally without being classified and given nicknames."

He adds that the Ministry has implemented courses on how to attract the marginalized and the poor who have been left behind, so that they can be reintegrated into schools and educated in the required manner by providing them with the necessary assistance in general, especially for those who want education and are unable to afford it. Thus, the ministry rejects and stresses the lack of discrimination between all students, the absence of any kind of bullying or harassment and the interest in accepting others and participat-

ing in promoting competition among students in educational attainment.

Concerning the future plans that the ministry is implementing in all schools, Abdul Qader indicated that the ministry has future plans on how to attract these children on the streets (marginalized) and make them aware of the importance of education in building themselves and their abilities as well as motivating them to continue education in order to face all challenges and become supportive for themselves and their families in the future.

In the same context, Mustafa Kamel, the agent of activities at the Azal School in the Al-Tawahi district in Aden, confirms that the school administration receives all students equally without differentiation and there are no measures against any group whatsoever as the school carries out self-effort or cooperation with some support agencies to focus on the difficult conditions of students at the beginning of each academic year by providing in-kind assistance represented in providing school bags, school uniforms and breakfast as well as focusing during the school year on activating the social worker section in the school as required, aiming at carrying out school activities that raise awareness among all students in one entity.

Supporting Coexistence Organizations

On the role of civil society organizations in strengthening the identity of the marginalized group, Noor Al-Saqqaf, President of the Coexistence Foundation affirms that the foundation seeks, among its objectives, to promote joint cooperation between all members of society for the development process and the promotion of education for all societal groups. It has contributed to the implementation of many aid in the education of marginalized and out-of-school children; including them in schools and working in the field of economic empowerment

of marginalized women by opening training courses in various professional fields to achieve their identity among the community in a manner that preserves their dignity.

Al-Saqqaf added to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) that the association conducts training courses for teachers in order to promote peaceful coexistence and acceptance among students, through the implementation of awareness-raising programs targeting students about concepts of coexistence and non-differentiation between each other.

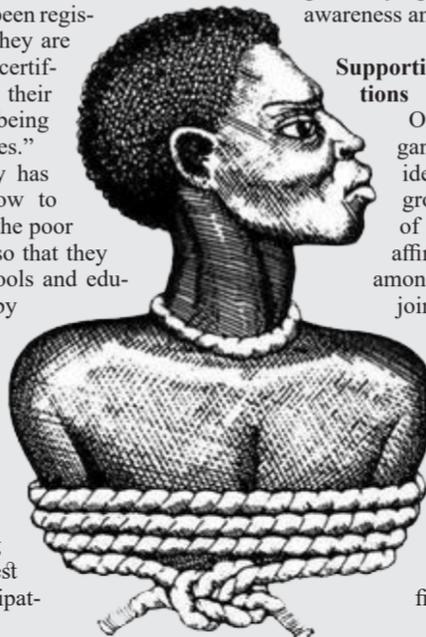
The Social Situation of the Marginalized

Regarding the social situation of the marginalized, Dr. Rajaa Moqbel, a sociology doctor at the University of Aden, Faculty of Arts, said to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) that the marginalized are considered in society to be part of the underprivileged group, deprived from the simplest necessities of life, a group that has surpassed the level of poverty until it has reached the stage of not proving its identity even though there is no difference between them and the rest of the society, apart from the material situation. In fact, the society is the one who makes such classifications and discrepancies among individuals, by focusing on the economic status of the person, color and race.

And she adds that it is not humane to make such differences and racist practices on the basis of (color, race and the abolition of their reality) by the society, generation after generation.

Dr. Rajaa called on the concerned authorities and those concerned to put in place the necessary treatments and solutions to protect this category of ideas deep-rooted in the minds of people and which transmit their ideas and beliefs to the next generations as well as the need for joint action to protect people and their rights and accept the others who are considered members of this country.

The doctor reviewed the laws mentioned in the Yemeni constitution in Article (41) which include "that all citizens are equal in rights and public duties", which obliged the concerned authorities to recognize them as an influential group in society and not to classify them with false names that diminish their value, as they are an integral part of this country.



People Live in the Margins

Life punished them because of the color of their skin that they did not choose, imposed on them social isolation, an inferior view and deprived them of living like the rest of the members of society, of which they are an integral part.

The marginalized people, as they are called, are a socially and humanly vulnerable group. They live on the outskirts of cities, or on the banks of torrents, setting up their tents that are metaphorically called houses or "Al Mahawi", which hardly protect them from the heat of the sun, the cold of winter, and the rain, which has exacerbated their suffering and made them vulnerable to further diseases and pandemics.

By: Bushra Al-Ghaili
Sawt Al Amal (The Voice of hope)

As soon as we reached them to feel their concerns and suffering, they complained about any journalist who came to take pictures of them or talk to them, because those who took pictures of them made promises and did not keep them, whether they were individuals or organizations.

Let us talk and read the details of what this part of society suffers from.

Back to the context our dear reader.

Five days after his birth, he passed away

At the entrance to "Al Mahwa", there is a small room in which a group of women crammed, performing the duty of condolences to a mother whose child passed away in her hands, five days after his birth. The cold weather and the raindrops that were falling through the ceilings covered with cartons and rickety zinc were not enough to give him warmth, so he passed away.

Expired Plastic Covers

"Umm Murshid"- talks about their conditions with the rainy season saying that their situation is difficult, and since they are on the banks of "Al-Sailah", its level rose until it reached their place of residence that is metaphorically called "home", and which lacks the simplest means of living. She adds: The mattresses that we sleep on have sunk, and the covers that protect us from the rain have shred, and whether there is someone to alleviate their suffering or help them, she confirms: Most organizations come and take pictures of us, our children and our simple rooms, but we no longer see them after that".

We slept without supper

"Umm Niaz" was next to her and said, "We sleep under raindrops and our beds are filled with water, we have no destination to go to, and there is nothing for us but begging throughout the day, or we dry up the houses, so we can eat and live, otherwise we may die of hunger." And she continues, "Even begging all day long is no longer useful as we get 500 Riyals, we do not know how to spend them on our children, and the aids come only every five months, while the rest of the days are just bitterness". And she concludes: "Yesterday, my family and I slept without supper."

"Saeeda Al-Mubarzi", a mother of eight children, one of whom has 15 children, and the other 7 children, her quiet charm, dark skin, and grief-filled looks, is asking God to relieve her from her misery. She suffers from cancer and cannot afford the cost of treatment, and her kitchen is flooded with water. After she allowed us to take pictures of it, she said, " I do not have the transportation fare to go to the hospital, and all those who come to take pictures of us promise us aids which we haven't received, and all their promises evaporated".

Rituals

"Nasser Arma", the (Akel) of "Mahwa Al-Ramah", speaks on behalf of "Al-Mahwa", that their suffering is very difficult in the rainy season, bitter cold, and hunger. He says, "We, our children and our families, have all suffered, and we eat the remains that the restaurant owners leave. This is our daily life".

"Umm Mabruk", who has 9 children and three grandchildren, says, "Our suffering is very difficult. A month has passed with the rain falling on our heads, and we suffer from hunger, thirst, and cold, and we can't afford the price of a medical injection when our children suffer from the cold because of the rain".

The Sheikh of "Mahwa Al-Ramah", "Fahad Farie", adds to the speech of "Al Mahwa" (Akel), that he regu-

"Arma" : We Bury our Dead in Well-Known Cemeteries. the Rumors About Us Are Untrue.

"Al-Mubarzi" : All those Who Come to Take Pictures of Us Promise Us and Then Break their Promises.



larly attempts to raise the residents of "Al Mahwa", but no one responds.

Regarding their occasions, festive or funeral rituals and how they celebrate them, "Arma" said, "We publicly hold engagement parties and weddings. In wedding parties, women are placed in a large room in "Al Mahwa", and men gather in a tent. Same thing goes in funerals, just like other members of the society".

Where do they bury their dead?

A rumor circulates among the community, saying that the marginalized do not bury their dead, and no one has ever seen their funerals, and this rumor remained a mystery that baffled many, and regarding this rumor, the Sheikh of "Mahwa Al- Ramah", "Fahad Farie", replied, "This is not true, we bury our dead in cemeteries, and we hold the funerals with the same rituals that are held in the general community, but the difference is that we do not rejoice, and 5 or 6 people come out with the dead, while more than two hundred people at least take out the dead in their funerals, and when they do not see us taking out our dead in a crowd and cheer, they think

that we do not bury our dead". He adds, "A journalist came out with this rumor and when he was informed and saw by himself how we bury our dead, he apologized for what he stated".

No Substitute for Begging!

You find their children around most of the capital's tours since the early morning, and at the restaurant doors, waiting for what they are given from crumbs to take them back to their (Mahwa) and feed the hungry people who await them there.

The Sheikh of "Al Mahwa", "Farie" says, "Let them find us an alternative and give us what we live from, and we promise that they will find no one in the streets or tours. The Sheikhs and (Akels) of our neighborhoods will abide by the fact that no one will go to beg". He continues, saying, "But we cannot stop this, as long as we do not have food to eat, and there is no source of income from which we live except begging".

Intermarriage with community members

"Arma" talks about the integration with members of the community, through attending social events and intermarriage, and he says, "We are married to white people, and they are married to us, and we attend their events, whether in the capital or other governorates, and thus we feel that the barriers have begun to fade between us". He also adds that the term (Bilal's descendants) makes them feel comfortable, and the terms used to call them like "Khadem" (servant in Arabic) and (marginalized) are receding, and they are very satisfied with the new term.

Corona did not reach us

Among the tasks performed by the (Akel) of "Al Mahwa", "Nasser Arma", is to raise awareness of the importance of hygiene on a daily basis and adopting it

"Farie" : We Marry Members of the Society. the Whites Marry Us and We Marry them, and We Share their Occasions.

If there Are Alternatives to Gain Our Livelihood, We Will Not Push Our Children to Beg.



as a permanent behavior, to grasp the conditions and concerns of those living in "Al Mahwa", and solve their personal problems.

"Arma" says, "We are here as one family dealing with each other respectfully, and we thank God that not a single corona infection case occurred among us despite our difficult situation, and although all the "Mahawi" were sterilized by the Ministry of Health except this "Mahwa", God has protected us from that deadly pandemic knowing about our conditions".

In Tents and Rental Homes

They often live on torrential streams, shantytowns, or banks of "Al Sailah" where the water level sometimes rises and floods their tents in which they live.

"Farie", the Sheikh of "Al Mahwa" confirms, "Some of us live in rental houses in different places in the capital and its neighborhoods, and those who have jobs can pay the costs of the rent, and some others live inside stores with their families, and recently three children from one family of our tenants died in "Naqum", during the flood disaster that swept buildings there. They were transferred and housed in a school due to the disaster".

Cartons instead of Gas

Although the Revolution Directorate specialist discharges their share of gas, according to the Sheikh of "Al Mahwa", "Fahad Farea", some people cannot afford the price of a gas cylinder, so they are forced to cook their food on stones, by collecting empty plastic cans and cartons collected from the streets, especially when the World Food Organization (WFP) provides them their share of monthly food aid.

Going to school or wandering?

The children of the marginalized people go to school, just like the rest of the community, except that their parents are forced to take them out in the third or fourth grade of primary school, due to their inability to provide the costs of schooling, and they send them to beg, or engage them in child labor, so that they participate with their families in earning a living.

Here, "Umm Murshid" explains, "We do not have the cost of notebooks, pens and school supplies, so they drop out early from the first grades". The sheikh of "Al Mahwa", "Farie", who also participated in the conversation with her adds, "If there were organizations that support our children's education, we welcome that. It will make us happy to see our children learn and be good at reading and writing so we will push them against their will to learn and be good members in the society". And he adds, "If you have ten or fifteen children and you want them to learn in light of our difficult financial conditions, so how can you provide them all with the educational supplies?"

The Latest Papers

From the above data, it can be asserted that the so-called (marginalized) group have the ability to fully integrate into the society if they had the opportunity and alternatives were found to get them out of their isolation, they are in fact Yemeni citizens, and they carry the Yemeni identity, not to mention that Islamic religion has abolished any racial discrimination, and the world has also become more receptive to this category which has suffered a lot of marginalization. Obama, who assumed the presidency of the United States, did not lack competence, nor did the color of his skin prevent him from being like the rest of the white-skinned. So here we conclude by asking this question: Will we someday see the marginalized people of Yemen going beyond their framework, turning from mere cleaners, car windshield wipers, and beggars, to prominent leaders in their community, sharing with all members of society the building of their great homeland, Yemen?



The Children of the Marginalized ...

By: Manal Ameen
Sawt Al Amal (The Voice of hope)

With a frowning face, revealing the worries of the whole world, the 12-year-old girl, "W.F.", says, "It is not my fault that I am black-skinned or from a poor family. I want to learn and become a teacher. Is this forbidden?"

"W.F.", who lives in the "Sira" district in the city of Aden in southern Yemen, originally from "Tihamah" region, is a fifth-grade student. She complains about the mockery and irony of her classmates at school, as they always describe her as a "Khadima" (servant in Arabic), and she is sometimes subjected to physical attacks.

"W.F." tried to leave school several times, but her parents' insistence on going to school prevented her from doing so, which prompted her not to lose hope in continuing her studies in order to become a teacher in the future, despite the difficult living conditions her family is going through.

The child, "Wedyan", just like many of her peers from the marginalized, suffers a lot in order to continue her studies. They are forced to work in the streets or beg most of the time, to gather the educational supplies they need, in light of the failure of the organizations supporting this group.

The illiteracy among the marginalized is high

A report issued by the Equal Rights Trust in December 2018 confirmed that discrimination was practiced against the marginalized group in schools in Yemen, based on race, lineage and inequality, through the study of 103 cases, in 16 Yemeni governorates, who left their schools and were deprived from education because of their ethnicity or lineage, and their exposure to harassment, abuse and discrimination by students and school administrators.

The (difficult) humanitarian and economic situation that Yemen has been going through - during the past periods up until now - has contributed to an increase in the illiteracy rate among the marginalized in various Yemeni regions, in addition to the process of ongoing displacements of this group between the regions of the country in search of a livelihood. The unstable economic and security situation has led to the reluctance of the marginalized people from schools, in addition to some harassment and racist practices (bullying) practiced against them: from students and some school administrators.

Helpless and unrealistic measurements

The Secretary-General of the National Union for the Development of the Poorest, Salah Dabwan, confirms to "Sawt Al Amal (The Voice of hope)" that the extreme poverty from which suffers the members of the marginalized group, and the racial discrimination

that is practiced against their children in schools, are among the most important reasons for their reluctance to go to school in the early stages. In addition, children start working at a young age, on the streets and sidewalks, to support their families financially".

Dabwan added that there are no statistics or research studies from any party (governmental, international organizations, or research centers) that shed light on the estimated percentages of the number of marginalized people in schools, and the issue of discrimination against them in the educational facilities indicating that all published research related to the issue of the marginalized are just incomplete and unrealistic information.

"Dabwan" also indicated that international organizations bring many funds through various programs, in the name of the marginalized people and their different causes, but in fact, the main demands were not implemented to enabling them to enjoy their rights in practicing an ordinary live, including their enrollment in educational and employment facilities like the rest of the community, and it did not provide any type of facilities, and all it took were helpless and unrealistic measurements.

Regarding treatments and solutions to confront this problem, "Dabwan" points out that great efforts must be made with all parties, to implement interventions that facilitate the process of integrating students from the marginalized group into the educational process,

and to promote a culture of acceptance of others, regardless of their color, gender or race, and joint work to provide basic services in order to meet their needs for a decent life.

I dream of becoming a pediatrician

The students belonging to the marginalized group suffer many psychological difficulties due to the racial treatment they are subjected to at schools, as other students call them "Akhdam" (servants in Arabic) and sometimes insult and beat them and diminish their dignity before their colleagues, and the school administration or teachers are found unable to limit the persistence of racial discrimination among students.

"R. Q.", a 13-year-old girl from the marginalized category, is a sixth-grade student at a school in the city of "Aden". She aspires to become a pediatrician in the future, out of her passion for helping children who suffer from many diseases in the area where she lives with her family in the "Tawahi" District in "Aden" Governorate.

"R.Q." suffers from being bullied by her classmates in her school because of her skin color and her worn-out clothes. She says, "Since the first grades, I have been suffering from

Educating the Marginalized

Between the Devil and Deep Sea Regarding Discrimination and Poverty

Nada al-Bukari
Sawt Al Amal (The Voice of hope)

Racial discrimination based on skin color causes marginalized children to drop out of public schools in Yemen, owing to the inferiority view and their non-integration into the classes with other students, which aggravated the problem of the drop-out of the marginalized students from school and led to their lack of access to their basic right to education, in addition to the difficult economic and living conditions experienced by the marginalized people in the country, and thus, their inability to integrate with their fellow members of society.

The marginalized also suffer from the lack of application of law and decisions issued concerning their integration into public schools, and their exemption from tuition fees, but those decisions have not been implemented.

"Abdullah Awad", a 12-year-old student from the marginalized group in "Sana'a", says, "I strive to go to school, and I hope that I will have a great position in the future. I am trying to avoid paying the prescribed school fees, because my father is unable to pay, given our poor living situation, but in vain. He asserts that every day, he receives a notice from the school administration that he must pay the fees or else he will be suspended from studying and permanently dismissed". He adds, "Because we are "Akhdam", as they say, they do not support us and do not stand by us to get our educational rights."

Racial Discrimination in Schools

On the other hand, Muhammad Saad Al-Russi - a guardian of the marginalized people in "Al Mahwa of Al Maama-

li" in "Sana'a", says that schools ask for a thousand Riyals of monthly fees, and that he cannot provide the sum in addition to the school expenses. He adds, "My daughter did not go to school because of the non-payment of fees and the non-purchase of school books and notebooks."

Al-Russi indicates that he works on collecting empty water cans, and gets between 500 and 1,000 Riyals to provide a living for his family. He adds, "My daughter suffers from bad treatment at school, yet she is still trying to learn like other girls but her suspension because of the non-payment of school fees has had psychological effects on her and a feeling of frustration."

Muhammad, who is a father of 4 children, points out that all of his children do not go to school because of his poor living conditions, lack of income, and his inability to pay the fees and provide school supplies. He considered that the school administration's failure to accept the exemption from fees is a racial discrimination against the children of the marginalized people who are deprived of their educational rights.

Deprivation of Education and Numerous Diseases

57 families live in "Al Mahwa" of "Al Hasba", and they suffer from diseases and pandemics, due to the sewage surrounding their housing, which led their children to stop going to school due to the diseases that they are exposed to, in addition to the inability of their parents to provide the school fees or the price of treatment for those affected with the disease.

"Tariq Ali Abdo" (the "Akel" of Al Mahwa) says, "The schools want monthly fees although there is an exemption, as this has not been applied, and some of my children are still studying and some others are not. We are still being treated as marginalized, although my children and other

children of "Al Mahwa" wish to pursue their studies."

He points out that school principals' pretext is the overcrowded classrooms and that priority is given to other social groups, while we belong to the marginalized class "Akhdam" and we are not prioritized by them. He also affirms that the children of the marginalized suffer from discrimination and racism, even if they are smart and excellent in education, they do not come first.

Unavailability of statistics

There are no specific statistics on the rate of illiteracy among the marginalized in Yemen, confirms Haidar Al-Samawi, Deputy Director General of Statistics at the Ministry of Education: "We do not have specific statistics on illiteracy indicators for the marginalized group in Yemen", indicating that the illiteracy index in general has reached 40.7% in 2005, according to a household survey carried out by the Central Statistical Organization.

Regarding the implementation of the decision to exempt marginalized group from fees, "Al-Samawi" explains that the decision used to be applied normally before the war, but due to the salaries outages four years ago, it is likely that the implementation of the decision is no longer effective, especially since public schools depend on the community contributions and tuition fees to disburse teachers' salaries and transportations.

"Al-Samawi" affirms that the culture of the surrounding community plays a major role in the issue of whether or not to enroll in education. As for the school, it is considered amenable to all groups, without racism, and without exception according to the law and the constitution. And there are programs previously implemented by the ministry in aspects of motivation and awareness against discrimination towards the marginalized. He points out that the most notable difficulties are the unwillingness of marginalized students to enroll in education, in addition to their parents' dependence on them to work and assist in providing family expenses.

Inferiority deprived them of their Rights

Inferiority and racial discrimination towards the marginalized resulted in depriving them of education and other rights and opportunities, which exacerbated their suffering. The "Akel" of "Al Maalami mahwa", in "Sana'a", and the head of the "Dar at-Ta'am" association, Yahya Al-Fakhy, says that the reluctance of marginalized students to attend schools is the result of the behavior of some principals and

The

Marginalized of Yemen ... Racial Discrimination Isolates them from Society

teachers, who treat marginalized students violently, in addition to being harassed by their peers who practice racial discrimination and bullying because of their skin color.

A different view

But "Wafaa Mohammed", from the marginalized group, believes that her children have not been subjected to any marginalization or improper treatment, but rather received some respect.

"Wafaa" says, "I was deprived of education, and I do not want my children to be deprived of pursuing their education, as the situation will improve in the future". "My husband is educated, but he is currently working in the municipality, and he does not have the right to work with his diploma, and herein lays racism; to learn and not find a law that gives us opportunities to acquire jobs like other members of society", she adds.

Treating with Contempt

"Samira Ali Abdo", a displaced woman from the marginalized group and a mother of six, suffers from discrimination and the non-enrollment of her children in schools in "Sana'a". Samira says, "Because we are from the marginalized class in society, we are exposed to racism and we are treated with contempt, which has made my children feel humiliated, so they left school and went begging". She adds, "After my husband's death, there is no one to support us. I hope to see my children study, and fulfill my dream of changing their situation for the better, but unfortunately there is nothing I can do."



Ongoing Suffering in Schools and Outside

the classmates' mockery regarding my skin color, my hair and my clothes. I used to cry every day for calling me "khadima" and insulting me. I have endured it all for the love of learning, despite my family's insistence on leaving school, like my older brothers who did not complete primary school".

Despite the light smile that was drawn on her face, mixed with pain and soreness from the bitter reality, she said, "I dream of continuing my studies and becoming a pediatrician to treat the children for free in the future".

Bureau of Education: No impediments hampering to pursue their education

The Head of the Division of General Education at the Bureau of Education in "Aden", "Nabil Abdul Majeed", says that all schools receive all those who want to study, from all the society segments without discrimination, and there are no barriers that prevent the marginalized group from pursuing their studies, stressing that there are many marginalized people who are being received in public schools normally.

He added that the reluctance of marginalized students to learn is linked to their own inherent culture, related to the necessity of literacy, without worrying about completing all academic stages, and being devoted to work due to the economic and social situation that the marginalized families are going through, but despite that culture, there are people who pursue their

studies and finish secondary education.

Regarding the support of international organizations, he pointed out that there are evening classes in some schools in the governorate that provide reinforcement lessons for this group, as well as students who are late in their education and need assistance, supported by "Save The Children" federation under the direct supervision of Department of Education, in order to re-engage them in the educational process in a way that preserves their status in the community.

The Ministry of Technical Education: The percentage of marginalized people is low in the institutes

The Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training confirmed to "Sawt Al Amal (The Voice of hope)" that there are students from the marginalized group in a number of disciplines in the institutes at the level of the Yemeni governorates, but in very small proportions, because of the difficult economic situation that this group is going through in society, and that there is no discrimination practiced against these people while receiving them in the technical and vocational institutes.

The Ministry's administration also confirms that there are no international organizations that directly support the marginalized group, in order to facilitate their integration into the educational process in the various technical and vocational institutes in Aden



and the rest of the Yemeni governorates, except as an individual initiative that seeks to train some marginalized youth, in the disciplines of auto mechanics, plumbing and turning in an unsustainable way.

Some activists and human rights defenders in Yemen seek, through some simple activities and pro-

grams, to alleviate the suffering of the marginalized and change the society's perception against them, and promote a culture of their acceptance and non-racism in dealing with them, as they are members of Yemeni society, and have rights and duties in Yemeni laws and legislation.

Minorities in Yemen Are Respected and Not Discriminated

Statistics issued by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in May 2020 revealed that Yemen hosts about 218,000 refugees and asylum seekers, mostly from Somalia, and they constitute 96%, while Ethiopian refugees constitute 6.3%, according to the UNHCR.

Nada al-Bukari
Sawt Al Amal (The Voice of hope)

African refugees are characterized by self-reliance, through work and seeking opportunities to help them provide a livelihood, which has made them easily integrate into the Yemeni society, exist in all Yemeni governorates, and work in different life professions, far from discrimination and racism.

"Maryam Mohammed" is Ethiopian, and she immigrated to Yemen more than 25 years ago with her four children in order to get a job opportunity and provide her and her children a decent life.

"Maryam says: "After the death of my husband, I did not find anyone to support my family, and I have children so I had to migrate to Yemen, my children and I, to provide financial income to guarantee the living costs".

She adds: "I worked in cleaning houses, and I used to work in more than one house a day, to cover my expenses, and after a period of work and efforts, I was exposed to a health problem, and could not continue my work, so I left it, and found a cooperative Yemeni merchant, who made me run a small shoe shop. I have been in this same shop for two years, and I added to it the well-known "injera" in the preparation of "Zigni" meals, in addition to the types of Abyssinian honey that is distinguished by its quality and unique taste. So this helped me cover my expenses.

"Maryam" talks about her experience and life in Yemen, and the behaviors of Yemenis towards her during the years that she spent in this country until today. She says: "Ever since I came to Yemen, I have found no harsh treatment, and there has been no racial discrimination against me as an Ethiopian, but quite the opposite. The Yemenis treated me with manners and respect. They see me as their mother, and sometimes describe me as their sister. These behaviors helped me a lot to adapt with the Yemeni society".

The combination of Yemeni customs and traditions generated a great harmony between Yemenis, Ethiopians and others which made Yemenis eat Abyssinian foods and accept to buy products that are distinguished by Abyssinia from leather and others.

Maryam added, "I have become an old woman, and I know many Yemeni customs and traditions, as if I am

Yemeni, I wear Yemeni clothes and also cook Yemeni food, but my only problem so far is that I still cannot make bread using the "tannour". I consider my learning of Yemeni customs and traditions a kind of exchange of cultures and civilizations, as I learned a lot, as well as some Yemenis who learned a lot of Ethiopian customs and traditions from me."

In the same context and regarding marriage with Yemenis or vice versa, it has been shown that when Yemenis go to Abyssinia, they marry Abyssinians, but the opposite is not desirable, for several reasons, including that Yemenis prefer the women of their country more, and if they do get married, the Abyssinian shall be the second rather than the first, because of different customs and traditions, and their non-acceptance.

"Maryam" mentioned that her daughter, when she was young, got married to a Yemeni married man, but that marriage did not last. She adds, "He was underestimating my daughter for being Ethiopian, and this affected her psyche, so she asked for divorce, but that does not mean that my daughter's failed experience applies to everyone, because most are not, and there are many Yemenis whose ancestors are Abyssinia called "Muwalladin". (M-P) who is an immigrant has been living in Yemen

Foreign Cultures Blended With Yemeni Society And Formed Homogeneous Coexistence Panels

for seven years, and has been working for an international organization, then he quit when he found a job in a friend's shop. He describes the Yemeni society as nice, as he was supported and helped during his life among them, and says, "I have adapted to Yemeni customs and traditions, and I feel that there is a great connection between the two cultures, and I hope I will keep living in this country, but because of the current situation, life has become more difficult for everyone. I am as affected as any Yemeni citizen and God willing, the situation will improve and we will live safely".

Regarding the Yemeni treatment to him, he says, "There are many people who have high morals, and they respect your presence among them. I met people with high morals and human values that I could not find in any country, and if I wasn't Christian, I would have married a Yemeni woman."



Hafat Al Hunoud: mixture and cohesion

"Hafat Al Hunoud" is one the old neighborhoods in the "Crater" district of the "Aden" governorate, which includes a number of Indian families who came to Yemen during the period of the British occupation of southern Yemen, to fill some administrative positions and work in banks, and since they arrived and lived in Yemen, the two cultures have overlapped. They intermarried, and this connection was not limited to the southern regions only, but they reached the northern regions, and they lived in them, and the people of North Yemen married their women, representing the greatest example of coexistence and community cohesion, despite their different customs and traditions, thus they merged into a society that had rejected all aspects of discrimination and differentiation.

Uncle "Taha Al-Ansari" has Indian parents. He was born and raised in the city of "Aden", where his parents settled. He speaks Arabic and Hindi. He says to "Sawt Al Amal (The Voice of hope)", "I did not feel that I was different in Yemen, but I rather felt I belonged to this country. I took a lot from its culture. I lived my childhood in "Aden", and when it was time to work, I moved

to "Sana'a" and married a woman of Indian origins, and as my parents did, I taught my children both cultures."

"Umm Mohammed" says: "We have a strong relationship with Aunt "Farzana", who is a well-known Indian bag merchant. There is no house in "Crater" that does not deal with her because she is simple and humble", and she adds, "When Aunt "Farzana" returns from India, we all know and we go to her, and she opens a huge room containing a number of goods, and we start choosing. We pay her in installments, and this is the most beautiful thing in her, as she relieves us of many troubles."

"Mujibur", an Indian tailor who owned a shop for tailoring and sewing women's dresses, coexisted with a large number of people. He says, "I did not feel that I was strange as the wonderful thing in Yemen which differs from other countries in the world is that they are simple, treat you with love, and cannot insult you once they know your nationality, and this is what many Indians around the world miss."

Cultural diversity remains a prominent feature that included many different cultures in Yemen, which has been inhabited by a large number of different nationalities, in which they have lived, for long periods, without any discrimination and racism.



President of the Marginalized Union to “Sawt Al Amal (The Voice of Hope)”:

Racial Discrimination Is Inherent Us since Birth

By: **Rajaa Mukred**
 “Sawt Al Amal” (The Voice of hope)

Gasping out his last breath, he extended his hand and said, “Please take care of my mother, and bury me, because my mother may not find a pit (tomb) in which I would sleep, after I had kidney failure, and my health worsened”. These words uttered by one of the marginalized children in his last moments. It was a turning point in the life of “Numan Al-Hudhaifi”, President of the National Union of the Marginalized, whom “Sawt Al Amal (The Voice of hope)” met with and conveyed more details about his life and his journey in combating racism. And as an example, he overcame the pressures and difficulties, raised his voice and said: We are here! Let’s go to the interview details:

Q: To begin with, tell us about “Numan Al-Hudhaifi” and his childhood?

A: “Numan Qaid Mohammed Al-Hudhaifi”, born in 1972 AD, in the village of Souq Al-Rameed, Uzlat of Al-Hudhaifi country, Al-Udayn District, Ibb Governorate. I belong to a poor family, known as (the marginalized group), which is the poorest social group among the components of Yemeni society. Married twice, and father of nine males and females, I studied “Technical Education” for the fact that my family’s conditions and their constant relocation between the governorates of “Taiz” and “Ibb”, in addition to the extreme poverty we were suffering, prevented me from pursuing my university education.

Q: Did you face racial discrimination in your childhood? How?

A: Racial discrimination is inherent in us, the black-skinned people, since birth.

Q: How was the beginning of your fight against racism?

A: In fact, my story began one day while I was doing my job as an environmental health officer at the Public Works and Roads Office in “Taiz”. I passed by the gate of “Al-Thawra” Hospital and found a black-skinned woman crying over her son, who was less than ten years old. I approached her and asked her, “Why are you crying?” She said, “My son suffers from kidney failure, and they kicked us out to the hospital, because he does not have clean clothes - according to the hospital director - and we are required to pay the bed fees.” I then felt chills and fever at the same time, so I took the boy to the hospital director, and told him that if he doesn’t order to receive the child, I will take him to the court, and if he dies, I will file a lawsuit to accuse you personally of killing him. At that time, the child was accepted and I went to the Association of the late “Haj Saeed Anam”, and they took in charge the purchase of medicine and all the bed and treatment fees, as they used to do with many poor and sick people from “Taiz” and all of “Yemen”. Three days later I went to visit the child in the hospital; I was informed that his mother had taken him out based on her desire. I went to the child’s house, and found him lying down, gasping out his last breath, wishing me health, and he said, “Promise me Sir to shroud me (cover me in white) and buy me a grave, because my mother does

not have any money.”

The child died, and I took care of all arrangements for his burial. We went to pray for him in “Al-Nour” Mosque in “Al-Salkhana” neighborhood in “Taiz”, and when we brought the child to pray for at the time of the evening prayer, the Imam refused to pray for him, on the pretext that he is a (khadem) who does not pray, and he asked us for two witnesses to prove that he prays. I told him at the time that he was a child, and if he does not pray, then he will be punished by his Lord. Everyone refused to pray for him, so I came forward to lead the prayers for the dead and the black-skinned followed me, but the responsible, Imam, and preacher of the Mosque - a religious figure in “Taiz” - was ashamed and prayed for him, so these two incidents were the turning points in my life, towards confronting racism.

Q: What does success mean to you?

A: Success is a human trait, given that human beings were molded for that, being God’s finest creatures on earth, and therefore every person has an ambition to achieve success, and to put his imprint in life which makes him an inspiration to the rest of his peers. As a conclusion: “Success is what a person wishes to achieve in his life.”

Q: How does society deal with the marginalized?

A: Yemeni society is known to be a traditional society, in which tribal, regional, and dynastic affiliation represent the basis on which human relations based on differentiation are defined, and therefore, it is not strange for the society to deal with the marginalized from the angle of contempt and the view of inferiority, which is inconsistent with the association of religion and land which brings together the marginalized and the rest of the Yemeni society. That’s why the marginalized remained a social group rejected by the rest of the Yemeni society.

Q: Who is your inspiration in your scientific and practical life?

A: There are many who have passed through my life, and they were given credit for “Numan Al Hudhaifi” personality, but since I am struggling to eliminate racism, I put before me two world figures: “Mandela” and “Martin Luther King” as an inspiration to continue my struggle.

Q: During your academic and practical journey, did you notice a difference in the way the society and employers treat you? How did you find the difference?

A: Certainly, a person puts himself wherever he wants, and thank God, throughout my career, I have never been subjected to any kind of racial treatment. On the contrary, I have enjoyed a decent societal respect, and this is a blessing from God on me. I hope it falls on all the marginalized people in Yemen.

Q: What are the main difficulties you have encountered in your social, scientific and professional life?

A: Of course, we are all exposed to many difficulties and challenges in our social, scientific and professional life, but we should not stop at the first turning point that faces us as individuals or groups if we want to move forward.

Q: What positive situation have you encountered that you



Numan Qaid Mohammed Al-Hudhaifi

couldn’t forget throughout your life?

A: There are many positive situations that I have encountered in my life, which I can’t remember, but they have all shaped my personality, through the love of good for everybody, and the search for justice and equality among all my compatriots, no matter their social spectrum.

Q: In your opinion, what are the necessary steps and procedures for the advancement of the marginalized category?

A: In fact, there are a number of steps and procedures that can advance the marginalized, including those related to the marginalized themselves, based on the Almighty saying (Allah does not change what is in a nation unless they change what is in themselves) Thunder 11, and this is a very important step for the marginalized to act upon on their own if they really want change and influence within their societies. Then comes the role of the government represented by its political system, which must undertake a series of legislative and legal measures, and develop practical plans and strategies to make a change in the lives of the marginalized.

In addition to bringing about a change in the mentality of the rest of the components of Yemeni society, and re-evaluating the behavior of these components, from the standpoint that there is no difference between people except by “taqwa” (piety, fear of God) and the amount that the human being offers to his community and country. Without this, the change

that we seek for this group or for other groups of the Yemeni society cannot happen.

Q: Why do you think marginalization exists? Is it because of society or the marginalized themselves?

A: Both, in addition to the absence of the government that guarantees the rights and is able to achieve justice and equality among its citizens, on the basis that everyone has the same rights and duties, and that they are all equal towards law and order.

Q: What are the future plans of the “National Union for the Marginalized” that you are chairing?

A: The “National Union” has many ideas and plans, but ultimately, it remains a civil entity, and the issue of advancing the marginalized and integrating them into society is the government’s responsibility, as they are its citizens, and one of the state’s duties is to work to improve their conditions and take them into hands to be good citizens and able to participate and contribute to building the nation.

Q: What are your future ambitions?

A: There are many aspirations that I hope will be fulfilled on the personal, categorical and national levels.

Q: What message would you like to send to the world, the society and the marginalized?

A: There are three messages that I would like to send. The first would be to the marginalized, based on the Almighty saying (Allah does not change what is in a nation unless they change what is in themselves) Thunder 11. If you want to change, you must go towards education for you and your children, change some behaviors and replace them with behaviors that bring you closer to the society, and if you want to enjoy your full rights, they are extracted and not gifted, and the best way to reach your rights is to continue changing, expressing peacefully, and stepping away from the culture of violence. The second message would be to the Yemeni society: If you are Muslims, Islam was equal between the companions, our master “Bilal al-Habashi” and our master “Abu Bakr as-Siddiq”, and that the marginalized are your brothers under the bonds of religion, language, land, and a common destiny. The message that I would address to the world: It is time to rethink your policies, move towards establishing the values of equality and justice, and renounce all forms of violence, extremism and racial discrimination, through a global revolution, if we want to live in peace on this earth.

Q: Is your life outside Yemen different from inside Yemen? Why?

A: In fact, I am not an advocate of expatriation. I am not dazzled by all the forms of modernity and development that I see abroad. I am a Yemeni deeply attached and affiliated to my country, so the dirtiest spot of its pure soil is the most beloved, dearest and most honorable of all the nationalities of the world, and in summary: I am a Yemeni by identity and passion, and inevitably, no matter how long the separation from my country lasts because of its exceptional circumstances, I am confident that we will return to it, and together we will build its future that we all aspire to.

A Journey of Suffering for A Marginalized Displaced Person from (Ad-Dali’)

The conflict in the country that has been going on for more than six years has led to the destruction of many homes, the displacement of thousands of families, the increase of poverty and unemployment, and food insecurity, especially among the marginalized groups in Yemen in the various Yemeni governorates. It has also drowned them in a lot of scourges, bitterness and heartbreak as a result of living in a bad reality that turns day after day into a worse reality, without there being any glimmer of hope for a breakthrough.

By: **Manal Ameen**
 Sawt Al Amal (The Voice of hope)

“Abdo Ahmed Saad”, a displaced person from the marginalized group from the “Hajr” district in As-Saddah, the border region between “Qa’atabah and Ad-Dali”, migrated to the southern Yemeni city of “Aden” on April 5th 2018, after many houses in that area were destroyed and burned due to the constant bombing of the outskirts to the conflict, which led to the total destruction of his house. He was then forced to emigrate with his family of seven children and 3 of his brother’s children, who was killed in the “Muris” area in 2014.

Stages of the displacement suffering

“Abdo Ahmed” talks about the stage of his displacement and suffering that began when he left his house that was destroyed and burned along with the rest of the houses and cabins near him due to the constant bombing in his area, which is considered a battle front, in addition to their exposure to constant threats of death by the parties of the conflict if they did not leave their homes. After an arduous

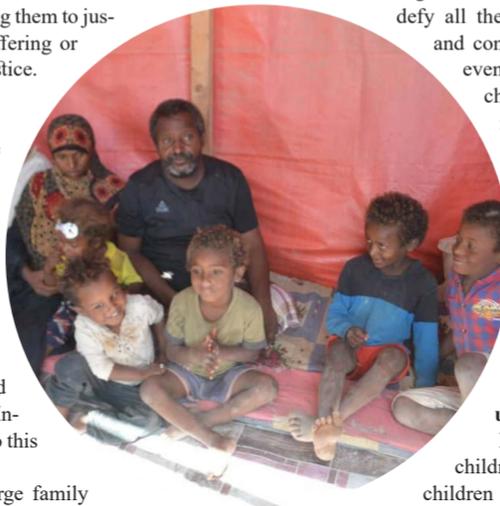
and bitter journey, he arrived to “Dar Sad” district of “Al Bayda” city in Aden with more than 18 families (from his family and relatives), and lived in a building for several days, in a very bad psychological, healthy and economic situation, then he moved with the families to another area in “Al Mansoura” district and lived in an under-construction building for a month.

“Abdo Ahmed” suffered greatly when he saw his cousin whom he raised like his son, severely beaten by some people in that area, while assembling plastic cans from the streets. The boy could not bear the pain, and died the next day suffering from the severity of the beating. The shock was hard for “Abdo”, so he went to the police to file a report on the murder of his cousin, to know the identity of the perpetrators and bring them to justice, but no one heard his suffering or responded to his appeal for justice.

Death threat

“Abdo Ahmed” said, “We kept trying to search for the killers for more than a week but in vain, until a number of masked people came to the building and threatened to kill me and my family if I did not forget about the issue. Here, I contacted the “Executive Unit” to help and protect us from being killed. Indeed, we have all been taken to this camp.”

“Abdo Ahmed” and his large family



of 18 families live in “Al-Shaab” camp, in “Al-Burayqah” district, which contains more than 142 displaced families from various Yemeni governorates, supervised by the Executive Unit for the IDPs Camps in “Aden”.

Implementation of a private business

Regarding the aid that has been provided to the displaced in the camp, “Abdo” says, “Since we arrived to the camp, we have obtained some relief and shelter aids from various international and local organizations and benefactors. Last year, I received the sum of 125,000 Riyals from INTERSOS International in 2009 in which I implemented a small business inside the camp, consisting of a shop containing some simple food products, in order to defy all the difficulties facing my family, and contribute to providing assistance, even in some small way, to the camp children. He added, “My sons currently work in this store, which brings us very little return that may only be sufficient to buy modest goods and one meal for our family, in light of the difficult economic conditions that the country is going through and the high prices.”

Ensuring to Continue Education

Regarding the education of his children, “Abdo Ahmed” said, “My children were studying in the “Hajr”

region of (Ad-Dhali’) at different educational stages, and were relatively well-off in their studies, as I ensured they complete their studies, build their future in a way that protects them from all harm in the society, and teach them how to face difficulties, especially since we are from the marginalized group, but the conflict and displacement conditions made them lose two years of schooling”. He explained, “Currently my children and camp children continue their studies at the primary stages, through only one teacher, as the camp administration is searching for another teacher to target as many camp children as possible.”

“Abdo Ahmed”, the displaced member of the marginalized group, goes back in memory, to the time when he worked in the field of “Qat” cultivation in his area, along with his family, who missed those days and feel nostalgic, especially in light of the bad situation they are currently living in the displacement camp. Among the most important difficulties facing “Abdo Ahmed” in the camp is the lack of support organizations during this period for the displaced, the lack of food baskets that satisfy the hunger of many displaced and marginalized families, in addition to the deterioration of the tents that became completely dilapidated and unsuitable for living in, especially since his family is big and the level of damage in the camp is huge.

The dream of returning

“Abdo” dreams of the end of this conflict so that he can return to (Ad-Dali’) governorate, to his work on the farm, and rebuild his house stone by stone, as he said, in order to feel safe and get rid of the feeling of expatriation and oppression, while he sees his family and children displaced from one place to another in difficult circumstances which makes him feel powerless.



They Are Viewed with Racism and Contempt

The Society Culture Surrounds the Low-Profession Employees in Yemen

The circle of lower professions is expanding in Yemen, which falls under the works and professions in which the community looks down on their workers and refuses to work in them. While those working in those professions see that racial practices and caste discrimination have become a hereditary habit in Yemen, this did not deter them from practicing their work which is a profitable source of income, and they don't care what is said about them.

Alya Muhammed
"Sawt Al Amal" (The Voice of hope)

"None of my father, grandfather, or member of my family worked in this field. I rather chose it willingly". That is what "Fawad Al-Hubaishi", a young man from "Ibb" city, has been working for fifteen years in shaving said. He has chosen this profession as a source of livelihood for him and his family. "Al-Hubaishi" is proud of his profession and says, "I do not care what people say about me being a deficient or a "muzayin" as the society calls those working in this profession. I am not affected by what is said about me, because there's nothing like the feeling of comfort when your livelihood is hard-earned".

Discrimination Origins

The origins of caste discrimination and racism go back to hundreds of years. The social division by professions has been made into a number of classes, beginning with masters and tribes, and ending with service owners, and the circle of low professions expands to include all those who serve others, such as forging, butchering, weaving, and making household appliances, and working in clothes washing, cupping, reviving parties, grooms and brides hairdressing, shaving, patching shoes, playing drums and bowls, playing the oboe, and other professions in which a large proportion of the Yemeni society practices.

These groups, which are classified according to the professions practiced by the members of each category, whose number reaches about half a million, according to the official statistics, are discriminated and racism is practiced against them, and are prevented from the most basic rights, so they are not entitled to marry outside their families, and they are not allowed to sit with those who are of a higher social class. They are given surnames, and proverbs that despise them are passed on. Despite the September 26th revolution in 1962, which abolished all forms of racial and caste discrimination, and partially stipulated and removed some of the differences and privileges between classes, some manifestations of racism that the society could not overcome remained and returned again creating a large fence and forming a large gap between the members of a single community.

Customs and legacies that formed a racial gap

"We practice honorable work, many of which are fi-

nancially profitable," says "Muhammad Nader", a young man who plays the oboe, sings, recites poetry at events, and other artistic works. His passion and love for this profession began when he was a child.

And in reference to the caste discrimination that he was subjected to from the society, and the insulting terms that detracted from his being, "Muhammad" affirms to "Sawt Al Amal" (The Voice of hope) that the reason is due to wrong legacies and convictions that have been instilled in the minds of the society, and they have forgotten what God Almighty said, "Surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the most righteous of you". God created us equal, and there is no preference for one over another. He adds that he and other people whose professions are despised, all bear the responsibility of families, and they cannot change their professions, because they are the source of their livelihood, so it is not permissible for them to leave work just because of discrimination practiced against them by some groups of society.

In the same context, the journalist, "Noor Sareeb", says, "In 'Aden', we do not see that there is a caste discrimination, which is the result of integrating these groups into the society and giving everyone his right, and thus the discrimination was dropped. The sanctions imposed previously on those who practice discrimination disappeared... and she adds, "Laws that abolish discrimination, had they been applied in the tribal areas in southern Yemen, the view of contempt for these professions would have changed..."

In her speech to "Sawt Al Amal" (The Voice of hope), she deplors any term that insulted any person who wasn't to blame except that he had chosen a profession from which he could earn a permissible livelihood". She pointed out that workers in the field of art and hairdressing receive great attention and respect, and they are considered to have high income levels in "Aden" and other Yemeni cities, which made a significant number of them resort to working in these professions that generate great financial profit.

Social researcher "Ahmed Al-Majidi" believes that caste discrimination occurs between different groups of the society, and these forms of discrimination only resulted from accumulations of concepts, customs and traditions inherited from grandparents. In our

The Phenomenon of Racism Is Once Again Creating a Gap between the Members of the Society

country, these concepts have found a suitable environment for the consolidation of these ideas, due to societal desire.

As for "Amir Al-Surabi", he lives in conflict between his humanitarian principles and other matters that make him reticent. He says, "There are things that I have reservations about, as a result of family customs and traditions, and because of racial discrimination, I cannot marry the daughter of a butcher, barber, artist, blacksmith and other employees, as a result of the categorical rejection of my tribe to this marriage, which they consider unequal, because of lineage, race and other terms inherited by the society".

Discrimination Criterion

On the other hand, the journalist "Mustafa Al-Sharabi" believes that the discrimination criterion must be based on behavior, not occupation as some of those who have a profession that the society despises, have a behavior through which they impose respect by others, adding that people are not equal, for each person has his/her own behavior. For example, we can see that a person whose profession is not shameful doesn't possess a positive attitude.

In the same context, "Ahmed Thabet", a displaced person from the city of "Taiz" to "Sana'a", says, "I have been patching shoes and bags for fifteen years and I have not been exposed to such surnames like "muzayin", incomplete, or undignified, and other terms that I do not believe in." He adds that the only criterion that can be used for preference is ethics and dealing with others only.

Choice of lineage

False misconceptions and beliefs that the Yemeni society believes in make a person's profession remain a stigma that pursues him/her throughout his/her life. The young "VSA" says, "They refused to marry me off with someone I loved, because his grandfather was a cook at weddings." She adds that societal and racial discrimination against employees deprived her from being with the person she loved and wished to be her life partner, whose only shame is that his grandfather used to work as a cook at weddings and events.

Many youth believe that such divisions and differences are inevitable, as they are related to the family's reputation. "Ibtisam Harbi" says, "We must choose a person who will be a lineage (son-in-law) for us, so no one in the family can marry a girl from the "muzayana" class or those working in professions in which work is a shame for the tribes, because this issue affects the reputation of an entire tribe. And we should only be married to origins, and whoever violates these conditions will affect the entire family.

She is disagreed by the journalist "Marwa Al-Areqi", who believes that relations should be based on good morals, behavior and good treatment, and not on color, race, or profession... and asserts that if any of her children want to marry a girl from any societal group, she will not stand in their way because these are decisions that you should not interfere with.

Caste discrimination ... will it be dropped?

When discrimination becomes like the human genes, it is passed on from generation to generation and will not change, and the society will remain the one that creates barriers of racism and discrimination that stands in the way of building a cohesive society free of distinction and racism.

"Issam Al-Hamidi" says, "I expect that time will come in which we will not see distinctions and racism, given the increase in the society's awareness, and what we need is to change false misconceptions and install correct conceptions."

While the journalist "Fatima" says, "I left the pen and paper and took the needle and thread, and now I am sewing dolls, and I did not surrender to people's talks, because I am fully aware that I am the one who builds my name, and not my profession. I am "Fatima", the journalist. I have not changed from "Fatima", the dolls weaver."

As for "Amro Muhammad", he took a new step, and changed a misconception about employees, because of his passion and high ambition to achieve the position he dreams of. He says, "Despite the caste discrimination, I practiced my hobby and talent, despite the fact that I belong to a tribal family that totally rejects such professions", and he adds, "I faced many problems, but they did not affect my ambition. I challenged the wrong traditions and beliefs, and changed the ideas of some of my tribe's people, and now they are the ones supporting me, and here I am organizing their own weddings, and this is what I consider a great achievement through which I changed a wrong societal legacy that was passed down through generations".





Bara'a, A Dark-Skinned Girl, Victim of Racism and Inequity

A brutal incident that disclaims the values, customs and norms of the Yemeni society which victim is a seventeen-year-old girl, classed within the black minority who are racially referred to as "Akhdam" (the servants in Arabic) or "the marginalized".

In a remote village in one of the Yemeni governorates, Bara'a (a pseudonym) was publicly harassed, at the end of March 2020, by a village youth, while fetching water from the well from which she used to get water from, like most girls and women in her village.

Alya Muhammed
"Sawt Al Amal" (The Voice of hope)

Bara'a did not remain silent about the harassment and disturbance to which she was subject by that young man. So she went to complain to his father, who replied to her by saying: "You are beautiful, and if I were him, I would have raped you"... With this response, the father encouraged his son and gave him a tacit approval to carry out the heinous crime after that, as it happened at the same night, the young man raped Bara'a, not alone, but with four other young men who participated with him in this act.

On the day that Bara'a described as "the ominous and black day of her life," she was on her way to visit her grandmother in a nearby village. When she arrived to the valley, the five young men were waiting for her, kidnapped her to the farm of one of them, and then took turns raping her.

The screaming of the girl "Bara'a" did not shake her kidnappers who were enjoying ravaging her body, as she kept on screaming for help until a passer-by heard her, and rushed to the incident site. Upon his arrival, the young men escaped after having completed their crime against the girl, and the medical report later proved that she was still a virgin until the day of the incident.

The girl's father filed a complaint with the concerned authorities, which in turn issued an arrest warrant for those accused of the crime, but one of the village influential people (related to one of the accused) helped four of them escape from the governorate, and asked the fifth accused to surrender himself, and promised to release him within two days.

"I don't want anything else; I am only claiming the right of my raped daughter," says "Bara'a" 's father in a special statement to The Voice of Hope. He confirms, "I have not given up the case, as they said, I still and will continue to demand my daughter's right, despite the pressures and threats I face from the perpetrators who pass by me every day." Bara'a's father adds, "My daughter is a victim whose dignity, reputation and honor have been robbed, and the perpetrators are free, breathing freedom."

Bara'a's mother, through a call with The Voice of Hope, appealed to everyone to stand with the cause of her daughter. "We are a poor and vulnerable family. We are facing influential people who pay huge sums of money for my daughter's rights to be lost. We haven't found anyone to do us justice in Taiz," she said. Then she added, "We transferred the case file to the Attorney General, but we aren't able to provide the travel costs to follow up the case."

Salem, the cousin of "Bara'a" (the newspaper holds his real name) says: "I was threatened and shot by the perpetrators, to put pressure on us in order to give up on the case, taking advantage of our social status and our class classification as Khaddam (servants). I filed a complaint with the security administration in the governorate, but they did not do

us justice." He adds: "The perpetrators discredited "Bara'a" and issued an arrest warrant against her, accusing her of defamation, and she was detained in the Public Prosecution Office until we contacted people and she was released.

The perpetrators tried to question the authenticity of the medical report, although it was issued by the Rural Governmental Hospital, according to Salem, who also indicates that "Bara'a" is a traumatized child, and a victim who has no sin except that her skin is dark, and neither organizations nor specialized bodies stood by her side. He concludes his speech to "The Voice of Hope" by saying: "Victory for the child "Bara'a" and give her justice."

In the context, Nehman Al-Hudhaifi, head of the National Federation for the Poorest (The marginalized in Yemen) says that it has been eight months, and the case file of raping the dark-skinned child, "Bara'a", is thrown in the Attorney General's office drawer in Aden, and the case file has been withdrawn from the competent prosecution, with the aim of hindering the investigation procedures, and executing the desires of those who stand behind the accused. He adds: "We hold the Attorney General responsible for the loss of the legal right of the victim, and all the aggression and intimidation that the family is exposed to, in defiance of all the values, legal legislations and international conventions related to human rights and international humanitarian law."

On her part, the lawyer of the child "Bara'a" (the newspaper holds her name), says that the legal procedures are still frozen until the Attorney General is informed of the case file and assures "The Voice of

Hope" that "Bara'a" is still under psychological rehabilitation in the shelter in the General Federation of Yemeni Women .

Likewise, Lawyer Samira Nbeish, chairperson of the Rights and Freedoms Committee at the National Federation for the Poorest, says that the issue of "Bara'a" is a serious case, and is considered as a case of a public opinion solid with reports issued by government authorities, as well as by the testimony of witnesses and she adds: "We have submitted to the Attorney General a memorandum of appeal - following all of the above - to demand that the case be re-investigated under local and international judicial supervision, free from prejudice, influence and interference in the interest of the perpetrators."

She points out that "Bara'a" needs support, assistance from civil organizations, and advocacy for her cause, but no organization, so far, has played its part in the case and the child victim among the marginalized groups that need support and advocacy.

The lawyer, Nbeish, was assaulted and attacked in last Ramadan by whom she described as "influential" in security. She says: "They threatened me, took me and brought panic to me, my family and the neighborhood people, and if they had not intervened, I would have been kidnapped now."

The case of "Bara'a" is an example of racism practiced against a societal category, because of the skin color, which calls for the intervention of interested parties to support such cases, which are concealed and do not go out into the open because of the Yemeni defect culture, customs and traditions, and according to specialists, behind every public case of rape, there are dozens of cases that are kept a secret.

(Fictitious names were used and details of the area where the incident happened were hidden, in order to ensure the safety of the persons associated with it, and the newspaper retains the real names and details of the case)

Civil Society Organizations ... Efforts to Combat Discrimination and Marginalization in Yemen

Civil society organizations play an important role in establishing many programs that fosters the groups in need of support and assistance, including the marginalized category, which is one of the poorest in the society, and which suffers from discrimination and racism made by societal customs, traditions and human values. So many organizations have sought to establish and reduce support activities, and to set up several projects to help this group and alleviate its poverty, but some others, and they are the majority, are in the process of promoting activities in the media, while in fact there are no activities on the ground.

By: Nada Al-Bakary
The Voice of Hope

Income-generating projects

Abdullah Muhammad, one of the marginalized people in Sanaa, says that many organizations come to Al-Mahwa and provide food aid "which is half a bag of flour (25 kg), five kilograms of sugar and a can of oil" for a month. They are sometimes disbursed after two months, and then we do not see these organizations anymore. He adds: "Some institutions provide water on a weekly basis, but the residents of Al Mahwa are large families and in each household, there are more than 8 people. The water provided is not enough, which forces them to search for water from other sources, in the neighborhoods adjacent to ours."

While Ahmed Qaid - from the marginalized group who lives in the Sawad Hanash neighborhood in Sana'a, stresses the importance of small-scale enterprises that help this category who suffer from difficult living conditions, which calls for development projects that improve their living and economic conditions. He adds, "There



are many organizations that come to the refuge to collect information, while we hope to get projects that will help us face the requirements of life, but unfortunately, we do not see any tangible effect of these organizations, so we feel despaired and sad as those hopes go unheeded."

Programs and Projects

Many organizations emphasize their endeavor to implement programs and projects for the marginalized group, and because the conflict has led to a high proportion of groups in need of such projects, the latter are distributed according to priority among those affected by the conflict in Yemen.

Amr Zaid, the program manager and reporting officer at RRD, says to "The Voice of Hope" that "humanitarian organizations generally aim to guarantee human rights of all kinds, and of course, there must be equality between the differ-

ent societal groups, as guaranteeing their rights is an essential and fundamental part of the work and activities of NGOs, whether local or international." He adds, "if we talk accurately about the role of organizations in combating marginalization and discrimination in Yemen, given the exceptional situation we are currently experiencing, the reality of the field requires organizations to focus on other aspects of humanitarian action", pointing out that the role of organizations in combating marginalization and discrimination is diminishing, at the expense of focusing on providing emergency humanitarian assistance, which is designed to include marginalized groups.

Anti-racism laws

While there are many international laws that reject racism and discrimination among segments of the society, they do not apply do not matter, but if human values are reinforced, they will be a

deterrent to combating racism against the marginalized people, and we won't need any laws to curb this phenomenon.

Amr Zeid affirms: "In light of the current situation, and from my experience in humanitarian action in most of Yemen's governorates, it is difficult to impose the application of international laws against racism at present and the compliance with international laws against racism has become a moral obligation that reflects on the individual, and no law obliges the individual to follow it". And he adds: "I do not overstate the efforts of any individual, entity or organization, but I see that the activities and programs offered by organizations in combating marginalization and discrimination are very few, compared to the actual need for them in the field. Thus, I think that each stage brings with it its priorities for humanitarian activities and action, and the current stage, of course, has marginalized this aspect considerably."

In the context, Mohammed Al-Qudsi, the monitoring and evaluation officer at the Qatari Crescent Association says: "we always target all groups of society, especially the vulnerable ones, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity or skin color", "Even if we don't allocate programs for the marginalized in particular," he adds, "we are keen to ensure that they are included in some projects, especially those related to gender marginalization and discrimination."

Despite the efforts made by civil and international organizations to combat marginalization and discrimination against groups of society, the reality of those marginalized groups says that their suffering is increasing as the situation in Yemen deteriorates, and that the organizations do not live up to their aspirations to reach social integration and remove marginalization and discrimination, and to provide development and economic projects that guarantee this category a decent life, and to enforce laws to reduce discrimination and racism that are directed by the marginalized people in Yemen.

Young Marginalized... They Broke the Barrier of Isolation and Overcome Racism

“In every society, young people represent the flame of hope and the fuel of the engine of change, and the youth of the marginalized group are not an exception to this rule. There are souls that glow with brilliance, energy and enthusiasm to change the bitter reality of their centuries-old community, besieged in the margins of life.

In this report, “The Voice of Hope” deals with examples of marginalized youth, who broke barriers, overcame marginalization restrictions, and rejected the racism practiced against them, so they broke into education, went out to work, founded civil organizations, and accomplished achievements that reached beyond the Yemen’s borders.

By : Alya Muhammed
The Voice of Hope

The thirty-year-old Abdul Ghani Aqlan, who is part of the “marginalized” group in Sana’a, did not stand impotent in the way of achieving his ambitions and goals, and his affiliation with this group was not an obstacle to him, but a main motive for building his future and proving himself and his name, by adopting the causes of this category that has suffered and still suffer from racial discrimination due to color and race. Abdul Ghani Aqlan

obtained a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration, and trained in the field of human and project development. He founded the National Union for the Marginalized in Yemen, and was one of its prominent leaders.

“Aqlan” contributed to the project of rehousing the marginalized people, taking them away from the dangers of torrents, monitoring the violations that affected the marginalized. He participated in 21 training courses and also prepared three documentaries for the marginalized people in Yemen, which were translated into several languages. “Aqlan” denounces the negative social legacy of the Yemeni society, the long-standing contempt of the dark-skinned marginalized people, which has expanded over time.

He tells “The Voice of Hope” that some marginalized youth spend their lives in permanent estrangement, and in systematic isolation, in a racial society that does not appreciate their needs and requirements, which will only be achieved through awareness of the importance of education, taking children to school, social integration, achieving equal citizenship, and empowering the marginalized people to attain all their rights.

Dr. Hajar Nehman, who agrees with him, believes that “some young people of the marginalized group have a number of practical and scientific talents and skills, but unfortunately they lack many things, such as the educational arms and the safe environment, as they are surrounded by a society where illiteracy and poverty are rampant.”

Young People Break the Barrier of Discrimination

Long ago, the society began to issue judgments on black-skinned people,



especially young men, as the prevailing culture tied them to professions that some thought fit only in this category, such as cleaning and sanitation work, leather shoe patching, and drum beating at events and weddings.

The community activist Maha Rush (from the marginalized people in the city of Taiz) says: “I have lived a cruel childhood and I suffered from the racist and unjust outlook of society, which has made me stronger and more determined to achieve my ambitions.” Maha told “The Voice of Hope”: “I did not care about the words of society, its class discrimination, and its racial language towards the marginalized group. Thus, I continued my journey with confidence, until I participated in the Fellowship Program for Minorities in Switzerland ».

She referred to what she benefited from in this wonderful participation, which added a lot of information in knowing the other community, and what distin-

guishes it from her community in which she would like to achieve her project called «Struggle to Succeed».

In this context, media activist Jamal Al-Hari, deputy editor-in-chief of “The Voice of the Marginalized Net” website, and head of the Irada Society for Community Development in Al-Dhalea, says: that the youth of the poorest category are living in social isolation to a bad extent, something that is deeply self-motivating and has a very serious impact on them, and thus negatively affects all their general orientations.»

Jamal adds that he dreams of a country in which the values of social justice are embodied, and that everyone becomes equal like the teeth of a comb, with no difference between them. He stressed the importance of activating the role of the marginalized young man, caring for him and encouraging him, pushing him forward, guiding him to safety, and encouraging him to fulfill his mission, play his effective role in the society and activate his potential that suffers from stalemate due to the social, political and economic restrictions that besiege marginalized groups in Yemen.

Hope Despite the Pain

The human rights activist Muhammad al-Harbi received a scholarship within the quota for marginalized seats in a public university, but he was rejected by the university presidency, and in a second, he felt his dream was shattered. But with determination and perseverance, he stood back on his feet and registered in the media department of a private university in order to complete his education, and obtain the university degree.

“Marginalized youth are increasingly demanding more equitable opportunities

in their communities, and there is a major confrontation and challenge that marginalized youth face, such as access to education, health, employment and equality”, says Al-Harbi. He affirms that youth are a positive force that pushes the wheel of development forward, but only if they are provided with knowledge and opportunities that will qualify them to participate in various areas of development. He also praises the role of marginalized youth in decision-making, achieving the peace process, and representing the homeland in local, international and regional conferences.

On his part, the Executive Director of the National Union for the Marginalized, Mortada Naaman Alzекry, says that there are many young people who devote all their attention to improving the humanitarian situation of the marginalized in all aspects of life.

Alzекry added: “There are a lot of work and accomplishments that have been carried out to support marginalized youth, as 130 male and female students were enrolled in university education within 4 years, 50 male and female students were enrolled in technical education within 3 years, and more than 2,500 families were enrolled in the UNICEF-funded Monetary Assistance Program in the Secretariat.”

What else?

On the walls of marginalization, these young people have painted their dreams and aspirations, a positive step to change society’s perception of a category that has been trapped in the corners of racial discrimination. Many of them have proven their ability to make a significant change in society, by having the capabilities of other social groups.

The Weddings of the Marginalized People: Hustle, Singing, Dancing and Parties Until Dawn

By:Alya Muhammed
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“The “Marginalized” live in isolated residential areas, known as “Al Mahwa” (meaning “slums” in Arabic), whose inhabitants are called the “Akhdam” (meaning “servants” in Arabic), and the surrounding community refuses to coexist with them, mix with them, or approach them. The marginalized suffer from various forms of class and racial discrimination, the most important of which is social discrimination. Tribal and social norms consider marrying them or marrying them off is a shame due to the difference in color, gender, ethnicity, and work, in addition to the life-style, and the behaviors describe by some as barbaric and urban.

Skin Color: a Hindrance to Marriage

“Being a black-skinned in Yemen makes your life an unbearable hell”, this is how Mahmoud Bahkali (30 years old), described his suffering from racial discrimination because of color.

Mahmoud says: “We are condemned to unjust social judgments because of our dark skin color. Tens of black-skinned people and I suffer from the painful outlook of the society, and from the class divisions of society, which confine us to an isolated corner of the world and prevent us from merging with the rest of society. As a black-skinned man, I have no right to marry a white girl because, according to their beliefs, I am not fit for them.”

In the context, Naaman Ahmed, who is a human rights and political activist (from the marginalized group), affirms that “the problem of class discrimination in society concerning marriage is the refusal of marrying off males from the marginalized groups. As for the marginalized, they accept marrying off their daughters to people other than the black-skinned. But the majority of those who marry our daughters have left their families, and they have no connection with them and their societies. As for those who have a family, the latter prevent them from marrying one of our daughters, given what we suffer from the inferior view of some members of society.

Naaman recounts a number of stories he described

as painful and sad, one of which was the story of a white young man who loved a black-skinned girl and held on to her love, asked her father to marry her, and he was rejected, but the young man’s insistence on marrying the girl made the end of this love a tragedy, as the young man lost his life because of his brothers who killed him. The incident caused the displacement of the marginalized group in that region. This is not the only story. There are thousands of other stories that discrimination placed on the margins of life.

On her part, Samira Soueid, director of the Aman Foundation for the marginalized in Aden, said: “We may find in southern Yemen and rural areas marriage cases between marginalized groups and other groups, but in small proportions, as a result of educational involvement and social integration.” She added that what the most distinctive feature of these areas is that their inhabitants are of different races and classes, their origins are from Abyssinia, Somalia and India, and therefore we find that the discrimination based on skin color in these areas is very minimal, and color is not a major problem.

Marriage Rituals in “Al Mahwa”

In “Al Mahwa”, the place where the so-called “marginalized” groups live, there is a world different from the rest of the neighborhoods, characterized by simplicity and absolute spontaneity, and an atmosphere of familiarity in this neighborhood, which consists of a number of houses made of tents or of zinc sheets and logs and some others of stones. Speaker sounds are loud, and men lay on the ground to chew “Qat” until late at night. The inhabitants of these areas are characterized by a different life, and marriage rituals differ from those rituals practiced by the rest of the society on such occasions.

The newspaper columnist Latif Al-Sarari says: In “Al Mahwa” there is a different world: “Qat” sittings extended to the end of the night, songs through loud-speakers, dances in which Yemeni folklore blends with the African folklore. Prior the advent of the cassette

system, the marginalized people used to participate with the “dawashin” in reviving weddings in the countryside of Taiz. When they moved to the city, they took their passion for music and dance as if it were their best safe haven to resist the ascendancy of discrimination.

The 40-year-old Aunt Khamisa lives in a slum, in the center of Sana’a, and she married off her daughter, by performing the marriage rituals in a tent she set in the middle of the neighborhood.

“We have special rituals for weddings, and we like to stay up late and dance to the sounds of loud music, so we prefer to hold the wedding in tents rather than halls, because it allows us to celebrate for long hours until three in the morning”, she says.

As for Salah Ahmed, he says: “The most beautiful thing that characterizes our men’s wedding rituals is dance. Our weddings cannot be free of it, especially at the “henna” party, which has a particular impression. Everyone at the party takes some of the groom’s “henna”, then everyone dances on Yemeni and Gulf songs, and even foreign songs, and our parties continue until late at night, accompanied by chewing “Qat”.

On her part, the community activist Maha Al Udayni says: “The wedding parties held by the so-called marginalized groups have no big difference compared to the weddings of other groups as rituals are similar to some extent, but they differ in the location of the wedding. She adds that the most disturbed thing is the marriage of young girls, as a result of the social environment and the difficult financial conditions of their families.

“Simple weddings at the lowest costs”, this is how Arwa Sami, one of the attendees, described a wedding party for the marginalized group in Aden city. Arwa confirms that these people are simple and spontaneous, so whoever cannot provide a white dress may wear a dress of another color, and whoever cannot find a “wedding tent”, will then be holding the party in the house backyard, where everyone in the neighborhood meet and party until late at night.

And regarding the most important characteristics of these wedding rituals, Arwa says: “In previous periods, weddings were mixed, bringing together women and men, but the situation is different now and no longer occurs, but the ritual of the flute entry to the wedding tent continued, and women interact with its tunes, and they perform a dance called “Al Taba’a”, which is an approach to the “Zubeidi” dance known in Tihamah.

Behaviors that society does not accept

There are many reasons that increase the marginalization of this group in the society because of some of the behaviors that some practice.. And in a poll conducted by Sawt Al – Amal (Voice of Hope) with a group of people – living next to the marginalized - some agreed that family upbringing is the main cause of these behaviors!

“Behaviors that I cannot accept, carried out by some of the marginalized, and these behaviors gave us a negative view of them.” This was how Salwa Hamid Awad saw the behavior of black-skinned people. Adding: “We do not deny that there are people from the marginalized group in Yemen, who have rational behavior, but most of them behave in an inappropriate way, and no one accepts to merge with them.”

Regarding these behaviors, many people described them as barbaric and irrational, which is the main reason why they don’t get linked or associated with members of this group.

Helmy Al-Hudhaifi (from the marginalized groups) says: “Some marginalized people - especially those who live in slums - behave inappropriately, and therefore people judge everyone for misconduct, but this does not mean that there are no people among this category who have transcended these behaviors and acted appropriately: there are large numbers of us who have adopted an appropriate behavior, adapted and integrated into the society.”

The activist Abdul Ghani Aqlan asserts: “that there are many young men and women from the marginalized groups who have proven their worth, reached advanced stages of education, and faced discrimination with vigor and courage, followed the right path, and deserved to be role models for many young people”. He adds: “Regarding that segment’s wrong behaviors, the family has a big role in it. If every family starts upbringing correctly, the general perception of this segment which faces discrimination due to acquired societal customs and traditions will change.”





By: Manal Ameen

Give them the Dignity they Deserve

Our Yemeni society has imposed on the marginalized group to live in cruel and inhuman conditions, only because they differ from us in color, and are considered among the poorest, most deprived and farthest from education, positions and high ranks in our society.

In my country which has been ravaged by war for several years, and which has been severed by political, ideological and regional disparities, this group was the most affected than any other group, so they lived a life of displacement, loss and alienation, in a country where the most extreme and severe cases of collapse occurred, where the majority of them hovered on the streets in scarcity, and some of them stayed in cafes, wishing to get crumbs to feed themselves, or looking for places to embrace their exhausted bodies.

I am absolutely certain that these (marginalized people) are the most hardened people, and the most willing to sacrifice and work as there are no property, high salaries, or high positions they are keen on, and they fear losing it, as they struggle from sunrise till sunset, and they only find what sustains their bodies and preserves their lives, to keep up toiling and working again.

When will society realize that the dignity of these people is not an insignificant thing, for the heavenly religions, Yemeni laws and international laws all affirm the right of others and respect for their well-being and work, apart from the images of undermining, disrespect and discrimination that face the daily lives of the marginalized, besiege their movement, and prevent them from spending their lives like the rest of human beings.

They are in need of finding the true value of their work and roles in life, which the majority of the society is not doing, to enjoy a better standard of living (housing, food and dressing), to find social protection against poverty, disease and unemployment, to have access to schools and universities and finally to live a better and dignified life.



“Difference in Skin color” Can the Yemenis Move Beyond it?

By: Mona Al-Assadi
The Voice of Hope

Searching for a livable place has become all what Muharram Ahmed aspires for. He is a fifty-year-old man who sleeps on a sidewalk of a very poor neighborhood in Amanat Al Asima. Muharram lives with his family, consisting of five children, in the “Mahwa” neighborhood of Sawad Hanash, where life seems to be the worst and harshest, due to the state of poverty, and the lack of services, where the smell of sewage waste which is so close attests to the real suffering of his residents.

The lack of Muharram’s ruse made him live in this neighborhood, with his family and 42 others, being all black-skinned people. Muharram says “The word “Akhdam” (servants in Arabic) has followed us a lot since we were children, and it kept chasing us and now our children, and I don’t think it will ever leave us”. He sadly adds “This eternal curse has completely destroyed us, and deprived us and our children of education, playing and living in security, although we are Muslims, and we

bear witness that God is right, and this is our destiny in life.”

This sad tone with which Muharram spoke reflects the extent of suffering they are experiencing in the “Mahwa”. Perhaps what Muharram mentioned of the suffering is only a microcosm of the misfortunes of three and a half million people of his own country, which is the total number of black-skinned people in Yemen, representing 12 percent of the population of Yemeni society, according to statistics from the National Center for Statistics.

Not a single category suffered from negative discrimination and exclusion in Yemen, as black-skinned people did, or as the Yemeni community calls them “the Akhdam”. “My classmates call me ‘Al khadima’ (the servant in Arabic)”, says Fatima, Muharram’s eight-year-old daughter, “Everyone in class laughs at me, and every time I leave school, I wish that I never go back”. Her father adds: “I force Fatima to go to school and leave the task of begging to her older siblings. I hope she will find a better future than it is now or at least far from the sewage waste!”

Racial Discrimination and Poverty Prevent the Marginalized from Enrolling in Education

Exclusive: The Voice of Hope

The Secretary-General of the National Union for the Development of the Poorest, Salah Dabwan, affirmed that the extreme poverty that members of the marginalized group suffer from, and the racial discrimination against their children in schools, are among the most important reasons for their reluctance to enroll in schools, which has led them to start working at an early age, in the streets and the sidewalks to support their families financially.

Dabwan said to “The Voice of Hope” that there are no statistics or research studies from any party (governmental, international organizations or research centers) that shed light on the estimated proportions of school-age marginalized people, and the issue of discrimination against them in educational facilities. He pointed out that all published researches on

the issue of the marginalized are nothing but incomplete and unrealistic information. “International organizations bring in a lot of funds through various programs, in the name of the marginalized and their different causes, but in reality, the main demands in enabling them to pursue their normal lives, including their enrollment in educational and employment facilities like the rest of the society were not implemented and any types of facilities have not been provided for this matter, and all what they did was paralyzed and not realistic.”

On treatments and solutions to confront this problem, Dabwan points out that significant efforts must be made with all parties to implement interventions that facilitate the integration of the marginalized students into education, promote a culture of acceptance of one another regardless their color, gender or race, and joint work to provide basic services and to meet their needs for a decent life.

The Story of a Marginalized’s Success

Osama Massaad – If You Have Determination, Nothing Is Impossible

By: Rajaa Mekred
The Voice of Hope

The young man Ossama Massaad had a dream of wearing the white robe, and becoming a doctor. He has made his way towards his goal with slow steps, almost one step ahead facing three backwards. He strives to overcome the barriers and obstacles. And in order to achieve his dream, he accepted to work in the most difficult and lowest-paid professions.

Osama smiles while we can see stories full of motivation and energy in his eyes, and he says: “I will do whatever it takes and will not stop learning”.

Ossama Massaad, a 21-year-old from the marginalized

group of ‘Al Mahwit’ governorate, graduated from high school in 2018-2019 with a very good average of 88.88%. The racial discrimination and intermediary stood as an obstacle to his entry into the Higher Institute for Health Sciences (a governmental educational institution). But with his insistence, he was able to enroll in one of the private medical institutes, and is currently in the third year of specialization (Physician Assistant).

Osama says that accessing education classes is very difficult, as he belongs to the marginalized and the poor category, although he has high degrees and aspirations for learning, but he did not find what he aspired to, and repeated because of “poverty”. Osama adds that he is expelled outside the institute every day for not paying the tuition fees of 140,000 Yemeni riyals (240 dollars). Once his time at the institute ends, he goes out to the street and wipes cars or does any other job, to save 1,000 Yemeni riyals (two dollars) per day but he sometimes cannot find work.

He goes on saying: “we are often sent as students to some hospitals. During the field visit, I get out of the hospital to wipe cars, to provide transportation fees for the next day,” in an attempt to strike a balance between his education and work, despite his feeling of regret, as he did not enter the specialty he desired such as a doctor or anesthesiologist.

Massaad’s family consists of eight siblings and his parents. Osama’s father works as a porter, while Osama did not want to mention the other jobs besides wiping car windows and carrying flour, considering that the work is not a shame.

Osama faces difficulties while doing hard and low-paid work. According to him, some car owners despise him, others appreciate the hardship, and some use the word “Khadem” to call him... He affirms: “We, the marginalized group, have no respect or status in the society. It is certainly difficult to practice my job, but patience is necessary”.

Massaad had applied to other professions in the directorate near his residence, but in vain, he did not get any job opportunity. He says: “I have crossed all the paths to improve my living conditions, but I did not find any solution. Thus, nothing can stop me from learning except death.”

Osama aspires to improve his living conditions, and to complete his university education, which he has always dreamed of, regardless of the difficulties or obstacles that he faces, or the hardships of the professions that he practices, and hoping that he success will help him out.

“The Voice of Hope” had conducted a survey on the social networking site Facebook, on why the marginalized people do not enroll in education. It was found that 61% of the participants agree that the reason for not educating the marginalized is the economic situation, 29% of the opinions suggested that the marginalized people do not enroll in education due to their lack of awareness of the importance of education, while 9% of the respondents agreed that the reason for the marginalized people reluctance to learn is the marginalized themselves, and an estimated 1% of the public attributed the reason for the marginalized people not to learn to racial discrimination.

