

# Women In Yemen:

## Women in Yemen: Limitless Sacrifice and Constant Tender

Yemeni Constitution: Citizens Are All Equal in Rights and Duties

## Yemen Is Ranked 153<sup>rd</sup> in the Global Gender Gap Index

Decline in Female Employment by More than 28% Due to the Conflict

### The Women's Position in Yemeni Society



Shawki Al Abassi

Yemenis adhere to societal values, principles and norms towards many issues that fall within the limits of shame and transgression of norms and values, including insulting women and assaulting them in word or action. This issue is one of the basics of Yemeni values. Women are respected and have an important place in the society, and assaulting them is considered a criminal act according to law and a shame regarding the social norms which are inherited values in the community away from the advocacies against women violence that have appeared recently.

All age groups of Yemenis know the limits of shame and what offends the customary regarding dealing with women, so they don't go beyond it since it will be considered as a disgrace for those who act in a way that harms the dignity of women, injures or exposes them to violence as he will be deprived of respect and shame. The Yemeni society denounces the conservative social values and norms that criminalize any actions that affect women and their dignity.

The society seeks to limit the spread of phenomena that try to obliterate the pure features that respect women and reject everyone who attacks her or insults her honor. The woman is the most important element in society. She is the mother, the wife, the daughter and the most valuable and important element in the society. Any infringement to her is an infringement to the most important pillar of the society that calls for harsh deterrence against those who hurt her, in order to be an example to those who try to undermine her.

This year, the celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women had a slogan "Safety and Dignity for a Better Reality", aiming to highlight the courage, resilience and the positive role that Yemeni women play in various life fields. From this point of view, the Yemeni society does not comprise anyone who would accept harming a woman, because it is considered a red line that no one is allowed to cross or harm.

At the end, we emphasize that women are half of society and have their stature, as they are a source of giving on the family, society and the state levels. She has distinct roles and bears responsibility as a partner of men in various fields, especially in the Yemeni society where she has a high position and appreciation.

There is no construction or development without the solidarity of all society segments, male and female, in a relationship based on mutual respect and equality in rights and duties. The first step to achieve this begins with credible self-criticism, balance and distinguishing between relief and fatness, which is what we tried to present in this issue about the most prominent obstacles that Yemeni women face and the mechanism to overcome them to activate their role in their social fabric in an equitable manner befitting their human, social and legal status.

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## Women.. In Yemeni Society

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### Women Break into the World of Commerce: 199 Businesswomen in Sana'a

By: Shawki Al Abassi  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Statistics issued by the Ministry of Industry and Trade in Sana'a revealed that more than 199 female entrepreneurs have obtained commercial registers for small businesses that are classified under industries and small businesses.

According to the statistics issued for the year 2019, more than 50 women have a commercial register for sewing, embroidery, perfumes and incense activities, 20 women in the cosmetic field, 40 female entrepreneurs in the field of sweets and bakery, more than 50 women pioneers in the field of selling foodstuffs and spices, and 6 pioneers in the field of advertising and technical services, as well as the registration of 13 women working in the field of coordinating services, parties and events, and 20 leading women in the field of making detergents, juices and pasteurized milk.



### Early Marriage is a Nightmare that Haunts Girls in Yemen

By: Dawlat Al Aamiri  
Ibb - Sawt Al Amal

The rate of under-age marriage in Yemen has increased in recent years, due to the conditions that the country is going through, and according to the Yemeni Women's Union in Ibb Governorate, the cases of early marriage in 2018 AD reached 1224 cases, while they were 1140 in 2017 AD.



### United Nations: Violence against Women in Yemen Increased by 63%

By: Aalya Mohammad  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

The rates of the societal violence practiced against Yemeni women are noticeably increasing, as the dominant societal culture, concepts, customs and traditions still view women with an inferiority look and underestimate them against men, which encourage the persistence of their violence.

The United Nations defines societal violence as: "any behavior that harms women in the physical, psychological and sexual aspects." According to the United Nations Population Fund, incidents of violence targeting women in Yemen have reached 63%.

Yemen comes at the bottom of the Global Gender Gap Index list for the year 2020 in the penultimate ranking of 153 countries in the classification established by the World Economic Forum, while Yemen was the last Arab country in this classification.





# Sahar Ghazi: From Bitter Reality to an Independent Life

By: Manal Ameen  
 Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

*Success has always been synonymous with suffering. Before every success story, stumbling beginnings, and many difficulties, had to be overcome to leap forward.*

*Sahar Ghazi, 31 years old, from Aden, faced many psychological and financial challenges in order to lift herself and her children from the nightmare of living in the street, after being and her children rejected by everyone, she was left alone to face her fate as a divorcee after a nine-year marriage. Sahar sold her gold jewelry, and borrowed from other people, to open her own business, which is a small boutique store in Bay Mall in the Crater region, and allocated it to sell cosmetics.*

In a voice filled with oppression and bitterness, she regains the magic of her memory tape, to tell her story of only a few months old, she says: "I was divorced more than six months ago and I have two children, an 8-year-old boy and a 6-year-old girl, and I have repeatedly tried to keep our family, and faced all the psychological difficulties that I went through, but with the increase of pressures, I reached the stage of mak-

ing the difficult decision. I had to create from nothingness an opportunity for a new life, even though I did not have the certificates or even the qualifications that would enable me to get a better job opportunity."

Sahar went out from the house of her ex-husband, to find herself in the street, without getting any attention, as if she had chosen her cruel fate willingly, and she only had a small amount of her expenses, which forced her at first to depend on some relatives and friends. She also borrowed from some of her friends an amount of money to rent a house, for her and her children, consisting of a room, a kitchen and a small bathroom, in a popular area in Crater, worth 40,000 Riyals. From here, Sahar started a new life journey. She returned to work as a saleswoman in a shop to ensure the rent and the living requirements for her and her children.

And she began to think in a way that would enable her to rely on herself, without depending on others. Getting the support and the encouragement of her friends, Sahar thought of launching her own project, which she implemented within four months, when she borrowed from her friends an amount of money that she added to the remaining money of her own expense. She opened the "High Fashion" project for cosmetics, which was the first station that enabled Sahar to gain acceptable profits in a short period of time.

Sahar says that she was not planning to run a small shop of her own, but the circumstances that



she went through prompted her to be independent, as she woke up from the beautiful dream that she had woven into her imagination, to find herself in front of another reality that does not resemble to the life she dreamed of, but sometimes a collision with the bitter reality has a pos-

itive effect. Her life has completely changed and she became a more future-looking. The desire to pursue her high school education has revived in her. Currently, she's seeking to expand her project and increase her commercial activity with a lot of ambition.

# Ahlam Al-Dabai : From the Womb of Suffering, Creativity is Born

By: Nada Al-Bakary  
 Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

*The first beginnings of success stories differ from one story to another, some of them come by pure chance, and others are filled with suffering, but some of them come as a surprise. "I needed to conduct a surgery, so I was surprised by a dismissal letter placed on my desk." This is how Ahlam began her carrier towards success which has started by dismissing her from The Company, to become later one of the most prominent Yemeni entrepreneurs.*

Ahlam Kamal Al-Debai - Bachelor in Business Administration, master's in Financial and Banking Sciences, worked as an employee in a foreign company for about ten years, which ended with her dismissal.

Ahlam did not find herself in the traditional jobs that a number of Yemeni women had approached. She tapped for herself a new path in the labor market which was preserved for men. Then she became the owner of a car showroom and one of its importers, and she began the struggle journey with "Car Care", as the first car showroom owned by a Yemeni woman.

The idea of the project came to her mind for two reasons: The first reason was personal, stemming from her suffering in her work with a private company that did not take care of her illness, and she was rewarded after years of working with the dismissal. She made a promise to herself to launch her own project, which she can manage efficiently, because she has the experience that qualifies her for that.

As for the second reason, it was the summit of the excellence of entrepreneurs in 2017, when the names of the various projects dominated, and their owners emerged as influential people in the community, so she wanted to present a new and unfamiliar idea in the labor market, by owning an exhibition to sell cars, after feeling the need of having experience to advise women in buying and selling



cars, especially since women have shown lack of experience in this field. She and other women were exposed to fraud in the car market, starting from buying and maintaining the car, to selling or replacing it, so this was a breakthrough towards consolidating the idea of the project.

So she used social media to measure the effectiveness or success of the idea of the project, especially since we live in a conservative society and committed to customs and traditions. Thus she found support for the idea, and this gave her an incentive to start implementing the project. The beginning was at Malakat mall, and it lasted for a month and a half. Thus the first experience of the project faltered, and Ahlam was forced to rent a small shop. Men revealed a positive and acceptable reaction since they were having concerns about their women who ignore about the process of selling and buying cars and maintaining them. Her project came to dispel these concerns, as Car Care provided after-sales services, including maintenance and interest in cars, especially since the desire of women to buy cars coincided with their desire to rely on themselves to travel and work, so buying a car was an urgent necessity and not an entertainment.

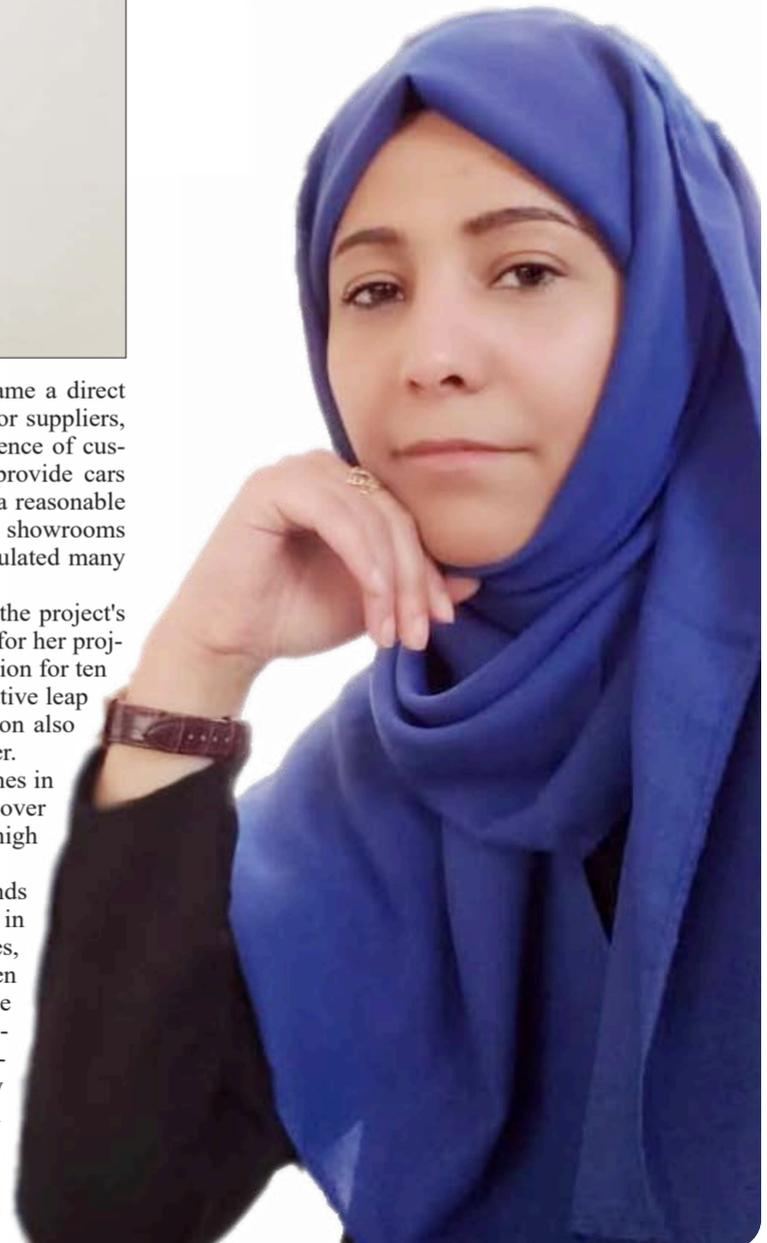
At the beginning, Ahlam provided maintenance services and rehabilitation of services

and products, and then she became a direct car importer, without the need for suppliers, which made her gain the confidence of customers. After she was able to provide cars with excellent specifications, at a reasonable price, in a market full of car showrooms owned by senior dealers, it stimulated many to encourage her.

Today and as a third stage of the project's launch, Ahlam received support for her project from the Asmenbas organization for ten years to come, which is a qualitative leap for her work, and the organization also provided logistical support for her.

Al-Dabai hopes to have branches in the governorates, and be able to cover the Yemeni market with cars of high specifications.

The message that Ahlam sends to Yemeni women is to believe in themselves and their capabilities, especially since Yemeni women have been able to create a place for themselves, even in the difficult circumstances that the country is going through. Thus they need community support, which opens doors to many Yemeni women who have creative ideas that can become successful experiences in the labor market.



# Female Entrepreneurs: Small Projects Supporting the Yemeni Economy

By: Chawki El Abbassi  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Statistics issued by the Ministry of Industry and Trade in Sana'a revealed that more than 199 female entrepreneurs have obtained commercial registers for small businesses that are classified under industries and small businesses.

According to the statistics issued for the year 2019, more than 50 women have a commercial register for sewing, embroidery, perfumes and incense activities, 20 women in the cosmetic field, 40 female entrepreneurs in the field of sweets and bakery, more than 50 women pioneers in the field of selling foodstuffs and spices, and 6 pioneers in the field of advertising and technical services, as well as the registration of 13 women working in the field of coordinating services, parties and events, and 20 leading women in the field of making detergents, juices and pasteurized milk.

And based on the statistics, these restricted numbers are for women who have held commercial registers during the year 2019, while many women are still practicing commercial activities from their homes without any commercial register, and it is difficult to count them since they work outside the framework of official authorities.

## Difficulties and Challenges

Despite the difficulties and challenges that women are facing and that is hindering their participation in the labor market due to the culture of the masculine society and the scarcity of the economic activity opportunities that are available to women, they have

proven their abilities to work as partners for men, as women have strived to search for their opportunities in life through working in feminism economic projects and have proven themselves in this field.

Yusra Al-Shahari, a businesswoman and owner of "Yemen Casual" Ready-to-wear garment, says: "The conditions that Yemen went through during the past years have pushed many women into the labor market, where the difficult conditions, the suspension of salaries and the layoffs of many workers forced the society to change its culture, and provide some concessions and making room for women to work in order to make a living and relieve the pressures imposed on the Yemeni families.

Al-Shahari assures to "The Voice of Hope" that obtaining funding to start establishing a private project is not an obstacle, and when there is will and patience, one reaches his ambitions... She adds: Women must move patiently and cautiously, and shouldn't take quick steps before carefully planning and studying the market and the target customer so that the project does not fail and cause them to become frustrated from continuing their work in this field.

## Female Activities and Projects

The situation in Yemen has pushed many women to work in different professions through small enterprises that they often run from their homes, while some of them have become owners of shops and service offices that provide many job opportunities.

Fatima Al-Salawi, Director of Businesswomen's Department at the Amanah Chamber of Commerce, states: "There is a great movement of women entering the labor market, and there are activities and projects that follow women and have entered to work in them, but most of these projects and ac-



tivities were not registered in the official records.

She added to "Voice of Hope":

"Many of the women working in the market and owning commercial projects have not officially registered these activities, although these projects are more than the projects that were registered in the Chamber of Commerce or the Ministry.

Al-Salawi called on women who work in commercial activities and who have private projects to register their commercial and industrial projects in the official bodies, in order to preserve their rights, and obtain the facilities provided by the authorities, such as loans and other privileges granted, whether

by the ministry or other bodies.

## Delving into life

Despite the challenges that women are facing while contributing in economic projects, because of social customs and traditions that have made economic activities male exclusive, women have been able to enter this field by contributing in many commercial businesses and private projects, until many women have become businesswomen owning projects that contribute in supporting the economy.

In this context, Fadwa Naaman - Director of the Women's Department at the Ministry of Industry states: "Yemeni women have proven, during the recent years, that they are at the level of confidence and responsibility, and they are able to delve into the economic life, reserve their own space in the business world, and move forward, defying difficulties in order to reach their goal, achieve their ambitions and prove themselves... She asserts by saying, "Women worked in many activities that were exclusive to men, and ably entered the Yemeni market, contributed in improving their standard of living and their families", and created job opportunities for women."

She added that the Yemeni woman has been the man's partner since ancient times, as she is the one who works in the field and raises children, and today she contributes with the man side by side to restore the deteriorated economic situation, fill the many gaps in this field, and create job opportunities for others.

Women  
Have Proven  
their Capabilities in the  
Market as an Effective  
Partner to Men

## She Combined Motherhood and Entrepreneurship

# Imane Yahya tells "Sawt Al-Amal" about her Journey in the Women's Development and Creativity in the Popular Heritage "Fashion"

By: Rajaa Mukred  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Just like a dress is woven, she weaved the threads of her life, to ensure that she and her family had a stable life. It wasn't enough for her so she offered help to other women and assisted them to overcome the obstacles they were facing.

Modest and ambitious, always smiling despite the hardships she went through, creative and having fingertips that tell the story of her success. On the family level, she is a mother to orphans, and at work she is an administrator and a successful businesswoman, with the testimony of everyone who deals with her. She is Imane Yahya, who received the visit of "The Voice of Hope" in her workplace located in the association "Tamayoz Emra'a for Human Development" that she runs; which is in order to learn about her success story, and shed light on her role in empowering Yemeni women economically.

Imane Yahya Abdullah, BA in Islamic Studies in 2002 AD, held several positions, including: Director of more than three women's centers, she was chosen to participate in the 17th Qahis Festival - in the Jordanian capital Amman in 2007 AD, and the Culture and Heritage Festival that was held in the State of Kuwait in 2009 AD. And the (Homemade) Festival in the Kingdom of Bahrain in 2011 AD, and the (Craft Products) Festival - Manama in Bahrain in 2012 AD. She was also chosen to participate in the International Women's Day - which was held at Movenpick more than three times.

• Dear Iman, we will talk about many details about your life as a mother, and your success as a businesswoman who achieved a lot in the field of women's development, but before that, who is Imane Yahya?

• Iman is the mother of three daughters, whose father passed away when they were young. She watched over them and raised them to become two doctors and an engineer in the future, an ambitious person who loves social work, especially helping women and improving their living conditions, a fashion designer interested in the Yemeni traditional clothing.

• Who was your inspiration for overcoming this path in your career?

• My husband - may his soul rest in peace - was the one who encouraged me to complete my college degree, because I got married right after high school.

• When did you join the Yemeni Women's Federation?

• 28 years ago.

• How did you move from issues related to advocating women to issues related to women's economic empowerment?

• At first, I was satisfied with my work in supporting and advocating women, and then I created a project that economically supports women, and its idea was based on educating and training women to master handicrafts, which enabled them to overcome the current economic conditions.

• Tell us about your current project, and the role of your institution in supporting women and humanitarian work?

• We set up several projects, including holding seminars to support the displaced people, distributing food bags and baskets, and we also participated in many activities and events that were carried out in the capital.

• How many women have been targeted in your courses?

• We conducted sewing courses three times for 76 women, and two courses for accessories, through which we targeted 50 women, and we also trained 51 women in mastering cosmetology in two courses. We also conducted first aid courses for 50 women, in addition to courses in the manufacture of incense and perfumes for 50 trainees.

• Was the foundation able to be part of the success stories of some women who trained in the institution?

• Yes, the story of Nabila Muhammad, for example, who belongs to a family suffering from low income, joined the course on the manufacture of detergents and soaps, which was beneficial for her, so she launched her own project to produce all kinds of liquid soap in her home, and marketed the product in stores.

• How do you plan on serving the community and Yemeni women?

• By expanding production, and opening markets to sell the product that guarantees permanence to women in income-generating projects.

• What difficulties did you face in your work life?

• Among the most significant difficulties I have encountered were the shortage of finance and the people's loss of confidence in the local product, in addition to the deteriorating economic situation in the country.

• What advice can you give to the Yemeni woman?

• I advise the Yemeni woman to believe in her goal and strive to achieve it as it is related to her determination and belief in her potential.

• In addition to your interest in the development of women, you are distinguished by your passion for sewing costumes and care for the popular heritage ... When did you get the idea?

• My love for Yemeni fashion and folklore has accompanied me since childhood, so I was interested in the folk costume that distinguishes each of the Yemeni governorates; in addition to that I found positive reactions to



traditional Yemeni costumes when I represented Yemen abroad.

• What style does Imane pursue in her outfits? ... And what has she added?

• The combination between tradition and contemporary in the traditional Yemeni costume is what I do in the fashion that I present, so that this costume matches the market requirements locally and abroad.

• Of all the awards you have won, which one are you the most proud of?

• I have many local and international awards that I have obtained throughout my work as a pioneer in humanitarian work, for more than twenty years, and also in my work as a Yemeni fashion designer, and one of the most important prizes that I am proud of is the Queen Sabeeka award, from the Kingdom of Bahrain in 2014 AD.

• Do you feel you have put your personal mark in your community?

• Yes ... Thank God, I am proud of what I have achieved today, and my success is the success of the women we have trained, qualified and empowered in more than one field, and who now own their own projects.



# The Yemeni Woman: A Case that no File Can Privilege

The woman remains half of the society, and gives birth to the other half, so she becomes the whole society. In any society, women play a vital role in the development and prosperity of the nations, as well as building their future. In our country, Yemen, women have special characteristics that distinguish them from other women in other countries.

In this issue that "The Voice of Hope" devoted to talk about Yemeni women, we tried, as much as we could, to get acquainted with the case file on women in its various aspects, starting with their position in the Sharia and their status in local laws, then the basic rights of women such as education, passing through their economic and cultural life, and their participation in different societal activities, in addition to sharing their interests and ambitions, by highlighting stories about successful women.

We devoted space to talk about the most important problems and difficulties that the female sector in Yemen suffers from, such as cases of early marriage, discrimination and violence, which are practiced against them in the house, the street, or the workplace.

We have also devoted a special corner to talk about Yemeni women in the countryside, where there are great examples of women sacrificing their souls for the sake of the happiness of their children, their small family and their large community.

Talking about Yemeni women is a matter of concern, and we are fully aware that a case file in a newspaper will not capture all of their issues, but we tried to take note of the most important topics, and contribute to establishing an appropriate entry or introduction for the researcher, interested and follower, to start a more comprehensive and deeper work, with the aim of setting the truth as it is, to address imbalances and develop positivity and proposing solutions or keys to solutions in order to develop a comprehensive strategy to solve Yemeni women's issues.

Here we tried to make the statement clear, even in the first lines, and there remains room for more work in an open and wide space that requires solidarity efforts, in which all groups of society and its interested organizations participate in their national, regional or international context...

Editor in Chief



## Early Marriage A Nightmare That Haunts Girls In Yemen

By: Dawla Al Amiri  
Ibb - Voice of Hope

*"The rate of underage marriage in Yemen has increased in recent years, due to the country's current conditions. According to the Yemeni Women's Federation in Ibb Governorate, the cases of early marriage in 2018 AD have reached 1224 cases, while they were 1140 cases in 2017. The insiders confirm that the number is even greater despite the absence of statistics and the refusal of families in Yemen to report cases of early marriage for social reasons."*

The young lady, Intisar Mahmoud, who is 15 years old, is one of the victims of early marriage in Ibb governorate. She tells her story to The Voice of Hope, saying: "I got married when I was 15 years old, to a man 15 years older than me. One day, as I returned home from school, my father told me that I had been married."

She continues her speech stating: "I did not know the meaning of marriage, and all I could think of was the white dress and the new clothes at the time, but I knew afterwards that I would not go to school anymore, a decision my father took."

The health risks that she was exposed to as a result of her early marriage had caused her psychological and physical damage. And on her first day as a wife, she says: "I slipped into a coma for three days, and was subsequently transferred to the hospital."

Nassaer added: "I married a man who did not appreciate the age difference between us. He did not understand my situation as a child who can't bear the burdens and responsibilities of marriage." The suffering of Nassaer increased after she gave birth to her first child, as she almost lost her life, due to the pregnancy complications and delivery.

Nassaer indicated that her problems with her husband multiplied. She was verbally abused, and then beaten, which forced her to leave her husband's house and return to her father's house. However, her daughter was taken from her and she was deprived from raising her and taking care of her.

She says that she was subjected to violence and death threats by one of her brothers, because she had been requesting to raise her daughter, so she left her family's home to live in the house of one of her brothers, which is far from her residential area, fearing for her life.

Nassaer has been struggling to get rid of the nightmare of marriage that destroyed her life, deprived her from her childhood, and caused her physical and psychological harm for two years now. However she was unable to do so, as the husband fled outside the region, and refused to grant her divorce.

On hold, unmarried and not yet divorced From a religious point of view, Sheikh Abd al-Karim al-Awadi, an imam and a mosque preacher states: "The religion did not specify a certain age for marriage, but it is due to different customs, traditions and the environment itself."

On her part, lawyer Marwa Obeid asserts: "Underage marriage and the problems that occur between the family and the husband, result in putting the girl on hold without being divorced."

Marwa points out that in such cases, the woman has two options: the first of which is khula

in case the husband abandons his wife for a period of two years without return or financial support, and the band has the

husband has the right in this case to demand the dowry that he paid, and the other option is dissolving the marriage in court even if the husband was not present.

The Yemeni Women's Federation launches

many programs aiming at limiting underage marriage or early marriage in Ibb governorate. The head of the Yemeni Women's Federation in the governorate, Hayat Al-Kinai, says: "The union works through awareness programs aiming to enhance community awareness of the dangers of early marriage among the society."

Al-Kinai assured to "The Voice of Hope" that the federation seeks to restore these programs, in order to continue the job, and provide the necessary support for girls who suffer from early marriage problems.

Al-Kinai added that the federation is still implementing awareness programs and seminars in the targeted directorates, which are: "Al-Dhahar, Al-Mashna, Al-Mukhadir, and Al-Aden District."

She mentioned that there are many programs that have been launched by the Federation for victims of early marriage, and they are distributed in education, rehabilitation, health support and legal support for women to regain their self-confidence and be able to go out to the labor market, to enhance the status they lost, as a result of the early marriage experience they have been through.

Making radical changes in the Yemeni society's awareness concerning early marriage must be fraught with community support, and the media discourse must be present and supportive to make the changes that the society hopes for regarding early marriage, concerning the problems that may occur, the damages and the negative impacts resulting from it.



1224 Early  
Marriages in  
Ibb in 2018

# United Nations: Violence Against Women in Yemen Increased by 63%

By: Alia Muhammad  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“The rates of societal violence practiced against Yemeni women are significantly increasing, as the dominant societal culture, concepts, customs and traditions still see women as incapable and inferior comparing to men, which encourages the continuation of violence against them.

The United Nations defines societal violence as: "any behavior that harms women in the physical, psychological and sexual aspects." According to the United Nations Population Fund, incidents of violence targeting women in Yemen have reached 63%.

Amnesty International organization described Yemen as the worst countries in the world regarding the status of women. The attorney Sumaya al-Ghwezi describes the challenges that Yemeni women face in the society, saying: "How difficult it is to be a Yemeni woman in a society dominated by customs and traditions which controls the smallest details. Regarding everything that concerns women, the society has the right to be involved in and adapts it in a way that suits its mentality and conviction,

She added "Yemeni women still suffer from discrimination in obtaining their rights, despite the development we have achieved. However, some think that women are a merely machine, that they are ordered to provide us with predetermined outputs, without any opinions, nor rights, she was prevented from pursuing her education, and the home is her only field of work"

She asserts that the reason for this is due to the lack of knowledge of women about their rights that are guaranteed to them by Islam and the law, which enable them to claim their rights, since they are a point of strength in society not a weakness.

## Societal Violence against Women

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that violence against women is a major global problem, part of public health problems and gender equality. Yemeni social researcher Ahmad al-Majidi links the causes of the violence against women to a number of motives that lead to violent behaviors, starting with unhealthy social upbringing and the absence of the family role. The education is one of the important reasons that lead to the aggravation of the phenomenon of violence against women in addition to the weakness of religious morals, the absence of deterrent laws that criminalize and punish the perpetrators of these practices, the general culture and the prevailing concepts of men's



perception of women. Some do not admit the existence of violence, do not take its risks seriously, and make women responsible for what may happen to them.

Al-Majidi states that women's fear and concealment of the violence that they are subject to is another reason for the spread of this phenomenon. He also mentioned that the economic pressures, the low standard of living that a large segment of the society is suffering from, and the spread of poverty and unemployment, are among the most important factors that lead to exercising these forms of societal violence against women.

## 90% of Women Were Subject to Harassment in 9 Governorates

The phenomenon of harassment raises red flags in the Yemeni society, as a type of societal violence exercised against women. Harassment is defined as "a sick behavior that is exercised to release the repressed emotions, by pronouncing many inappropriate expressions, which may develop into touch, and sometimes reach physical assault, abduction and rape."

(S.M.A.) 34 years old says: "I was harassed while being pregnant but this didn't keep the harasser from abusing me. He started saying bad and filthy words. And she adds that the phenomenon of harassment has nothing to do with wearing specific clothes or not, but it rather became a

disease spread in the minds of some young people.

She believes that invoking traditions and social shame does not justify the societal silence on this phenomenon.

## A Phenomenon Met with Silence

The phenomenon of harassment in Yemeni society is still met with silence, and despite the stories that people talk about and the violence that women are subjected to, there are cultural and social factors that prevent these issues from being addressed. "The phenomenon of harassment is still prevalent in our society, as a form of societal violence on a daily basis," says Alia Al-Hamidi – Head of the legal affairs' department at the Yemeni Women's Federation in Mukalla. She confirms that 300 cases of community violence were received at the federation in the recent months, considering that this phenomenon is disturbing and threatens the society's safety and the well-being.

She indicates that the phenomenon of harassment is not associated with any culture or religion or country or social category or specific clothing like many individuals justify it, and she stresses on the importance of the existence of laws that criminalize violence in all its forms.

## Theft, Battery and Assault...

A new incident on the Yemeni

street, in addition to the incidents of societal violence against women, where girls are thrown by ignorant people either with stones or others while they are passing down the streets. Samar, 27 years old, says that she was hit in the head, after she was thrown by a stone, which caused her a fracture of the brain, and bleeding that she was subsequently admitted to the intensive care considering that this incident is one of the incidents of societal violence that falls under the physical abuse and violence.

The Yemeni arena is not free from theft incidents that women face, which cause material, moral and health damage, and in some cases death.

Um Akram, 35 years old, says that she was robbed while passing down the street by a motorbike driver. After he snatched her bag, she fell on the ground, and was scratched, and the thief ran away.

## Effects of Societal Violence against Women

The studies conducted on the effects of violence against women, which constitute another reason for

her psychological suffering, and the deterioration of her health and mental state, indicate that the effects vary from a woman to another and may last for a long-term, and for some of them for a short-term. Violence also affects health and causes bone fractures and bruises as a result of physical abuse. On the psychological effects of violence against women, the psychological consultant Amal Alban says: "Society is saturated with multiple forms of sadness and anger, as a result of what Yemeni women are facing, which is reflected on others, due to the emergence of many negative psychological disorders. She affirms that abused women suffer from a feeling of inferiority and frustration, their self-confidence decreases; their personality weakens, so they are unable to make future decisions, in addition to depression and suicide attempt increase.

## Protecting Women from Violence

Violence against women can be addressed by searching and addressing the reasons behind the spread of this phenomenon, in addition to raising awareness about social misconceptions that carry a wrong perception about women, with an emphasis on women's rights guaranteed by the Sharia and the law, and the dissemination of awareness programs on this phenomenon. As well as through emphasizing on the need to enact legal articles that include clear penalties for this crime against women in addition to enhancing societal awareness of the dangers of violence against women through various media and social media sites.

In the context, Hoda Harbi, a media activist, tells about her experience in creating a Facebook platform called Niswan, which she dedicated to listen and convey the experiences of women who have been subjected to violence, and encourage them to go beyond what they have been through. The platform finds great approval and acceptance from its high number of pioneers who seek to eliminate violence in all its forms.

Harbi confirms that society needs education and awareness of the dangers of violence and the importance of women's advocacy and standing with them to reduce the violence they are exposed to.

Addressing the phenomenon of violence against women, in the first place, needs to re-read the cultural product in its past process, so this reading enables us to build awareness programs that are compatible with the multi-directional culture of society.

“Yemen is at the bottom of the Global Gender Gap Index for 2020”



# Deliberate Discrimination to Weaken the Status of Women at Work

## Decline in Female Employment by More than 28%

### Due to the Men's Participation in the Conflict

“With the increase of the conflict pace, an image of discrimination between women and men has become clear in Yemen. Women were the weakest link in society. Not only that, working women are exposed in some workplaces to gender-based discrimination, because of the domination of males that controls administrative functions and the authority of decision issue, that some of its members were affected by their misconception about women, being inferior in rank and status than men, and therefore should not be equal with them in rights, but they must make a double effort to obtain their lesser rights than most of them in salaries, incentives and settlements. There are men who believe that if a woman's work alongside a man will mess up the image of the ideal woman according to the collective hereditary thoughts. This justifies the abuse of some males that violate the principles, values, customs and traditions of their female colleagues at work.”



By : Manal Ameen  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

#### The woman is subject to accusations:

Many women are subjected to various types of abuse from their bosses, and many of them remain silent because they know in advance that women are always subject to accusations as they turn from victims to guilty, and their reputations are deliberately distorted.

K - A confirmed to “The Voice of Hope” that she has been subject to many harassments for a year from her boss since she was appointed in one of the private educational institutions in Taiz governorate, in which she worked for a low salary.

K-A added: “The manager used to harass me, and because of my need to work, I had to endure all the harassment for a year, to avoid losing my job because we need money.”

She said that she was not able to talk about it to anyone, because it was embarrassing – according to her – and because the employees would accuse her because she is a woman.

She explained that she used to work in the archive department of that institution, although her qualifications could have nominated her for a higher position, but the manager not only decided that she would work in the archive department, but he was also assigning her to work in other departments. In addition to that, he used to increase her working hours without increasing her salary for the extra hours of work. He also used to deduct from her salary for false excuses, and used all the previous pretexts obstinately because she refused to fulfill his desires.

The least engagement and the least income in the labor market

The conflict in Yemen has stopped field surveys of the workforce in Yemen in the public and private sector, and provided accurate information about the number of male and female employees in Yemen from 2014 till now. According to what the Ministry of Civil Service and Insurance indicated in its last statement 2013-2014, the number of managers in the main occupations exceeds 68 managers, where the number of males is 66, while the number of females is 3.

While the indicators received from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor and the Central Bureau of Statistics in the Republic of Yemen, in cooperation with the International Labor Organization, showed the main results of the labor force survey that was carried out from August 2013 to May 2014, which is that the number of the working-age population is 15 years old and above which is more than 5 million inhabitants, the labor force participation has reached a rate of 37%. However the participation rate of men was much higher than the participation rate of women, nearly 67% for men, and 7% for women.

The general unemployment rate has reached more than 15%, and it is much higher among women exceeding 27% whereas it reaches 13% among men.

The average monthly salary in the main job reaches 52,500 Riyals which is equivalent to 60 dollars, and this amount for women drops to 40,400 riyals which is equivalent to 50 dollars.

#### Underestimating and reducing her competences

Discrimination against women at work is one of the types of gender discrimination, which is exercised against women in all aspects of life, where underestimating her or exhausting her energy at work, in exchange for not obtaining their rights as stipulated in the

local and international laws.

Soheir (a pseudonym) - 35 years old, who works in one of the government institutions in Aden, faces many difficulties from her new manager at work. Even though she has been working in the institution for more than 8 years, she has not received a promotion, an increase in her salary, or her dues, despite her hard work, according to her.

She says: “The manager appointed new people for important positions, with lucrative salaries, because they come from the same hometown as him, and when I asked him to increase my dues, he gave his preliminary approval, but did not implement it.”

She emphasized that “during this period, I started to lose my work gradually, which was given to the new people who had not been appointed less than four years ago, and the manager also reduced my authorities in some private procedures at work, which made me angry, as a result of the injustice that I was facing, but I could not object, because I feared that I would be removed from my office, or that I would be completely deprived of my dues, and I have a loan that must be paid, and many responsibilities.”

#### The global gender gap

The World Economic Forum ranked Yemen at the bottom of the list, for the annual global gender gap index 2019, which is implemented for the 11th time in a row, as it ranked 153 out of 153 countries. The forum focuses on four main axes, consisting of economic participation, educational attainment, health and sustainability, and political empowerment.

The Director General of Awareness and Information at the Ministry of Human Rights, Zaid Al-Idrisi, told “The Voice of Hope” that the situation in which Yemeni women are living can be described as bad, specifically since the beginning of the conflict in 2014, as they are the weakest group in the society, and their rights have been subjected to horrible violations, even in their work, in which they are exploited, without regard for Yemeni values, customs, traditions, and international laws.

Al-Idrisi said: “The Ministry of Human Rights always seeks to support human rights concepts, including women's rights in all fields of life, analyze the causes behind the increasing violations of women's rights at work, and find out the reasons that hinder women from obtaining their rights, in addition to strengthening the concepts of women's rights, including the right of women to work, their participation in the decision-making process, the support and implementation of these rights, in line with national laws and international instruments.

About the discrimination against women at work, Al-Idrisi said that “the current reality requires great

efforts and the solidarity of all government and civil society in order to raise public awareness of women's rights, achieve the required equality, respect these rights and protect them from any violation.”

#### Decline in female employment by more than 28% due to the conflict

The continuation of the conflict in Yemen has led to the emergence of major challenges in the labor market, which generally affected women. Researches indicate that the war has affected women as a workforce more than men in 2015. Male employments decreased by more than 11%, while female employments decreased by more than 28% due to men's engagement in armed conflicts and women bearing the burden of the house alone.

Female employment in Sana'a decreased by more than 43%, due to the private sector which has been severely affected by the conflict, while the number of working women in Aden increased by more than 11% in various sectors.

Samah Jamil, executive director of the Yemen Center for Human Rights Studies, indicated to “The Voice of Hope” that Yemeni women are exposed to many violations of their rights in the workplace, starting with their right to obtain a job, and passing through determining the location and nature of work, promotions and presence in leadership positions, and in material benefits, trainings, sessions and rewards. We find that those who exercise these violations are often men. This is a continuation of the domination of customs, traditions and legacies, which increase the influence and control of men over women, and weaken their position before the authority of the center.

#### Stereotypical culture of women

Samah says: “The solutions to curb that lie in women facing these practices and cultures associated with some customs and traditions, which carry a negative point of view of women, where they show interest in facing the violations they are exposed to in various work sites, which are based on material facts, and avoid the repetition of public slogans and demands. Talking about empowering women must be linked to confronting these cultures and practices that women are already facing.”

She added: “The women's settlement must be primarily related to the material and effective empowerment of their legal and human rights in the workplace, and the protection of their rights and their settlement within work facilities and sites, and where their presence is effective.”

Samah added: “It is imperative to focus on the importance of awareness programs that must be pointed

to women in the workplace, to create a kind of creativity and beautiful giving, and to draw a positive image of women in the workplace, because any negative behavior or failure in performing work creates an unpleasant image of women so it affects her right to obtain a job and a promotion, as well as other legitimate rights at work.”

#### Working women and the law

Legislation in Yemeni law included the rights of working women through constitutional articles that included the Civil Service Law in Article No. 12, which stipulates that public employment is based on the principle of equal opportunities and rights for all employees without discrimination, in accordance with conditions that define criteria for employment and promotion of the employee, whether he was a man or a woman, without discrimination or distinction.

Also, Article 5 of the law confirms that “work is a natural right for every citizen, and a duty for everyone who is able to do it, with equal conditions, opportunities, guarantees and rights, without discrimination based on gender, age or race.” Article 42 states that “Women and men are equal in all terms of work, rights, duties and relationships without discrimination, and they have to achieve parity between them in employment, promotion, wages, trainings, qualifications, and social security.”

The human rights and political activist and lawyer, Tahani Al-Sarari, told “The Voice of Hope” that the Yemeni constitution has guaranteed women to have rights similar to the rights against her. There are also legal texts stipulating the right of women to work, but there is no explicit provision in Yemeni law that punishes any form of violence at work. Despite this, women must refer to the rules and regulations of the facilities in general, in case they were subjected to any kind of discrimination against them, and go to the administrative courts to adjudicate cases related to work, and if the violence is verbal, physical or defamatory, then they can refer to the judiciary and the criminal court or criminal investigation.

#### Putting pressure on the government to recognize the role of women

Al-Sarari explained: “There are many forms of discrimination against women, especially in the context of the distribution of leadership, governmental and administrative positions. It is considered a real exclusion of women, regardless of competence, experience and capabilities. There are lots of solutions, such as putting pressure on the government to effectively recognize the role of women and activate the so-called women's quota, and the formation of feminist blocs and federations to reclaim the rights within work.”

Rights activists believe that the Yemeni constitution did not clearly give women their rights like the rest of the constitutions of Arab countries in case they were subjected to any kind of violations at work, especially harassment. Yemeni law described women as (twin halves of men) in Article 31, instead of recognizing them as equal citizens with men, under international human rights law.

They stressed on the need of imposing penalties on anyone who works on gender discrimination in public offices, and the importance of enacting a law to combat exploitation, discrimination and harassment of all kinds in the workplace, which has spread widely due to the continuation of the conflict and the spread of illegal practices in governmental and private institutions.



## Rural Women: Community Ignorance and Deprivation of Opportunities and Rights



By: Dawlat Al Amiri  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Rural Yemeni women set the greatest examples of struggle and sacrifice in order to develop their small family and ensure their needs, and then their local community in order to contribute greatly in the elaboration and formation of their Yemeni society in

general, and she plays as well an important role in the economic life of the homeland.

Talking about a woman's life in the countryside often calls for multiple images of the suffering she is going through in addition to her functional role of being a wife and a mother responsible for the needs of her family. It is also her responsibility to work outside the house in cultivating the land, raising livestock, fetching water and firewood. Before these roles that she plays, inside and outside the house, the rural women finds themselves locked in this recurring pattern of life that they know nothing else.

### I did not enjoy my childhood

Umm Musa, a housewife from the Ibb governorate, told "The Voice of Hope" that women in the countryside suffer greatly because of their many burdens and responsibilities, which negatively affects their health and their physical appearance, as they may appear in many times older than their real age.

She adds: "I lived for forty years between work at home, land work, grazing, fetching firewood, fodder for livestock, and carrying out family duties, whether in the family's house or in the husband's house which deprived me from achieving my dream of education."

### Work is a stressful addition to house chores

For her part, Umm Muhammad, 40 years old, from Rural Ibb, says that she lives a boring and exhausting life since she was in her family's home, where her primary role was limited to doing housework, grazing herd, picking Qat, and fetching firewood from mountains far from the house.

And she confirms that this job does not end until it's time to sleep and she wakes up the following morning and repeats the same chores. This routine weakened her, and caused her many diseases.

This is also what Aeda Hammud, 27 years old, living in one of the villages of Ibb, approves.

She says: "My day starts with the dawn prayer where I go to fetch water, then I go home again to eat breakfast. After I go straight to the valley to graze the herd, collect fodder, and I do not come home until the end of the day.

She adds, "I don't remember ever knowing what childhood means to me, as my life was limited to working inside and outside the house."

Aida notes: "Many rural girls and women do not know their true age. All of them work; even the younger ones have no time to play. They are deprived of their most basic rights to access to quality



## Limitless Sacrifice: She Plays The Role Of A Woman, A Man, A Worker And A Father

education, health and social care opportunities. They are always subject to oppression from their families and their community. "

### A mother, a farmer, a water woman and a shepherd

The girl's access to education in the countryside does not exempt her from working in the house and outside the house, as she's in charge of all these responsibilities.

This is what Aisha Faris, a resident of the countryside of Al-Kafr District, said, clarifying: "I got an education, in exchange for keeping on taking home and land responsibilities. However I didn't get another job opportunity, as my time was divided between

studying and working at home and on the land."

And she adds: "A man can provide aid to a woman if he wants, because the land work and taking care of livestock can be done by men alongside women, so that the woman can get out of the vicious circle, instead of sitting at home while she works at his place outside."

### Poverty back-breaks the countryside

Poverty drives many rural women who do not have a breadwinner to search for job opportunities that enable them to provide the basic needs for their families. These jobs are often limited to taking care of livestock, and working in plowing and irrigating agricultural lands, especially Qat, for a small sum of money that is provided for them and their children with what they can feed their hunger.

"This is what we have become accustomed to and have inherited for generations, says Alia Muhammad; women in the countryside were born to be responsible in the house and outside."

For her part, Aisha, 30 years old says: "Customs and traditions wronged me. I was deprived of my most basic rights. I assumed the burden of responsibility inside the house, and I worked outside. I didn't enjoy any of the rights that a girl enjoys in the city".

Bushra stresses that customs and traditions are one of the causes of early marriage in the countryside, especially in the Al-Kafr District.

### The rural women from the men's perspective

Concerning the role of women in rural society from a man's perspective, engineer Khaled Al-Sabahi says: "Women have a big role in the family, being responsible for carrying out their marital and family duties, and despite this, women do not receive the appreciation that they deserve for their support to men in working on the land, bringing firewood and water, and grazing livestock".

Citizen Talal Amin, a resident of Ibb, believes that the close functional role of women in the countryside is due to the masculine character of the old heritage, which believes that woman's job is to work in the house and outside, and nothing else.

The ability to change the lives of women in the countryside, and highlight them in other roles than what they are given is a societal issue that must be raised awareness. Educating girls in the countryside means increasing awareness rates in society. It also means reducing early marriage rates, and it is one of the advantages of changing the stereotype of rural women that must be considered.

# Girl Education Is the Most Important Keys to Development

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

Dropout from education is one of the most important problems that hinder the progress of the educational process in Yemen. According to the UNICEF report on education in Yemen, issued in September 2019, "there are two million children out of school, including nearly half a million who have dropped out of school." The dropout of girls from education in Yemen usually results from a combination of cultural, social and economic obstacles.

### Big ambitions and an unfair reality

Samar Saeed, 19 years old from the Yafa'a district of Lahj governorate, says: "I stopped my studies in the fifth grade due to the separation of my parents and the problems that occurred after the separation. I stayed with my father and had to become the surrogate mother of my brothers. I assumed the responsibilities at an early age which prompted me to leave education. My father married me at an early age, and I became a housewife and mother of two children "

Amal Jamal, 24 years old, from Sanaa, believes that stopping girls' education for various reasons will contribute to creating a generation of illiterate mothers. This will negatively affect their children in one way or another. The real paradox lies in the same upbringing, where the girl is raised to become a wife, mother and housewife, while the boy grows up and learns self-fulfillment and build his future in the direction he chooses according to his capabilities.

Amal says "My family forced me to leave school while I was in the ninth grade, and they did not allow me to fulfill my dreams of enrolling in medical school, as I got married later."

### The surrounding conditions are an incentive for the continuation of education

On the contrary, the girl who was married earlier may find support from her husband, as it happened with Rawan Kamel, who was able to challenge all the difficulties that she went through, starting from her marriage while she was in the ninth grade, and her first pregnancy while she was in high school, in addition to taking care of children during her university studies.

Rawan says: "I have challenged all the difficulties that I have gone through, and with the support of my husband, I was able to open my own first aid clinic, despite my family's opposition to it."

### Girl education from a parent's perspective

Jamal Ahmed believes that it is not necessary to educate girls, explaining: "This is what we are used to in our inherited customs and traditions". He adds: "A girl must be raised to be a wife and a mother, and her ambitions should revolve around how to preserve her home, raise her children and do all the work required".

And Jamal continues: "Marriage is concealment, and being the father of three girls, I know their best interests." Mansour Ghallab says: "My daughter stopped her education because of the living conditions. I live in an area far from

all educational facilities, and I do not have a steady job, and my money is not enough to provide the basic needs, and this is why I cannot provide the education requirements for my daughter, who is currently working to help me supporting the family and providing the essentials."

### Causes of discontinuity

Ibtisam Saleh Ali - the former director of girl's education in Aden governorate and general director of community participation in the girl's education sector at the Ministry of Education, points out that girls' enrollment in education is subject to the social norm that dominates the society's awareness. It is also affected by the geographical dimension, where the reasons behind girls dropping out of school in the city differ from the reasons that drive girls in the countryside to leave their schools. But in general, the main reasons that lead to dropping out education are directly related to the early marriage, and the low awareness of some community members of the importance of girls' education



especially in the regions that are more subject to parental authority. In rural areas, for example, parents prevent their daughters from going to school, in the absence of female teachers. The lack of schools, especially those in remote areas, for an acceptable learning environment, in terms of the presence of sanitation facilities, in addition to the lack of transportation, lead to girls dropping out of education. Also, the poor economic situation of the father pushes him to provide the basic needs of his family, and therefore education for him is a luxury that he cannot provide for his children.

### Girl Education Department:

The director of the Girls' Education Department in the Mualla District, Bushra Abdullah, believes that the conditions are very appropriate for the education of the girl, and there are no obstacles, in her opinion. But there are some simple obstacles that may affect girls' education, which are often obstacles caused by the parents themselves."

She points out that some school principals are trying to provide an appropriate environment for the girls' education, and are fighting with parents to solve the problems that lead to the girls' interruption of education. Field visits are also organized to parents of girls who have dropped out of education, and they are trying to persuade them to reverse their decision, and make girls aware of the importance of education in building their future.

She added "There are initiatives to bring girls back to school; either they

return as enrollment or come back again to study and learn. This is determined according to the duration of the interruption. All this with the implementation of an awareness campaign and the provision of instructions, in addition to conducting activities for students about early marriage and its harms."

### Girls dropping out of school: an ignorant generation

The social worker of October 14th High School believes that girls' dropout from education stands behind various reasons. Among them the failure of girls, which prompts many parents to withdraw their daughters from school, without addressing the reasons that lead to their failure. So some parents make it easier to remove their girls from school because of their lack of awareness concerning the importance of education for girls, which can be considered one of the reasons behind girls dropping out of education.

Zikra Saeed, a social worker in the same school, believes that the school dropout rate is not alarming. It is small and does not exceed 25%. The school has developed solutions for girls' dropout from education, and continues to follow up on their returns.

The problem of many girls dropping out of the educational process is one of the social problems within Yemeni society, and it must be addressed and reduced due to the danger it poses to the entity and fabric of society at the social, cultural, and economic level. It is important that many parties participate in developing solutions and possible remedies to reduce them.



# Domestic Violence and Its Family Psychological Effects

By: **Rajaa Mukred**  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Cases of violence against women are increasing, especially because of the conflict that the country has been witnessing for years, and the silence and fear of women, and the flexibility of articles of the law that punish violence against women, in addition to the psychological and economic pressures faced by families, all of which have doubled the intensity of violence against women. According to the latest statistics obtained by "The Voice of Hope" newspaper from the Yemeni Women's Federation regarding the number of women who have been subjected to domestic violence, and they have been provided with support, they have reached 80 cases in the month of October, while the statistics of women who suffered of domestic violence in 2019 reached 500 cases.

Most of these cases were of married women who were severely beaten, and their ages ranged between 18 - 38 years old. The violence was mostly from the husband. That statistics do not reflect the reality because of the Yemeni families' fear of the scandal, defamation, and the reactions of mentioning the family name of the woman who reports these attacks!

Women are the weakest link

"The Voice of Hope" newspaper tried to approach some stories that narrate the suffering of battered women at home, whether to trace the aspects of the problem and its causes to come up with solutions that could limit or eliminate the phenomenon of violence against women.

Samar 42 years old, mother of three girls and a son, the eldest of her daughters is physically and mentally disabled. Samar lived all her life in a village in Al-Arouq district - Taiz, then moved with her husband to a village in Amran governorate, after he got a job as a teacher, and after the birth of her first child who suffers mentally and physically, they had to admit her to a mental and psychological hospital.

Samar continued her speech, as her husband went through economic pressures that affected his moral, and one day he returned home while hallucinating. At that time Samar realized that his psychological state had worsened, and during his tantrums, he used to hit her, and the last time he carried a knife and tried to kill her. On that day, no one was with her, except her child who was weird, and he tried to defend her by throwing stones at his father. So the people interfered and protected her. They sent her to her family's house in the Al-Arouq area. But her brothers are using her daughters who are still at the age of 13 and 14 years old to work in agricultural lands and arduous occupations, in return for staying at home. Samar was patient, but she could not bear seeing her daughters suf-

fering, so she decided at that time to work in herding sheep and raising animals.

Samar is not the only one who has suffered from domestic violence. There are many cases and stories in the corridors of courts and prosecution offices in Yemen about domestic violence cases which some of them ended in a tragic way, such as the story of Abeer who lost her life due to her desire to return to her husband, but her father and brother prevented and they killed her. According to the words of the human rights activist Haifa Malik who confirms that she saw her body with her own eyes, and says: "she was killed by the hand of her brother and her father, and in cooperation with the women who were at the house. They tied their daughter and beat her. The brother says that Abeer drank the poison, while the husband stands helpless, because her father tells him you divorced her and you have no authority over her."

Likewise, the case of Samira Maqoula, who was chained for four years in a room, and gave birth to her daughter while chained, her story has showed up to the media after her daughter was killed by her cousin, according to the human rights activist, Haifa Malik.

## Violence breeds aggression in women

Domestic violence inflicted on women causes many psychological damages, and according to Zainab Al-Asadi, a psychologist at the Yemeni Women's Federation, the response of women to violence is either by coexisting with it, because they have to stay with their children, or because some of them have submitted to the customs and norms that control women due to the authority. This type of women becomes more hostile with time. The second type of women are the ones who reject the idea of submitting to violence and try to overcome it, and these women go to the Yemeni Women Federation and most of them are subjected to abuse (verbal violence), where the battered case reaches the psychologist, who studies the case and finds out if she needs legal advice.

She adds, "We study the causes of violence in the situation, develop solutions, and train women to master professional skills, in addition to introducing them to personal strengthening courses, teaching them how to respond and defend themselves."

Al-Asadi says: "There are many forms of violence that occur against women, such as physical violence, denial of education and resources (taking a woman's sources of income or depriving her from work), and denial of opportunities, services and trainings, and these cases are submitted to the legal department, and a legal support will be provided, as well as studying the issue of violence and providing a lawyer for the case.

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## Violence begets aggressiveness in women

Domestic violence inflicted on women causes many psychological damages, and according to Zainab Al-Asadi, a psychologist at the Yemeni Women's Federation, the women's reaction to violence is either by coexisting with it, because they have to stay with their children, or because some of them have acquiesced to the customs and norms that control women due to the central power. This type of women becomes more hostile with time. The second type of women is the ones who reject the idea of submission to violence and try to overcome it. These women, who are mostly mistreated (verbal violence), go to the Yemeni Women Federation and then to the psychologist, who studies the case and finds out if they need legal advice.

## Why does domestic violence persist?

Social activist Haifa Abdel Wahid believes that the reason for the persistence of violence against women is the spread of illiteracy, and the total dependence of women on males. While Zainab Al-Asadi believes that the cause of violence is customs and traditions, and her perception of the woman as she was created from a crooked shape, therefore, she is crippled. These inherited cultural influences push the man to think wrongly that he must impose his power before the woman and subdue her, and it is possible for him to do so by reducing her potentials and capabilities.

She adds "The woman is considered an accomplice in the crime, because she is satisfied with this position, and it mostly happens because the girl is brought up to accept the idea that she is inferior to the men."

She adds: "A woman is considered a participant in the offense, because she is satisfied with this position, and this happens most often because the girl was brought up to accept the idea that she is inferior to the men."

As for Haifa Malik, she says: "There are legal reasons that grant a man unclear immunity, which pushes him to committing easily violence against women."

## Violence arises from violence

### The women's deadly silence

Haifa Abdel Wahid believes that the silence of women on the violence exercised against them, whether out of fear or due to family pressure, in addition to the absence of deterrent laws criminalizing violence against women, leads to an escalation of violence against women.

While Haifa Malik classifies: the state of silence about violence against woman is because of her conviction that she is crippled and incompetent, the laws themselves are not deterrent, even worse, if a woman turns to the judiciary, you will find that his laws are against her.

## When do men stop harassing women?

In a poll conducted by "The Voice of Hope" on an elite group of men, many of them attributed the cause of violence against women to psychological pressures, especially, with the current conditions that the country is going through, and the disruption of sources of income. Some others did not reveal any importance to this matter, as they classify addressing women's issues, especially violence, that it is exaggerated. And some of them revolved around the idea that the woman is in her home.

Haifa Abdel Wahid believes that the media awareness that exposes violence and its damages on the family, in addition to creating job opportunities for men will reduce the phenomenon of violence against women, especially among poor families that witness an escalation of domestic violence cases. This is because some of them occur as a result of the economic and psychological conditions that the man passes through it. It's to be noted that the phenomenon of violence appears frequently in poor families in which the householder is unemployed.

As for Haifa Malik, she says: "Men will stop harassing women when the laws change. Women will not be given their rights through seminars and demands only, but through a real change in the articles of the constitution, Yemeni law, and through legislation that compels men to respect women and their rights, decades ago. To this day, we are still calling for women's rights, and every day we hear about murders and violence that affect women everywhere."

Haifa Abdel Wahid believes that the media awareness that exposes violence and its damages on the family, in addition to creating job opportunities for men will reduce the phenomenon of violence against women, especially among poor families that witness an escalation of domestic violence cases. This is because some of them occur as a result of the economic and psychological conditions that the man passes through it. It's to be noted that the phenomenon of violence appears frequently in poor families in which the householder is unemployed.

As for Haifa Malik, she says: "Men will stop harassing women when the laws change. Women will not be given their rights through seminars and demands only, but through a real change in the articles of the constitution, Yemeni law, and through legislation that compels

men to respect women and their rights, decades ago. To this day, we are still calling for women's rights, and every day we hear about murders and violence that affect women everywhere."

## Who bears the responsibility?

Haifa Abdel Wahid believes that everyone agrees that the responsibility for the continuation of domestic violence rests primarily with the state or government which, on the one hand, must limit this phenomenon, through the enactment of laws and deterrent penalties. On the other hand, society must refrain from supporting male concepts that contribute to fueling violence against women. The society must refrain from supporting patriarchal concepts that contribute to fueling violence against women.

## The solution: empowering women economically and scientifically

The legal advisor in the Yemeni Women Union, Arwa Al-Shamiri, believes that the solutions lie in educating the community about the fact that women are a major part of the social fabric.

In addition to the importance of empowering women to work opportunities, qualification and training, and not depriving them of economic resources. She affirms: "if woman has more capacity and possibilities then she will have more options."

The Yemeni Women Federation has provided multi-picture support for a number of women who are victims of violence, especially in the psychological aspect, where 4000 violent cases received psychological support, represented in counseling and psychological sessions for 4,046 cases suffering from various psychological problems. 2747 women from Al-Dhalea governorate and 249 cases from Taiz governorate received psychological support services, while 1,000 cases were monitored by protection networks.

7000 individual including refugees and most vulnerable families received awareness campaigns for adaptation and peaceful coexistence among members of society, in addition to other related topics, through 430 awareness sessions.

As for the psychologist, Dr. Nawal Al-Tuwaiti, she says: "The choice remains for society with all its conscious leaders, starting with the religion men. The Islamic religion contains countless explicit directives that the highest degree of gentleness should be observed in dealing with the female, because that is what reflects the stature of the man and his true religion "It is only the generous in character who is good to women, and only the evil one who insults them", says the Prophet, all prayers and blessings of Allah be upon him!

## Citizens Are All Equal In Public Rights And Duties

# Women between Sharia and Yemeni Law

By: **Manal Ameen**  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Islamic legislation that addresses women's rights and duties affirms that women are partners with men in rights and duties. This is what was stipulated in Article 41 of the Yemeni constitution, which states that all citizens are equal in rights and duties.

Lawyer and human rights activist Aqdar Mukhtar, the President of the Foundation "Supporters for the Development and Protection of Society" says: "The general image of women in the pre-Islamic era was based on the premise that she is a creature that doesn't deserve life. Islam and God Almighty honored the woman along with the man in saying: "And we have honored the children of Adam". As the Islamic legislation stipulated that everyone has equal rights whether they were males or females.

Mukhtar added "the Islamic religion guaranteed the rights of women to inheritance, education, and work. In the era of Islam, women became a nurse, a doctor, a warrior, and a poet. As for duties, Islamic legislation has equated the provisions of the lawful and prohibited, between men and women alike".

She shall have rights similar to men's

The human rights and media activist Ali Al-Naqi said to "The Voice of Hope": "The principles of justice and equality between male and female in absolute worship is a right guaranteed by the Islamic religion for women. Indeed, Islam made the women status higher and honors them the greatest honor, by placing heaven at the feet of mothers and it preferred her companionship about three times more than the father.

He added "Islam has legalized women's right to choose their husbands, and have an independent financial responsibility like a man".

## Usages and their explanatory implications on religion:

Dealing with customs regarding some women's issues is a reality that the Yemeni society has been familiar with them, especially in the countryside where the male perspective dominates the man's right to full guardianship over women and everything related to them. And this has contributed to the deprivation of women of some of their guaranteed rights in the religion, such as her right to inheritance, education, the right to choose a husband etc. .... And the reason for this is the misconception of the guardianship of men over women, and the fact that women are "deficient in reason and religion."

Aqdar says: "If we scrutinize the Holy

Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet, away from misinterpretations of what is stated in the Islamic religion, we will find that religion is far from these nonsense that find acceptance in some societal circles, which caused the isolation of women from their active role in society."

## Women in the Yemeni law

The Article 41 of the Yemeni constitution states that all citizens are equal in public rights and duties. There are also constitutional texts related to the participation of women in political work, which indicates that "every citizen has the right to participate in the political life." Regarding this, Aqdar says: "Although Yemeni law stipulated in Article 41 the right to equality of all society members, this equality was stipulated in Article 31 that "women are the twin halves of men and they have rights and duties, as guaranteed and required by Islamic Sharia, and stipulated by law".

She added: "This text gave the legislator a space that enables him to apply Islamic law according to his vision, and this causes many contradictions. Islamic law does not differentiate between women and men in the principle of reward and punishment. Thus in the Sharia, for example, we find that the death penalty is reduced for convicted men through "honor

crimes," and at the same time a woman who kills her husband in the same case is executed according to Yemeni law, which means that there is a conflict in the texts approved by the legislator."

## Yemen and international charters

Just like other countries, Yemen has committed itself to human rights covenants that explicitly state that men and women are equal in front of the law with rights and duties, and that in the International Covenant specific to civil and political rights, and to economic, social and cultural rights, as well as in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Al-Naqi clarified to "The Voice of Hope" that Yemeni law grants women their full rights. Indeed, the Yemeni constitutional project is one of the best Arab legislations that gave women their rights in all areas of life, which is fully aligned with Yemen's signature on all international agreements binding on women's rights.

Regarding the relationship between the religious perspective of women's rights and international conventions, Al-Naqi said: "There are no contradiction between international conventions and Islamic law regarding women's rights, as most international texts are derived from the spirit of Islamic law."

He added: "The problem only lies on the male consciousness, which is a product of the inherited accumulations in some of its negative aspects, which insists on restricting women to the image of a weak creature, which is a stereotype that still casts a delusion on the reality of women in Yemeni society."

How to achieve the concept of promoting full equality for women:

Al-Naqi says: "It is possible to promote the values of equality between men and women by emphasizing them in school curricula and representing the true partnership of women in decision-making positions".

Aqdar says: "First and before searching for tools, texts, or regulations, there must be a real political will. It enhances the role and status of women at all levels, explicitly and not implicitly, and that men and women are equal before the law, and they must be treated in a manner that implies equality in terms of practice and the opportunity for both parties in all areas of life".

Achieving women's equality in the rights and duties that are legitimate and legally guaranteed, can only be achieved by neutralizing social values and norms that have negative connotations about women, especially those derived from the inherited collective mentality.

# Mothers between Past and Present... Which One is Luckier?

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

*“The lifestyle changes from the past to the future. Each era has its own features that distinguish it. In the past, life was simple, but taking caring of the family and its daily needs was a burden that fell on the shoulders of the women who did not have the tools to facilitate their work. Nowadays, life has become complicated due to technological development while women have the tools that alleviate these complications. But for each period of time remains its past summons full of nostalgia for the past, even if it is full of difficulties and hardships.”*

## Lifestyle

Ghosoon Naji, 85 years old, says: “In the past we were assigned to a lot of work inside and outside the house. Our day used to begin at sunrise, when we started preparing breakfast, and getting ready to go to our work that was between grazing, agriculture and other household chores, thus we were able to take care of our families and manage our time, getting up and sleeping early, which made our life easy and uncomplicated at the time.”

While Shurooq, 42 years old, says: “Our day used to start early in the morning, where we prepared breakfast for everyone at home, then went to school, and returned directly to prepare lunch, clean the house, and then do our homework. We did not have the luxury of relaxing between work and study, but we were doing all the tasks without tiredness or boredom.”

While Nadine Jamal, 26 years old, believes that life is not related to housework and education only, at the present time there are tools and alternatives that help women complete work in a short time, allowing them to have free time.

She added, “Life is not restricted to business only, but we can allocate time to entertain ourselves through

Internet, social media, and pursue our favorite hobbies.”

## Education between Past and Present

Warda Muhammad, 70 years old, confirms that education was limited in its beginning to memorizing the Noble Quran, intonation, reading and writing at the so-called jurists, and then we went to school that was located in an area far from our houses...

She added: “We did not have the amenities and luxuries that the current generation has who, despite all the means they have, do not take education seriously, and do not work on developing themselves and their thoughts. They left books and scientific references that they are supposed to benefit from, and went to the phones and Internet, and used them randomly.”

In the context, Manal Mustafa, 39 years old, says: “Education in the past was strong and disciplined, and we were keener on it, although we did not have specific educational aids, and we had a lot of concerns and commitments.”

And she adds, “In the past, there was a sense of responsibility towards education. I used to divide my time between performing the domestic chores, raising my children, pursuing my university studies, and my governmental job, thus I did not shorten or neglect any part of my responsibilities.”

Marwa Salem, 25 years old, believes that education has become weak in Yemen. While the world is experiencing an information revolution, the education in Yemen has become limited to obtaining a certificate, regardless the results of this education and its reflection on students' practical life after graduation, and this is due to the weakness of the curricula, and failing to keep pace with the labor market.

## The Various Educational Methodologies

Radhia Muhammad, 75 years old says: “I have nine children and raised them according to the principles and values that we were brought up on. At that time, there was no external in-

terference that affected the upbringing of children. The older brother contributes in raising his younger brother, and bears the responsibility of everyone after his parents. The mother, father and older brother had authority and were respected.”

For her part, Samah Hisham, a housewife, says: “I have three children and we are ideal mothers. We have the ability to face difficult challenges in an environment that witnesses openness in all fields”.

She added: “We face many challenges in order to raise our children on our principles and values. Children have become older than they are because of the Internet, communication means, and mind-dispersive games ... We live in a constant state of anxiety, and we are waging a war to preserve the raising of our children away from the dispersed environment”.

## Home Management

Kawthar Mohammed, 47 years old, says: “Preparing food at the present time does not take a lot of time anymore, but on the other hand it lacks flavor, because in the past, food used to take its time to be prepared and cooked”.

“The food was prepared with love”, says Kawthar, “the mother used to put all her attention and senses on preparing the food”.

And she confirms that many girls nowadays use their phones during work, while preparing food and other occupations, and they do not show any sense of responsibility.”

Hiba Saeed, 18 years old, advises girls to use their time to focus on themselves and develop themselves. She says: “We are in the twenty-first century, and it is not logical that we continue with the same lifestyle, because time is different than before, and interests have become different.”.

## Rural Women... Limitless Struggles



Dr. Balkis El Ariki

The Yemeni woman in the countryside has always been considered a partner to the man in the journey of self-sufficiency for the families. She is a source of production, whether at home or in the economic aspects in various fields. In addition to her work as a mother and wife, she works outside the house, side by side with the man. She sacrifices and suffers throughout her journey of daily struggle. Unfortunately, the rural woman did not find support from the state and civil society organizations to rehabilitate her and improve her productive work.

During my trip to the countryside of Yemen to conduct community studies, I learned about the hard daily working routine for women in the countryside, where the journey of the daily struggle of rural women begins at dawn. The woman first works on preparing breakfast for her husband, children and the rest of her family, cleaning and tidying the house, and then she wakes them up and they find everything ready. She prepares her children to go to school, or provides the family with the tools they need to work on farms, and then she goes to the valley to take over the task of plowing, planting, and harvesting fodder and herbs for the cows. She only returns when it's noon. She comes back exhausted to prepare food despite her tiredness. She returns again to the field immediately after the afternoon prayer, and yet she works for free, and without boredom or complaint, because her only concern is to provide all the needs for her husband and children from food to self-sufficiency.

In the daily program of Yemeni women's struggle, the task of fetching water takes place. Most of the countryside of Yemen suffers from limited drinkable water, and the family counts on women and children to fetching water with which the rural women begins their daily program. Early in the morning, women and their children go to the pond water situated in the village, and bring water for two or three times in the morning. The painful details of this suffering is that some ponds are located kilometers outside the village, forcing women to use donkeys and go early and carry water on the backs of donkeys and on their heads. This way of fetching water is an extremely severe suffering.

Bringing firewood is also considered part of the daily struggle of rural women, especially on days when there is no work on the farms as in the winter season. At dawn, women go to the valleys and plains surrounding the village and its surroundings, and may also go to valleys several kilometers away from the village, due to the abundance of wood existing in these valleys. Although the phenomenon of bringing firewood in this way has massively decreased among rural women during the past decade, due to the availability of the gas cylinders, thus it has returned strongly in the past five years, due to the harsh economic conditions of rural families, and the lack of gas cylinders caused by the successive crises which Yemen is experiencing, and led to the increase of one cylinder price to about five thousand Riyals, a large sum that many rural families are unable to meet.

The livestock is strongly present in the details of the daily struggle of rural women. In the early morning, after preparing breakfast for the family, they go to their cows, sheep, goats and donkeys to clean the barn and bring water and some fodder, and then they give children under fifteen years old the responsibility of grazing sheep in the plains and valleys surrounding the village. Rural women's are keen on raising the livestock, especially cows and sheep, in order to achieve self-sufficiency in ghee, yogurt and milk, and also to sell some livestock from one season to other, to benefit from the gain to provide the family's basic food needs.

In this context, they consider rural women in Yemen to be among the vulnerable groups, because they are deprived of access to economic and social opportunities for work. This is due to several factors, including the lack of institutions and support agencies that introduce rural women into the labor market, and integrate her into the prospective economic life in the country. If

women received education, health, training and rehabilitation services, this will increase the chances of developing their economic and social activity, and thus they will achieve better living standards for the family and society in general.

In view of the foregoing, civil society organizations should provide financing and rehabilitation programs for rural women related to their experiences in the field of agriculture, livestock farming, craft industries, beekeeping, and the dairy cattle project, in order to exploit their capabilities, improve their status, and their family's economic and living situation and achieve rural development.





# Simple Dreams for Tender Hearts The Yemeni Girl Dreams of Getting a Job and Living Peacefully

“In a poll conducted by “Voice of Hope”, Yemeni girls agreed that pursuing education and getting a job is their priority, followed by peace and stabilization in Yemen.

A group of Yemeni young women also confirmed that being interested in revealing their independent personalities and learning about the culture of other countries are goals that many of them strive to achieve.

Aida Hashem, a student at the Faculty of Education at the University of Aden, states: “My current interest is to complete my university studies and get a job opportunity in my specialty, and I hope to fulfill all my dreams even if the path is long.”

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

Aida adds: “I advise every young woman to be independent in her thoughts and decisions, and not to yield to the pressures that could prevent her from achieving her ambition.”

As for Lamia Youssef, a university graduate from Taiz Governorate, she aspires to find a job opportunity in her specialty to prove herself but she hasn’t been able to find her opportunity so far.

Lamia says: “I would like to be financially independent, and look for other alternatives than the office job. Therefore, I try to find myself in small projects, and am still waiting for financial support that will enable me to launch my own business.”

Nada, a housewife, says, “In general, women priorities are to ensure stability and safety in life, which can be achieved by obtaining a job

in the field of subspecialty.”

## Changing Deficiencies and Working on Initiatives

As for Um Waad Firas, a housewife, she states: “the Yemeni young woman should be in charge of everything that would contribute in changing behaviors deficiencies in the society, so that women will have a leadership and influential role, and this will be accomplished through the interaction of young women and their volunteering in initiatives and organizations that create positive changes in society.”

Lisa Ahmed, who lives in Aden, affirms that “Yemeni women have become interested in everything that raises their status and strengthens their position in society, through their advocacy for women’s issues, with a loud voice that refuses to be marginalized.”

## Peace Establishment

On her part, Wafaa Amer from Aden, a specialist in sociology, says: “There are many Yemeni young women who give great attention to the consolidation of the principles of peace that preserve human dignity and ensure a secure and stable life.”

The journalist Nour Samad agrees with her, and she sums up her priorities and aspirations for peace to prevail all over the nation so it glows again

Nour adds: “I currently care about my family and the work that I do from home, through

social media, which has become an open field for everyone, through which I spread my activities and reports.”

## Other Interests

As for Khoulood Khamis, a high school student, from the city of Mukalla, she focuses most of her interests on her external appearance, which makes her feel satisfied and love life, as she said.

Haifa Al-Yamani, a pharmacy graduate from Sana’a, states that she is a traveling lover, and is interested in learning about the culture, customs and traditions of the different countries that she wishes to visit.

As for Mounia Ahmed, 25 years old from Sanaa, she says to “Voice of Hope” that she focuses on her hobby which is photography, and spends the best time taking pictures.

Sumaya al-Khawkha, 30 years old, confirms that the Yemeni young woman is distinguished by struggle and strength

and has many interests and priorities. Some young women think that creating a happy family is a priority, while others think that serving the country, by presenting development projects, is what they aspire to do.

## 4- Basic Needs of Women

In the psychological analysis presented by the consultant and director of the Mental Health Department at the Ministry of Health and Population in Aden, Muhammad Ismail,

he emphasized on the fact that the psychological state differs in general between women and men, as each one of them has specific interests in life. Some focus on developing their thoughts, studies, capabilities, and various specializations, while others think of security, safety and stability, by creating social relations.

Ismail adds: “The nature of the human being lies on the difference, that’s why we see different types of characters.”

And he says, “talking about the necessary needs that both women and men are looking for, it starts with human needs which are five, beginning with the physiological or basic needs in life as food, drink, housing, clothing, breathing and discharge processes. The second need is represented in security and stability.”

And in the poll, we noticed that many opinions are based on looking for stability, regarding the difficult living conditions, this is the instinct of life, where every person aspires to obtain the thing that he misses.

Ismail asserts “that the third need is the social one, which is represented by family and emotional stability, creating friendships and affiliation. And this is what we will notice with the fourth need, which is self-esteem, especially women, as they need to be appreciated and feel that they belong to this society, this environment, children, family and partners in life, so that they excel in the fields of their lives.”

Ismail concludes his speech by saying: “What we see in the survey is an explanation of these natural differences which indicates that there is a difference in the personality, education, and environment in which they were brought up. Every girl has beliefs, customs, and traditions, unique to her and her family.”



# Women's Contribution: A Ghost from which Men Fear

By: Alia Mohammad  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“Women have an important role in building peace, and their contribution is a fundamental factor in achieving justice and balance in the society. Yemeni women have proven their competence in various aspects of life, through their effective contribution in various fields, which were previously men exclusive.

Since the implementation of the Security Council Resolution No "1325" issued by the United Nations, which calls for the contribution of women in the decision making, there has only been a slight increase in the political and cultural participation of Yemeni women, as a result of a number of difficulties and challenges, some of which were mentioned in the opinion poll conducted that was launched by "The Voice of Hope" newspaper about the extent of Yemeni women's political and cultural participation, and how this experience was evaluated.

Harun Rashid - a journalist in Aden states: "Politics are highly dominated by the patriarchal society, which made women's participation in politics very limited, even though they possess the capabilities that enable them to enter the political field and excel in it."

Theatrical actor Shuaib Al-Afif in Taiz agrees, as he believes that "women have not had a fair opportunity to participate in the political field, because the society is still unaware of their potential, and has a limited cultural perception of them."

Shuaib added, "Yemeni women had and still have

a good wisdom and opinion. They are distinguished by their interaction in the societal field and training programs. They have a great passion in contributing. Therefore, they must be given a fair opportunity."

As for Yusra Al-Nahari, who is interested in political sciences in Seiyun, she described her experience through her participation in political and cultural seminars as a new and unique experience in which she got acquainted with a number of political concepts and terms.

Al-Nahari confirms that the political participation of women is one of the strongest opportunities through which they can prove themselves and their worth, as well as provide an opportunity to encourage other women to enter this field that may seem alarming to many women, which created a void in the political arena.

As for the researcher, Issam Al-Hamidi, he praises the positive role of women in the political, economic, cultural and social fields ... adding that "Yemen has gone through a great history, whose success has been written by women who are distinguished by high efficiency and capabilities."

On his part, Judge Adel Ahmed-Dhamar says:



"The events in Yemen have proven that the Yemeni woman do not represent half of the society as it is said, but rather three quarters of the society. She is the mother, sister, daughter and wife, and she can lead society politically and culturally like men, and she may be better than him".

And he continues, "Women got a small space in political and cultural participation, and this is unfair to them, as they deserve more than that space."

As for Marwa Saleh, from Aden - a pharmacy graduate, working in the political field, she emphasized that women in Yemen face many difficulties, her reference being the society's adherence to wrong customs and traditions - as she said.

She adds that Yemeni women are struggling hard to prove themselves and impose their presence, and try to delve into several fields of life.

She continues to talk about her experience, which she said was difficult, as a result of family and people not accepting her work in the political field, but she tries with all her efforts to deliver her message to everyone, that women have the right to participate in all fields of life.

Fouad Ahmed disagrees with some opinions, and believes that Yemeni women cannot participate in political and cultural fields, as they are characterized by haste and emotional thought more than reasoning, which will affect their decisions.

Lawyer Maryam Muhammad from Sana'a confirms that, "Yemeni women are still suffering from the deficient perception of them, which robs them of their just rights compared to the other half of society, which has affected their participation in public life.

As for the journalist Yahya Al-Jubeihi, he believes that the participation of women has deviated from its natural path, and women did not understand their role in this participation, and they were only interested in serving certain groups, which made him not trust what women offered, advising them to learn more about their roles, so that they could apply them correctly.

Arwa Fadel, a human rights activist from Aden, confirms that Yemeni women have become aware of their political and cultural role, but the political environment in Yemen does not enable them to perform their effective roles, and prevents them from participating in the decision making, and we find their role is limited and hidden, so they must fight to take away their right.

Adham Abdo supports the idea of the participation of women politically and culturally, and considers it a positive thing, but on the condition that women understand the limits that they should not cross, because everything in life has a certain limit, which we should not surpass, so that we can reach the desired goal.

Adel Bishar, 35 years old just says that he cannot evaluate this experience, as there is no politics in

## Kulthum Al Nawasiri: A Story of Struggles in the World of Finance and Charity

By: Manal Ameen  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

“Perseverance in work, and pursue of the advancement of women who desire to invade the world of commerce are the motto of the businesswoman Dr. Kulthum Nasser Al-Nawasiri, head of businesswomen in the Aden Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and president of the Small Business Owners Association, who singled out "the Voice of Hope" with this meeting, about her experience and the stages of her career in the world of finance and business.

### • Who's Kulthum Al-Nawasiri?

• Dr. Kulthum Mahmoud Nasser Al-Nawasiri, wife of Professor Dr. Fayez Hashishi (head of the Arab community in Kenya), born in Aden Governorate, holds a BA in Economics and Political Science from Baghdad University. After graduation, I was appointed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as responsible for the Department of Socialist Countries and Latin America, then I left the country with my husband to Austria to complete my master's degree in International Law in the seventies of the last century, and at that time I was a pioneer at the level of Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula in this field. Then I continued my higher studies in America, and we emigrated to Britain, and then Kenya, and we remained in the host countries for more than 30 years. Then in 2000, we returned to our country, and I currently hold the position of President of Businesswomen in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Aden.

• We will talk about your beginnings in the world of business and finance, and who encouraged Kalthoum Al-Nawasiri to go through this experience?

• My father and mother worked in the trading field, and I used to learn from them all the rules of the world of finance and business, and then, fortunately and with the encouragement of my

husband, I established in Kenya an import and export company specialized in wood and some products exportation to Yemen and the Sultanate of Oman. In the early nineties, the company was registered in The Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Aden, and I was, at that time, one of the first members of the Aden Chamber of Commerce.

• What are the most important projects that Kulthum has achieved during her career?

• Perhaps of the most important projects I have presented during my career were the charitable projects that I've launched since my return to the homeland, in 2016. These projects were based on founding and establishing a federation that grouped all unemployed young women who wished to enter the world of trade and guiding them in order to achieve their dreams as the proverb says: "give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." I wanted to help them to search for resources that would help them and improve their capabilities in various disciplines and fields, and in order to achieve this, we implemented training courses to enable them to prepare and implement their own projects, and we established exhibitions and bazaars for their exhibits, and groups for exchange, consultations and loans.

I was very pleased that there is a significant increase in the number of women participating in this trade federation. While in 2016 the members' number was about 55, in 2020 the number of women participating has reached 700.

• Why did you choose to work in this field?

• My charitable commercial activity was a voluntary act for the great love that I have to this city, for the desire to share my experience and provide all the available opportunities to the ladies and young women who wish to enter the world of commerce, for believing in their abilities in various fields and in the purpose of reducing the unemployment rate that has increased due to the conditions that the country is going through.

• Have you encountered difficulties and challenges in the world of finance and business?

• In fact, I did not face any personal difficulties throughout my career in the world of trade. On the contrary, I received all the welcome and cooperation from the family who stood by me in my beginnings, from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the merchants of Aden, and all the young active women in this field.

In my charitable commercial project, I find it difficult to obtain white loans (without interest) for struggling young women, as I try to give them a start free from anxiety and worries to go into debts, as the fines that currently accumulate at the credit institutions and banks in our country, lead to the faltering of small projects and sometimes to their failure.

• In your opinion, what are the most important rules and basics for the success of any project for a businesswoman in Yemen?

• Success primarily depends on the sincere desire to work, and on the mental, psychological and material ability. So if a person has ambitions and purposeful aspirations, he will chart the path to success by himself, and in the field of trade, there must be a feasibility study of the project, choosing the appropriate site and the merchandise, and knowing the methods of advertising for the project, and selling conscientiously. The commercial reputation is very important to win customers in various disciplines.

• How do you see businesswomen's projects in the future in Yemen?

• The commercial projects have a very promising future, because the whole world is heading towards an economic and commercial competition, and there is currently a spread of unemployment in developed countries, due to replacing the human effort with computers and robots. Despite the difficulties facing our country, the only solution is young men and women to develop themselves in the modern scientific and technological fields, to move towards freelance, light industries, and local products, whether industrial, agricultural, fishery or food products.





Dr. Mayda Abdallah

## The Woman Protagonist in Success and Failure

The Woman has a great role in the local and international community, and is considered as one of the most important basic pillars of the society that cannot be dispensed with or ignored. She is the mother, sister, wife and daughter, for she is the humerus at the time of distress, the bond at the moment of brokenness, the safety during fear and the tenderness during loss.

But civil societies, with their different positivistic ideas that are man-made, have given women a position that ranges between ups and downs, and they have not been given the same esteem that Islam gave them. So we can say that the real battle for women began here, where women suffered from abuse and societal oppression. They suffered from marginalization and abominable racism that Islam eradicated and the merely thought reinforced. They did not only suffer from their society, but also on the family level since they were discriminated in a society empowered by authority and masculinity.

The problem of women and men is always reported in terms of equality in rights and duties, and that women should have as freedom and rights as men, and also in terms of social status and assuming administrative positions. There was a lot of talking about gender and an emphasis on the importance of women's political participation at a rate of 30%.

We always put the blame on the man for the non-advancement of the woman, but it did not come to mind for a moment what the role of the woman towards the woman is, their support to each other and their help for each other. It is known that women have a tremendous amount of jealousy in various sensory and practical levels. This is considered as an innate instinct.

Reality has another opinion that differs from what the thought says, and let us ask here whether it is possible for women to generate jealousy in the practical side as it is known on the social level, is there really a fierce competition between them in the field of work and for higher positions? On the other hand, can a woman support another woman in order to get a higher position? Can we say that women help women in achieving success and to what degree? Can women push women to accelerate development, stand by them and provide them with various instructions?

The answer is yes, jealousy is generated among women, both on the sensual and emotional level, as well as on the social level. Competition may reach its climax, and is considered as a double-edged sword.

On the first edge, we see the woman with high professionalism and an elegant style in dealing with her colleague in the struggle against racial discrimination, and she supports her in extracting her most basic rights to the largest, and we see her here from those positive angles supporting her sister, mother, sister and colleague, as she is her companion in overcoming crises and tribulations and getting out of them in a high positive aspect. She is the defender of stolen rights and expenditures, and she had a role in supporting her female colleague by addressing issues of discrimination, which are the issue of eliminating illiteracy among females because it ranks first and is the biggest compared to the percentage of males in illiteracy and the issue of eliminating domestic and societal violence in its various forms and spectrums.

As for the second edge, women may be a help for women in failure, and they intervene here as well with the power of feminine jealousy that has no limits and will not stop except with displacement or failure. There are many cases of failure that afflicted women and the reason for them was the women themselves. We see women trying hard to destroy other women and compete with them for their lack of valuable administrative or social positions. We see women who were the reason to stop the development wheel of their female colleagues, because of jealousy that has no significance in a society that is struggling against the elimination of racial discrimination.

In conclusion, and through the aforementioned, we can say that the woman who is claiming her rights just like her brother the man on the one side and on the other side can play a negative role in looting the rights of her sister, so we can say that the woman is an aid to the woman in success by helping her and standing by her side with all courage and also the woman is an aid to her sister the woman in failure by obstructing her progress and fighting her because of undue jealousy and not in its proper place, but the innate instinct here overwhelms her and its excessive use is a reason for the woman to be a woman's aid in failure, and for this the principle of intellectual balance must be achieved. And what is reflected in it is a societal behavior and a positive motivation that restores women to their true advancement and position in society.



## Launching a 16-Day Campaign to Combat Gender-Based Violence in Aden

By: Manal Ameen  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

The Women Association for Combating Poverty - (WACP), in Aden, launched the 16-day campaign against gender-based violence (GBV), within the activities of the Women Leadership, Empowerment, Access and Protection project in crisis response LEAP - Yemen, in partnership with the UN Women.

The campaign that is held every year around the world, under the slogan "Join us to reduce violence", includes a number of awareness-raising activities on combating violence against women and girls, through a radio program, to raise community awareness about forms of violence against women, and to hold various workshops, to raise



awareness of women, youth and security, about the effects of the persistence of gender-based violence on the behaviors of children and society, in addition to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on women.

Many words were delivered on the importance of this global event, which sheds light on the violations that are practiced against women that restrict their freedom and position in the society in various fields.

In the event, the objectives of the Women Leadership Project were reviewed, which targets 1050 vulnerable and socially and economically marginalized women, from the local displaced and host communities, through how to access protection services and empower them, through the implementation of training activities that qualify them in various fields, and work to increase

community awareness about the impact of the pandemic COVID-19 on women.

It is worth noting that the 16-day campaign starts on November 25th of each year, as it is the International Day for Eliminating Violence against Women, and continues until December 10th, which coincides with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced that the COVID-19 outbreak on March 11th, 2020 exacerbated major risk factors for violence against women and girls, such as food shortages, unemployment, economic insecurity, school closures, mass migration, and increased forms of violence against women and girls, especially the physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence.

## The Red Carpet

By: Yasmine Youssef  
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Nada Muhammad Ahmad Al-Kinai, put her foot on the red carpet, to be one of the very few in Yemen to have succeeded in the Arab world. Nada, twenty-five years old, won first place (gold medal) in the international competition of the Arab Forum for Plastic Arts, among 13 Arab countries 2020, and it was not her first grand slam victory in competitions and participations, as she won many advanced places in local and international competitions and exhibitions.

The artist began with her talent from a young age, and after high school she liked to polish her talent in a scientific way, so her studies were only for the sake of increasing knowledge and a wide background on painting.

Her painting entitled "Bitterness of Living" is the third drawing in pencil, which is the spark for the launch towards excellence. She participated in the first international competition of the Arab Forum for Plastic Arts, and she won the second place (silver medal) among Arab countries in 2017, although the oil colors are considered International, especially since international exhibitions contain these types of paintings, because they last for many years and do not change, but at that time they had not started painting in oil colors,

and she expressed between the folds of the painting that women are the most affected in the war.

Al-Kinai discussed many women's issues, such as issues of violence against women, like her participation in the creativity for social justice program, which discusses violence against women in its forms and methods, and the psychological effects it has on women and those around them, and she has embodied them in the details of this painting in terms of looks of stalking or revenge.

In addition to a research conducted within the program, Nada discussed the children of female prisoners who were forced to stay with their mothers in prison, where children are exposed to a dire situation, especially when they are infected with any disease. The helpless mother does not find any means possible to help her baby but to wait for the mercy of the Almighty, "The mother is crying to see her newborn die in her arms." This is how Nada described her painting to us.

"Its idea is from my imagination ... The difference in the eyes' colors is the same as the differences of people, so difference

is beautiful, and it is considered a completion not a lack." This was the slogan for her painting which she participated in at the exhibition "Embracing Our Differences" in California, which discussed the differences in societies and the bullying that occurs because of it.

She told us that the painting of the mother with her child makes her feel a sense of tenderness and security, because the nature of her feminism was greatly reflected in her paintings and plastic drawings.

**My Name is my Identity and the Niqab is not an Obstacle.**

This is what she answered some of the artists' criticisms for wearing the niqab, which she asserted that it does not cause any obstacles to her successes, participations, hobbies as well as her identity.



She won the trust and recommendations of Arab artists, and was nominated by them, as she submitted her work for the committee evaluation, and it was accepted by critics, and selected and included in the encyclopedia within the historical book "Arab Creators". Her own album was released and should be published in 2020 AD.

