The role of women in building peace in Yemen

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Acknowledgements

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“Do we have to carry weapons and participate in war to be taken seriously by the UN and the warring parties and to be granted a seat at the table?”

Wedad Al Badwi, Yemeni journalist and member of the Yemeni Women’s Pact for Peace and Security (Pact)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the conflict in Yemen escalated in 2015, the country has remained home to one of the world’s worst humanitarian crises. Over 21 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance.² The conflict has resulted in thousands of casualties, forced over four million Yemenis into displacement and led to a collapse of the economy, exposing millions of people to further vulnerabilities in the region’s poorest country. The import of fuel, food, medicine and other commercial supplies has been disrupted, with rounds of currency depreciation accelerating economic deterioration. Food prices have more than doubled. Yemeni women and girls have been disproportionally affected, as armed conflict has exacerbated existing inequalities in the context of patriarchal social norms.

Widowed during the conflict and shown in August 2017, this mother in Abs district is now the family’s only breadwinner.

Credit: Ahmed Al-Fadeel
Women represent 49% of people in need of humanitarian assistance. The ongoing conflict has created one of the worst displacement crises worldwide; one in three displaced households are headed by females, increasing their vulnerability to violence. Over eight million women and girls in Yemen are suffering from hunger, and over seven million women and girls have no access to adequate water sources. The conflict has taken a heavy toll on women, but women’s voices are absent from the journey to obtain peace in Yemen.

This paper brings the voices of Yemeni women forward. Women were active in the 2011 protests, influencing political developments at key junctures. However, subsequent armed conflicts militarized the political environment and pushed forward a more limited religious agenda that saw more and more women systematically marginalized in the process. Outside interventions from armed groups have played a role in further marginalizing Yemeni women. Despite the critical frontline roles carried out by Yemeni women in responding to the crisis, women’s political participation has sharply declined, particularly since the 2015 conflict escalation. This paper outlines these major trends and offers some key recommendations to the government and wider international community to better support women’s participation in peace negotiations and involvement in the Yemeni political arena.
INTRODUCTION

Despite ongoing efforts by the United Nations and many member states to end the war in Yemen, efforts at sustainable peace were failing until April 2022, when a UN-led, nationwide truce was announced. Yemenis began to gain hope after eight years of war. However, the truce lasted for only six months and ended on 2 October 2022 – with no announcement of any extension of the truce or end to the war in sight. The current situation will further compound women’s suffering and vulnerability due to displacement, poverty and the increased level of violence.

Since 2015, the exclusion of women from politics has been deeply felt across all sectors. While feminist networks and coalitions have been created and re-created, and women have demonstrated leadership in humanitarian response efforts, women have been rendered invisible from the main attempts at peace negotiations. During peace talks and the formation of the new government, women have been completely absent from the national political scene. The Yemeni Constitution gave women some rights to be part of the political process – however, quotas were unevenly applied. and women’s political participation has consistently been hindered by cultural and social restrictions, online and offline. In 2022, a presidential council formed an all-male government.

Certain transitional periods in Yemen have opened more space for Yemeni women. In 2011, the Saleh regime that ruled Yemen for 33 years and often excluded women from political participation was removed, and Yemen entered a transitional phase where women were given more room to participate in building the transitional government. The Revolution and the subsequent 2013 National Dialogue gained attention worldwide, though Yemeni women’s revolutionary activism and prominent humanitarian leadership were sadly often underestimated.

This paper demonstrates the ways in which Yemeni women, women-led organizations and women’s rights organizations have been impacted by the various peace processes carried out since the escalation of the conflict in 2015, and shares their views on what needs to change for there to be an inclusive and comprehensive peacebuilding processes in Yemen. The methodology includes a desk review and interviews with 18 members of women’s rights organizations, as well as peer reviews by national and international stakeholders.

CONTEXT:
A GENDERED ANALYSIS OF THE CONFLICT

Women and girls represent 49% of the people in need of humanitarian assistance in Yemen, and more than 80% of internally displaced people are women and children. Yemen has long been listed as one of the worst places in the world to be a woman. Yemeni women face gender inequalities associated with highly complex and conservative social norms, as well as the political and legal system. Women’s participation in the labour force is extremely low,
at just 6.3% of the population,\(^9\) and 6.5 million Yemeni women and girls are at risk of gender-based violence.\(^10\) Yemen’s rates of child marriage have been among the highest in the world. As of 2017, the rate of females aged 20-24 who were married before the age of 18 reached 32%, while 9% were married before the age of 15.\(^11\) As gathering accurate data is challenging in conflict-affected contexts, these rates are likely to be much higher.

Despite proclaimed gender equality in the Constitution of Yemen, the principal of equality between women and men is not enshrined in further policy or practice, leading to extreme forms of gender discrimination and marginalization.

Samar, 19, pictured in 2018, is the eldest of three daughters living in Abs district, Hajjah governorate, Northern Yemen. She finished high school and dreamed of being a teacher but after her father fell ill, she had to take care of her family. Samar spends most of her day fetching water. Credit: Ahmed Al-Fadeel

2011 – THE BEGINNING OF CHANGE

Yemeni women have always played a role in the political path of Yemen in the different conflicts that the country has endured since the early 1960s to 2015. Now it’s the most critical time for the country and women are absent from the negotiations and government bodies. Despite all the restrictions, women always worked with men for the sake of this country. Now women are leading on the humanitarian response and becoming more active in civil society.\(^//\)

Khadiga Alhirsi, Head of Al-Tadhamon Foundation for Development

On 27 January 2011, history was made with a series of protests calling for the overthrow of the government led by Ali Abdullah Saleh. The protests denounced high unemployment rates and governmental corruption and demanded constitutional amendments for a country that was ranked among the poorest in the Middle East – with almost 43% of the population living in poverty.\(^12\) Although Yemen is one of the most armed countries in the world,\(^13\) the public demonstrations were
peaceful. Students, young people, women and other civil society activists who formed the core of the month-long protests had a new vision of a better future for Yemen.

Women’s involvement went beyond direct participation in the protests to include leadership and organizing. Despite years of never-ending restrictions, women were still active and were finally able to create space for themselves and speak publicly about their rights and what was happening in their country. They protested openly in what was known as ‘Change Square’. Despite many attempts to prevent women from joining the demonstrations, women continued to participate in the street rallies and stood firm in their leadership roles, as well as setting up field hospitals to treat wounded protesters.

During the 2011 Revolution, female protesters were particularly singled out and attacked. Nevertheless, women and young people can be credited with bringing international attention to the protests (some 20,000 university students protested in Sanaa and thousands more in Aden, Hadramout, Taiz and Al Hudaydah). It was the voices of young people and women – speaking out for the first time in Yemen’s recent history – who captured the world’s attention by speaking up against the decades of poverty, injustice and corruption.

On 18 March 2011, clashes broke out between the protesters and the police when police snipers opened fire, killing over 50 people. This incident prompted officials, including cabinet ministers, diplomats and some senior members of the military, to join the protesters. Although the protesters succeeded in overthrowing the Saleh regime, civic space started to shrink for Yemeni women and political movements became less inclusive.

// The Revolution movement was militarized and voices of women were silenced. //

Yemeni journalist who participated in the 2011 protests
2013-2014 NATIONAL DIALOGUE: ‘THROUGH DIALOGUE, WE ARE CREATING THE FUTURE’

Women didn’t want to participate only for the sake of women; they wanted to participate for their societies and communities that had to endure 33 years of injustice that shattered all Yemen. //

Husnia Al Khadri, Gender Justice Manager for Oxfam Yemen and member of Pact

Through the National Dialogue Conference – for the first time in Yemen’s recent history – democracy, dialogue and change became the top priorities of all the major political parties. Facilitated by the UN Special Envoy to the Secretary General on Yemen, the Conference drew together over 500 participants to address long-standing critical political divisions and conflict issues, including the Southern movement, the Houthi movement (conflict between Houthis and Saleh government), rights and freedoms, transitional justice, good governance and state-building.

However, Yemeni women were not fairly represented at senior levels in government bodies. At the close of the Conference, of the 565 delegates representing all Yemeni political parties and constituencies – including the Southern movement, the Houthis, women, young people and civil society – women made up only 29.4% of the delegates across different political parties. The Conference’s organizing committee included only six women out of 37 members. Out of the 301 members of the Parliament, there was only one woman; and only two women were appointed to lead ministries, compared to 36 male ministers appointed. There was a lack of transparency on the selection criteria for women to participate in the National Dialogue, and parties were accused of only including women who promoted their political agenda.

Despite continued impediments to more meaningful inclusion and representation of Yemeni women in the National Dialogue, the women who were involved made a remarkable contribution at national and international levels, with women leading consultations and roundtable discussions along with key decision makers and politicians. Women who participated (including women’s rights organizations, journalists, academics and politicians) were recognized for their deep awareness of key issues, including power dynamics and complexities – leading to greater recognition of the value of women’s political participation.

All women interviewed for this paper agreed that women involved in the transitional political process were the most impartial group during the National Dialogue, and the least influenced by political and tribal affiliations. The successful, active participation of women during the National Dialogue Conference helped further qualify women to be at the forefront of the political arena.

The National Dialogue Conference Working Group on Rights and Freedoms consolidated recommendations on child marriage as well as women’s political participation, obliging the future government to enable the future inclusion of women, including rural women (e.g. through greater access to education). The Working Group pushed for a 30% quota of female participation in all public offices and elected bodies.

Fkrya Khalid, the first female to be chosen by the governorate of Aden to manage and solve family disputes in her local community, during an interview with a neighbourhood representative. Credit: Nada Mohammed
Despite this encouraging progress, the Committee tasked with monitoring the success and implementation of the National Dialogue’s outcomes was all male. According to a National Dialogue participant interviewed for this paper:

“This was the beginning of failure for all the outcomes of the national dialogue and all the efforts women came up with.”

POST-2015 – THE CONFLICT ESCALATES

In 2015, armed conflict escalated quickly and the space for development was reduced significantly. The impacts of conflict have been vast, putting Yemen among some of the most destructive conflicts since the end of the Cold War and setting human development in the country back by over 20 years.\textsuperscript{19} The conflict exacerbated gender inequalities in a country already ranked at the bottom for the global gender gap index.\textsuperscript{20} Gender inequalities were deeply interlinked with poverty, illiteracy, oppression, harmful and discriminatory patriarchal social norms, and weak or absent democracy and social justice – and were further compounded by discriminatory legal systems.

In October 2015, UN Women established the Yemeni Women’s Pact for Peace and Security (Pact) with the aim of raising the voice of women in peacebuilding. This initiative involved over 60 Yemeni women from different political and social backgrounds. This group would later become the Yemeni women’s Technical Advisory Group (TAG) under the UN Special Envoy to Yemen, and its role is largely restricted to backstage advisory and participation in consultations outside formal settings.

One of the women interviewed for this paper expressed her frustration at the marginalization women in the peace process by the different actors, asking:
Do we have to carry weapons and participate in war to be taken seriously by the UN and the warring parties and to be granted a seat at the table?\(^\text{1}\)

Wedad Al Badwi, Yemeni journalist and member of Pact

Against this background, and despite the limited progress made during the National Dialogue (prior to the 2015 conflict escalation), women have enjoyed little to no representation in the formal peace negotiations among the parties to the conflict in the past eight years. These processes include ‘Geneva 1’ and ‘Geneva 2’, held in the Swiss city in June 2015 and September 2018, and talks held in Kuwait and Amman.

During Geneva 1 and Geneva 2, only one woman participated (as part of the General People’s Congress), and only three women took part in the talks in Kuwait. Women have so far never participated in such talks as an independent group that is able to voice women’s collective vision for an inclusive peace.\(^\text{21}\) Yemeni women’s right to participate in peace processes was not a priority for parties to the conflict, including during the early stages of the strategic peace planning processes.

In the 2016 peace negotiations in Kuwait, the few Yemeni women who were able to participate were relegated to unofficial discussions with minimal relevance to the main negotiations on political and security arrangements.\(^\text{22}\)

As of October 2022, Yemeni women’s representation in the UN decision-making bodies that negotiate and implement the provisions of peace agreements related to the security sector stood at 10%. In previous years, when the UN Special Envoy publicly offered reserved, non-transferrable seats for Yemeni women, parties refused to allow women to join the committees formed as a result of the peace process.\(^\text{23}\)

The UN Security Council continues demanding the ‘full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in the peace process, and the need for full implementation of Yemen’s Women, Peace, and
Security National Action Plan (NAP) in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000), and recalling with satisfaction the 30 per cent minimum quota for women in the National Dialogue Conference.

According to UN studies, women’s participation in peace processes increases the probability that peace agreements will last. In Yemen, despite the capacity gaps, peace efforts are still being made on the ground and at negotiation tables. Yemeni women from all backgrounds have formed new coalitions, including Pact and the Women’s Solidarity Network. Working across political lines, women have activated local truce committees to prevent fighting over water and land resources, risked their lives to rescue families trapped by the conflict, and evacuated schools held by armed groups.

Hundreds of women-led initiatives to provide their communities with education and food also promote inclusive approaches to local security. They have facilitated humanitarian access for struggling international aid efforts, supported reintegration programmes for child soldiers, and led efforts – in the face of ongoing abuse – to release over 300 detainees. Significantly, they are seeding the ground for post-conflict recovery.

Ola Al Aghbari, Executive Director of Sheba Youth Foundation, peace mediator and a member of Pact. Credit: Golden Media company

Lamia Al Eryani, Executive director for Yemen School of Peace foundation, during a 2022 conference held by UN women around involving Arab women peace builders. Credit: Yemen Peace School
KEY CHALLENGES IN MAKING YEMENI WOMEN'S VOICES HEARD

POOR INFORMATION FLOW

Women’s voices inside the country could barely be heard in recent years. INGOs and donor communities must provide more support to women by mobilizing more funds and removing all complicated funding procedures that hinder women’s active participation, and advocate for removing all the movement restrictions on women. Women’s political participation is considered a luxury by the conflict parties, and women are absent from the political scene in Yemen. This makes women and girls’ needs forgotten in an already forgotten crisis.

Yemeni women interviewed for this paper cited lack of access to information and information sharing across various agencies and levels as a key challenge (with information gaps among local civil society organizations, INGOs and the UN Special Envoy’s Office). Although many women’s networks have been established at the national and local levels, sharing information has always been a challenge. Often women participating in peace talks and/or who have other access to the conflict parties have not shared information with other women in political spaces, including at the local level – further excluding them from relevant platforms. This results in the marginalization of many rural women and further elite capture of the peace processes; local successes in peace negotiations are therefore not reflected in wider national peace initiatives.

Yemeni peace efforts have moved from individual towards networked initiatives (especially since...
2015), playing an important role in raising awareness of women, peace and security issues at local and national level. This has produced collective efforts in reducing the risks faced by women and generated new networks such as the ‘Mothers of Abductees Association’, the ‘Feminist Summit’, ‘Hadramout Women for Peace’ and others. These have a shared goal of ending the war and promoting peace, while demanding women’s participation in the peace process.

However, their efforts have remained scattered and inconsistent, with frequent information gaps between leading peacebuilders and those working at the community level. Information that is shared is often poorly contextualized or inconsistent – in part due to capacity challenges, but also to due to shrinking civic space and conflicting political agendas. A lack of proper information-sharing channels has often led to failure of communication between the elites and women’s organizations working in and with communities at the grassroots level.

**LACK OF A COHERENT NATIONAL STRATEGY**

All those interviewed for this paper called for an urgent and comprehensive strategy on women’s inclusion in peacebuilding. Although the National Dialogue Conference had over 135 outcomes that focused on women’s rights, the resulting NAP did not fully adhere to global gender justice frameworks, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), which was endorsed by but not complied with by the Yemeni government. Women interviewed for this paper concurred that the NAP did not undergo a proper civil society consultation that would have included women-led organizations. Activists’ efforts in proposing amendments to the NAP were often neglected.
Civil society organizations in Yemen were built by the efforts of Yemeni women. They are the ones who began the journey of advocacy in Yemen since the early 1960s. Having strong feminist networks will help the entire civil society in Yemen to rebuild itself.

Wameeth Shaker, gender activist and Executive Director of Itar Foundation for Development

**NATIONAL ACTION PLAN LACKS FOCUS ON ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS RISING**

Civil society organizations have dedicated tremendous effort to raising awareness on peacebuilding and conflict resolution and in peace mediation, and some have managed to include government bodies in their awareness raising since 2015. In Taiz, Marib and Hadramout, for example, women have been successfully negotiating with local authorities and tribal leaders on opening humanitarian corridors and reopening airports.

While disputes and conflicts over land ownership have increased and spread, women have played an important role in resolving these conflicts at the local level. They have done this voluntarily and without adequate donor and political support – often remaining invisible to the wider peace processes. The NAP did not include specific activities, clear indicators or strategies that focus on advocacy with the different allies on women’s inclusion and participation. This strategic gap represents another obstacle and reflects the unequal power relations within Yemeni and international support structures. Without clear, conflict-sensitive influencing strategies, it will be hard to make substantive and sustainable changes to the structural marginalization of women and progress on women’s rights in Yemen.
Yemeni women stated that peacebuilding activities and their impacts are much more visible in urban areas and major cities. More efforts are needed in rural areas, and activities need to engage marginalized groups such as internally displaced people, and communities such as the Muhamasheen (‘the marginalized ones’). Many interviewees indicated that there is a huge funding gap for peace interventions, as donors prioritize emergency projects. Women-led organizations have raised the alarm – warning that if their access to funding challenges persist, they will not be able to survive as organizations, and in three to five years many will be looking at closing their doors. The funding gap is compounded by the heavy restrictions imposed by the conflict parties, with many donors questioning organizations’ ability to operate under such restrictions – ironically, in some of the areas where they may be needed most. Yemeni women reported being left out of strategic funding conversations and believe that often INGOs and UN agencies are not prioritizing women-led organizations. While women’s rights are part of many workshop and meeting agendas, donors (including INGOs) take few actions to support women-led organizations.

"The international community needs to walk the talk. We are now struggling to survive. As women-led organizations we will be forced to close if funding gaps and the forced restriction on women’s spaces continue to increase, and we won’t be able to play a role in the peacebuilding process in Yemen."  
Antelaq Al Mutwakel, Executive Director of Youth Leadership Development Foundation
The women reported that social media campaigns often target the female staff of local and international organizations, accusing them of ‘trying to shift social norms’. As one interviewee said:

// I get invited to conferences and peace discussions but I refuse to participate to keep myself and my team safe, and to ensure the continuation of interventions for the people most in need. We are being labelled as a bad influence by these campaigns that threaten us as women and as female humanitarians. //

These digital assaults have impacted women’s access to national influencing, where women now often fear talking about peace and the importance of women’s participation in public spheres.

The recent movement restrictions in the north, where authorities increasingly require a Mahram (male family guardian) to accompany any female civil society worker travelling across governorates or outside the country, have also severely impacted women’s participation in public life and international peacebuilding efforts. At the local level, the restrictions make it much harder for women humanitarians to reach vulnerable women and girls in the most impacted communities. Some organizations have had to open sub-offices in Aden to be able to carry on with their projects – but there they have faced further restrictions and challenges and come under pressure from the government to move their headquarters from Sanaa to Aden.

Yemeni women indicated that women’s participation in peace talks has not been documented and promoted by local and international media platforms. Local media platforms were most often controlled by political parties (in pre-conflict times). Despite expectations, the media sector in Yemen struggled to develop after the 2011 Revolution. There have been initiatives by Yemeni women journalists to promote Yemeni women’s achievements, mainly through social media channels, but the initiatives were not properly funded or marketed by major media outlets, either locally or internationally.
The international community doesn’t fully recognize the power it has to contribute to strengthening and providing safe places for civil society organizations and women-led organizations. Everyone has turned their backs on women – especially the international community – and at this very critical time Yemen is facing.

Hind Al Eryani, Yemeni journalist and gender activist

LACK OF INVESTMENT IN WOMEN AND WOMEN-LED ORGANIZATIONS

Interviewees highlighted a lack of funding and support for talent development and growth of women’s rights organizations. These organizations are suffering from weak institutional systems, mainly in their financial and logistical systems; this impacts their access to donors and ability to fulfil donor compliance requirements in such high-risk contexts. Women also expressed a need for conflict resolution training, conflict sensitivity, humanitarian negotiation skills and exposure to global gender justice frameworks and best practice.

The interviewees expressed that the benefits of women’s participation in peace talks will only be realized when women can meaningfully participate in and be at the centre of the decision-making processes – with real opportunities to influence the outcomes. The women interviewed provided some key learnings from their experiences (see box).

Factors that contribute to women’s political inclusion:

- Clearly articulated proposals for peace, including 2021 the Road Map for Peace;
- Strong and organized alliances and initiatives;
- International support, including the presence of the UN Envoy in Yemen and diplomatic missions.

A project officer with Oxfam partner Al Tadhamon Foundation for Development during a distribution of livelihoods grants to female-headed households. Credit: Nada Mohammed

Ola Al Aghbari of the Sheba Youth Foundation is a local peace mediator and member of PACT and is pictured here during a training session for the humanitarian and resilience programme. Credit: Golden Media company
Factors that contribute to women’s political exclusion:

• Lack of political will at national and regional levels to recognize women’s roles and initiatives;
• Shift in international community’s orientation, focus and support;
• Poor civil society awareness and/or understanding of UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security;
• Funding shortfall in the Humanitarian Response Plan, especially in terms of support for women’s rights organizations and women-led peace initiatives;
• Deliberate restrictions on women, including social norms-driven mobility restrictions, limiting women’s participation in regional and national platforms.

Recommendations for meaningful participation of women in Yemen’s peace process

• The UN Security Council and member states, including Yemen, must press decision makers, including parties to the conflict and political parties, to provide space for women’s participation in the peace negotiations.
• The UN and other donors (including INGOs) should press Yemeni authorities to prioritize addressing exclusionary policies and practices related to women’s participation in peace processes and including women in UN and diplomatic delegation.
• The Ministry of Legal Affairs (MLA) and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MoSAL) should integrate UN Resolution 1325 in governmental institutions’ policies, procedures and ways of working, and conduct advocacy campaigns and awareness-raising activities to increase pressure on decision makers and
leaders. For example, with donor support, the ministries could conduct workshops to build employees’ capacity to integrate Women, Peace and Security into Yemeni laws.

- The UN and other donors should include core and related governmental bodies – MoSAL, Ministry of International Planning and Corporation (MoPIC), MLA and the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) in capacity-building programmes on women’s participation in peace processes, and focus on the required presence of women in these governmental institutions.

- MoSAL could establish a platform for civil society organizations working on women, peace and security, which could improve coordination with MoPIC and international humanitarian actors.

- The UN should work with stakeholders to engage in a new National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security with meaningful involvement of civil society organizations, including extensive consultations (especially with women’s rights and women-led organizations), alongside relevant government institutions, and allocate budget to implement the Plan, taking civil society recommendations into consideration.31

- The UN and donors (including INGOs) should work with local NGOs, women’s rights organizations and women-led organizations to engage de-facto authorities and the internationally recognized Yemen government, where feasible, in confidence-building measures to build trust, improve coordination and develop a shared understanding of how the Women, Peace and Security agenda can be implemented in the Yemeni context.

- Stakeholders should work to promote UN Resolution 1325, recognizing the importance of including women in their programmes and facilitating women’s freedom of movement and ability to carry out women’s empowerment projects. Meaningful representation of Yemeni women can help achieve a peace agreement and subsequent political and reconstruction processes that address the needs of wider society – tackling gender and other structural inequalities, maximizing the impact of development investments, and laying the foundations of a widely supported and stable state.
The UN and other relevant stakeholders (including the private sector) should invest more in encouraging media outlets to promote women’s participation in peace processes, including reflecting the women’s positive contribution (in Yemen and globally) to political and socio-economic dynamics leading up to, during and after peace processes.

The UN and other donors (including INGOs) should invest more in bespoke capacity building for women’s rights organizations and women-led organizations in conflict-sensitive ways, including on peace processes, conflict resolution, evidence-based and policy-driven research skills, local humanitarian and political leadership – improving local capacities for peace.

The quality and quantity of aid should be improved. Strengthen joint advocacy campaigns to protect and increase funding of women’s rights and women-led programming, especially peacebuilding activities – including informal and innovative peacebuilding efforts. The UN and other donors, including INGOs, must work to ease the requirements of their partnerships policies and procedures and to include women, peace and security programming in their annual planning.

Donors should guarantee women-led organizations access to flexible funding that is tailored to their needs on the ground rather than to donor requirements, allowing these organizations to continue their lifesaving humanitarian and conflict-resolution interventions.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) should ensure that the new Humanitarian Needs Overview should be prepared from a gender and peacebuilding perspective, and with a view to greater inclusion of women.

UN and INGO agencies should support an interactive platform to bring together the efforts of civil society organizations on women, peace and security issues – documenting and coordinating their work, and enabling shared learning. Yemeni civil society should be supported to reach a shared goal for all feminist stakeholders and alliances, strengthening existing women’s networks.

The UN and other donors (including INGOs) should work to improve communication channels across the Triple Nexus (humanitarian, development and peacebuilding sectors), e.g. with period events to support knowledge and experience exchange among civil society stakeholders.

The UN and other donors (including INGOs) should support Yemeni civil society in cross-regional learning, including learning from successful women’s networks and alliances (e.g. in Tunisia, Jordan and Iraq), as well providing multi-year, strategic support for regional feminist network building.

A NEW AND INCLUSIVE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

The UN and other donors (including INGOs) could convene workshops to rewrite the NAP, drawing participants from civil society organizations (particularly women’s rights and women-led organizations), formal and informal security forces, and relevant governmental institutions (MoSAL, MoPIC, MoLA and MoHR).

The authorities should validate the new NAP through a consultative process with a range of state and non-state stakeholders, engaging urban and rural communities across governorates. The relevant authorities and civil society organizations should be encouraged and supported to conduct monitoring and evaluation activities to observe implementation.
ENDNOTES

2. Ibid.
15. The National Dialogue Conference (March 2013 – January 2014) took place under the slogan: ‘With dialogue we are creating the future.’
26. Key challenges as expressed by Yemeni women interviewed for this paper (July – September 2022).