

FORUM:	Human Rights Council
ISSUE:	Measures for Enhancing Human Rights and Gender Equality in Yemen
STUDENT OFFICER:	Wonjun Son
POSITION:	Deputy Chair of HRC

The entire document must be in **Times New Romans** and **1.5 line spacing**, and the body paragraphs should have **12 size font**. All paragraphs must be **indented**, and there should be no spacing between paragraphs. You must include a **picture or graph** every page that is relevant to the information on the page and supplement them with captions (use text box).

The entire chair report should be approximately **1500-2000 words** (not including the works cited page).

Introduction

Yemen currently is situated in a severe humanitarian crisis, being situated in deep poverty and depriving its citizens of their human rights. Since the start of its civil war in 2014, Yemen has been suffering from numerous unlawful attacks and killings. This had led to uncountable deaths, internal displacement, food insecurity, grave violations for children, lack of medical infrastructure, and the denial of various other types of humanitarian rights. Among the many issues, gender inequality is also one of deep concern. With the insecurity in Yemen, gender inequalities were deepened as women became banned freedom. Even along the loss of freedom came high rates of gender-based violence and the inability to participate in the workforce. Such gender issues are making both economic and social situations worse in Yemen, and this highlights the need to address such issues to ensure the basic human rights of the people and restore gender equality in Yemen.

Background

After Yemen became unified into one nation in 1990, the power of Saleh and the Houthis began to clash. Since the 2000s, the Houthis attempted numerous rebellions against the Saleh government and finally succeeded in taking control in 2015. This caused the opposing parties like other states and even Saudi Arabia to attack the Houthis. With the continued conflict, a humanitarian ceasefire was agreed on by Saudi Arabia and the Houthis but was broken a year after by both parties. From then on, international and domestic attacks have continued. While international attacks saw a decline in 2023, other civilian attacks have continued unstopably until the present.



With the Houthi authorities taking over, the *mahram* requirement has been placed, banning women from moving and travelling without male guardians. Getting a written approval from the authorities under Houthi control became necessary for women to travel to other places in the country. This has made it hard for Yemeni women to work or gain access to different humanitarian services”, taking away their rights to freedom of movement, freedom of expression, health, and work. As of 2021, Yemen ranked 155 of 156 in the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index. Even other than this formal economic or social gap, women and girls have also been facing high rates of discrimination and violence.

Problems Raised

Unlawful Killings

One major issue also affecting other aspects of this humanitarian crisis is the numerous and spontaneous killings happening all over Yemen. In March 2023, the Houthi forces launched a drone attack to a field hospital. In April, the Houthi party again attacked civilians in their houses by firing shells. In July, an exchange attack between the government and Houthi again killed civilians. Like such, the conflict has included deliberate unlawful attacks, targeting homes, hospitals, schools, and markets, affecting many civilians. With continued attacks even in 2024, many innocent civilians have been losing their basic human right to live. These attacks further leave people with destroyed homes and food sources, placing them in a situation without their basic protections.

Gender Inequality and Violence

Gender inequality is especially serious in Yemen, with most women being deprived of their right to freedom. Women are unable to move around the country without male guardians or government consent. This has led Yemeni women’s participation in the workforce to be extremely low (6%), with little representation in decision making (4.1%). This has caused the socioeconomic gap between males and females to become large. Other than such issues, women and girls are victims of violence, most of which their male family members are the perpetrators. Furthermore, girls suffer from child marriage, which has seen a drastic increase since 2016, rising to 66% from 32% in 2017.

International Actions

UN Women Yemen

In 2014, UN Women started working for Yemen to promote women's rights and gender equality. They have been aiming to increase women's leadership, inclusion in peace processes, gender in peacebuilding in support of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

UNICEF Interventions

Since 2015, The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has implemented programs to protect and empower girls, focusing on education, health, and protection from violence. UNICEF has also been working to help girls and young women recover from violence and child marriages.

Key Players

United States of America

The United States Agency for International Development has implemented programs aimed at improving education, health care, and economic opportunities for women in Yemen. The USA has been funding over 5.9 billion dollars in humanitarian aid since the outbreak of the crisis in Yemen in 2015. USAID (United States Agency for International Development) has also been providing support to Yemen through partnerships with the United Nations.

Canada

Canadian aid has also focused on empowering women economically and socially, including support for women's leadership and participation in governance. Canada has also been providing funding over 15 million dollars since 2018 to support UN-led peace processes in Yemen.

Possible Solutions

Women Empowerment

Since women are underrepresented in the public processes and workforce in Yemen due to the restrictions put on by the Houthis, it is important to empower women by increasing their participation. The international community should find ways to help women get work opportunities through non-governmental organizations that women can participate in. Also, ways for women to work without physical travelling in the country can help more women get jobs without being prohibited by the authorities' principles.

International Enforcement

In order to cease unlawful killings, international cooperation should enforce stronger penalties for the violation of the basic human rights of civilians. The international community should mobilize



international pressure on parties involved in the conflict to adhere to international humanitarian law and cease unlawful killings.

Health and Education Support

To enhance access to healthcare and education for women and girls, it is essential to implement comprehensive, targeted programs that address both immediate needs and long-term empowerment. These initiatives should include widespread campaigns to increase awareness of reproductive health services, ensuring that women have the knowledge and resources to make informed decisions about their bodies and futures. Education programs should focus not only on basic literacy and numeracy but also on life skills and vocational training, which can help break the cycle of poverty, reduce gender-based violence, and promote economic independence. Furthermore, integrating gender-sensitive curricula in schools and offering scholarships can encourage girls to pursue higher education and professional careers, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and equitable society. The combination of these efforts can create a sustainable impact on the well-being and status of women and girls in Yemen.

Networking and Leadership

They are establishing networks designed to support women leaders and entrepreneurs, fostering an environment of peer support and collaboration. These networks not only offer a platform for sharing resources, knowledge, and opportunities but also play a crucial role in empowering women to amplify their voices in society. By connecting women with similar goals and challenges, these networks help them increase their influence in decision-making processes at various levels, from local communities to national governance. Moreover, these platforms can nurture future leaders, encouraging women to take on more significant roles in business and public life, further driving gender equality and economic development in Yemen.

Glossary

Gender Inequality

discrimination on the basis of sex or gender causing one sex or gender to be routinely privileged or prioritized over another.

Human Rights

rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status.

Humanitarian

a person devoted to or working for the health and happiness of other people

Sources – Works Cited in MLA format; **bold** the sources that are most important

"Yemen." *UN Women: Arab States*, UN Women, arabstates.unwomen.org/en/countries/yemen. Accessed 5 Aug. 2024.

"Gender Equality." *United Nations Development Programme*, United Nations Development Programme, www.undp.org/yemen/gender-equality. Accessed 5 Aug. 2024.

"Gender Equality." UNDP Yemen, United Nations Development Programme, <https://www.undp.org/yemen/gender-equality>. Accessed 15 Aug. 2024.

"Gender Considerations in Humanitarian Response in Yemen." ReliefWeb, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, <https://response.reliefweb.int/yemen/gender-considerations-humanitarian-response-yemen>. Accessed 15 Aug. 2024.

