



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of
Discrimination against Women**

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

Sixth periodic report of States parties

Yemen*

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* The present report is being issued without formal editing.
For the initial report submitted by the Government of Yemen, see CEDAW/C/5/Add.61 which was considered by the Committee at its twelfth session. For the second periodic report, see CEDAW/C/13/Add.24 which was considered by the Committee at its twelfth session. For the third periodic report, see CEDAW/C/YEM/3 which was considered by the Committee at its twelfth session. For the fourth periodic report, see CEDAW/C/YEM/4 which was considered by the Committee at its Exceptional session. For the fifth periodic report, see CEDAW/C/YEM/5 which was considered by the Committee at its Exceptional session.



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Introduction:

Yemen signed the Convention on Eliminating all forms of Discrimination Against Women in May 1984. Consequently, the Yemeni government presented its previous two national reports (number 4 and 5) on the level of implementing this convention at the exceptional United Nations assembly in August 2002.

This report is the sixth report in which the major Yemeni women achievements in the past four years are listed. The report also highlights the challenges and difficulties standing against full implementation of the national plans aiming at improving the status of women in fulfillment of the convention's requirements.

Behind the preparation of this report are the members of the Women National Committee and the committee's gender focal points at the various government bodies, as well as representatives from non governmental organizations, and specialized research and study centers. The preparation of this report was based on convention's report writing manual methodologies issued by the International Women's Rights Action Watch in the United States and the Youth and Women Affairs Department at the Commonwealth General Secretariat in London. The manual was translated and distributed by the regional United Nations Development Fund for Women office to be used as an important reference tool when writing national reports on the level of implementation. Moreover, the help of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia expert was used in training the report writing team at the initial stage of work.

It is worth mentioning that the Women National Committee, which is the government machinery concerned with women, has made the convention one of the most important goals of the National Strategy for Women's/Gender Development (2003-2005) and also of the updated strategy (2006-2015). The WNC worked on gender mainstreaming the components of this strategy in the General Development and Poverty Eradication Plan (2006-2010) to be translated into general development projects and programs. This has encouraged the WNC to start presenting gender sectoral budgets (gender budgeting).

In addition to targeting women in special programs such as political empowerment and fighting violence against women while continuing reform of the legal and legislative system to ensure full rights for women. Meanwhile work on advocacy and campaigning for women's issues will continue in order to change the attitudes and trends standing against women's rights, and to gain supporting attitudes regarding women's roles in the public and private spheres.

The report discusses many details including development of women and improving their status while eliminating the obstacles against them. This would take place starting with the legal and legislative reform to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women in the national laws so as to be in line with the Sharia jurisprudence and the Yemeni constitution and also to live up to the CEDAW articles. This is done through the legal amendments project adopted by the WNC in partnership with the civil society.

So far, five amendments have been achieved and the efforts are still on going for another 27 proposed amendments being forwarded to the Parliament by the Supreme Council for Women.

The report details what is being done to improve women's conditions regarding every article of the convention. Probably the most important action taken is the tentative acceptance of the quota system

to improve women's representation in decision making positions, increasing rate of girls' enrollment in basic education which reached 55 per cent, and to encourage them to continue education until high schools. There was also relative increase in girls' admission in technical and vocational institutes as well as in universities.

The number of girls who have been admitted into market aligned scientific fields such as technology, communication and information systems has increased and this will eventually lead to increasing women's percentage in the total labor market to 30 per cent from 22.8 per cent by 2010.

There are real efforts exerted to reduce maternal and infant mortality rates as national priorities. Great efforts are also exerted to improve conditions of rural women through reducing illiteracy, enhancing health care services, developing infrastructure and treating water problems and environmental protection. All of these issues are national priorities being focused on under the current national plan until 2010.

Despite the relative improvement on women's conditions since 2002, there are serious challenges and difficulties standing against satisfactory achievement of the aims and objectives. This demands strong networking between government, civil society and donors to synergize efforts and improve performance. The networking is a visible part of the National Strategy for Women's Development defined in the coming five years because this strategy represents a common platform for real coordination and partnership leading to great realizations in women's issues on the short and medium terms.

Before concluding, we must not forget to thank the United Nations Development Program (UNDP-Yemen), the United Nations Population Fund and to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, who provided us with technical and financial support to prepare this report. We would like to also thank all government bodies, the Yemeni Women Union and other civil society organizations that facilitated access to valuable data and information.

Lastly thanks are extended to the working team behind the preparation of this report who enthusiastically shouldered this responsibility, hoping that we were successful in providing an objective and honest picture of Yemeni women's reality. We commit ourselves to further work in this path, giving all that we can to achieve the aspired goals for Yemeni women's development and prosperity.

Articles (1-4)

Legislative measures, policies and strategies

1.1 In accordance with article (2) of the convention, Yemeni government has taken certain measures to eliminate discriminative legislations in national laws either through issuing new laws or amending existing ones. The legislative measures which were amended during the period (2002-2006) to endorse women's rights are as follows:

Child Rights Law No. (45) for year 2002: in this law, rights of a child since being a fetus and until 18 years of age have been stipulated. This is one of the important steps defining women's rights since childhood.

Law No. (24) for year (2003): an article was added to the Nationality Law No. (6) for 1990, where an additional article (10) stated: (if a Yemeni woman married to a foreigner had children from her foreign husband and has become the guardian and provider for her children either because of being divorced, widowed or abandoned or any reason for a duration no less than one year, then the children are to be treated as Yemenis in all respects so long as they are with their mother. Children who reach adulthood have unconditional right to choose between their parents nationalities).

Law No. (26) for year (2003): articulating the amendment of article No. (27) in law (48) for year 1991 about prisons regulations. The new article states: (imprisoned pregnant women should be provided with adequate health and medical care before, during and after delivery according to instructions of a competent authority and the international charter. Concerned authority must provide the pregnant or nursing inmates with specified nutrition, and in all cases women of these categories are excused from disciplinary measures as per this article.

Labor Code No. (25) for year (2003): through adding a repeated statement to articles of Law No. (5) for year 1995 regarding labor. Repeated article No. (45) states: (public and private institutions that employ 50 or more female workers in the same establishment must provide a nursery to accommodate the employees children. The nursery must meet the conditions and environment defined by a minister's decree).

Civil Status and Civil Record Law No. (23) for year (2003): this law states the amending of articles (21, 47, 61 & 62). Article number (21) stipulates that (people entrusted to report a delivery of a child) are:

- a) A parent
- b) Male adult relatives, then adult female relatives and closest of kin
- c) Hospitals' managers, maternal care authorities, and authorities of prisons, quarantines and other places where child delivery takes place.

The responsibility of reporting a child birth of any of the mentioned categories does not apply unless the category prior to that fails to report the birth for any reason. Reporting a child birth is not accepted from any person outside the mentioned categories. In any case, the medical help delivering the baby has the responsibility of informing the civil status authorities, within the time frame mentioned in the child birth article No. (20), of the delivery taking place. Yet this is not enough, and the event must be registered in the concerned records by those responsible. This article was before the amendment gave the right of reporting the birth to the father only and so in the amendment the mother also gained the right to do so.

Law No. (20) for year (2004): through ratifying the optional protocol of the Child Right Convention on child trafficking, prostitution, using children in pornography and pornographic displays.

1.2 The Women National Committee is still advocating to amend many other discriminative articles in the laws:

- Personal Status Law No. (20) for year 1992
- Crime and Penalty Law No. (120 for year (1994)

- Elections and Referendum Law No. (13) for year (2001)
- Insurance and Pensions Law No. (25) for year (1991) and its amendments
- Social Security Law No. (31) for year (1996)
- Nationality Law No. (6) for year 1990 and its amendments
- Child Rights Law No. (45) for year (2002)
- Republican Decree number (4) for year (1996) to establish the Supreme Institute for Physical and Sport Education
- Labor Code No. (5) for year (1995)
- Civil Service Law No.(19) for year (1991) and its executive charter
- General Law for Education No. (45) for year (1992)
- Political Parties and Political Organizations Law No. (66) for year (1991)
- Prisons Law No. (48) for year (1991)
- Republican Decree number (4) for year (1994) about the executive charter legislating foreigners' entrance and residence
- Police Institution Law No. (15) for year (2000)

1.3 A committee was formed by the cabinet according to Ministerial Decree No. (94) for year (2005). The committee is composed of the Minister of Legal Affairs, the Minister of Human Rights and the Chairperson of WNC to review the above mentioned laws.

1.4 Women have the right to complain to the judiciary system in case their rights have been violated. Women have the right to complain to the state's instruments directly or indirectly according to articles Nos. (51) and (153) of the constitution. The highest judiciary body, which is the Supreme Court, is responsible of reviewing the complaints about unconstitutional laws, legislations and executive charters. The Supreme Court includes a constitution unit solely responsible for reviewing laws and judging their alignment with the constitution. The basic channels for eliminating injustice against women are the courts, with their three levels: primary, appeal and supreme. There are no specialized courts regarding personal status issues but there is a specialized judge in the primary court, a section for personal status cases in the appeal court and a full department for personal status issues in the Supreme Court. There are specialized juvenile courts as well as attorneys in nine governorates around the country. There are labor committees concerned with labor issues, the decision of these committees is recognized by the judiciary system and is considered in equal status to primary court statements, which could be appealed. The appeal takes place at the labor section at the Appeal Court.

There are certain bodies and instruments responsible for receiving and reviewing complaints such as:

- a) Complaints and Grievance Department at the Presidential Office
- b) Complaints and Grievance General Department at the Ministry of Human Rights

- c) General Department for Women Affairs and Protection of Child Rights at the Ministry of Interior
- d) General Complaints Department at the Ministry of Justice.

1.5 A number of government instruments and bodies supervise the implementation of the CEDAW:

Women National Committee, which considers the convention one of its working references. This is manifested in a main goal of the National Strategy for Women/Gender Development. Two surveys were also carried out reviewing all national laws in light of the Islamic jurisprudence and the Yemeni constitution as well as the CEDAW. Some amendments were approved and new articles were added in the 6 articles, mentioned previously. There are still 27 articles which have been forwarded by the cabinet to the Ministry of Legal Affairs for review and rephrasing before being forwarded to the Parliament (the legislative power). In addition to the WNC there are other parties concerned with the implementation of the convention and these are:

- General Department for Conventions, Treaties and International Cooperation at the Ministry of Justice.
- General Department for Conventions and External Agreements at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- General Department for Conventions and Agreements at the Ministry of Legal Affairs.

National policies incorporating the convention's principles and aim at improving women's conditions

In addition to the legal amendments that took place earlier and the current projects for further amendments, interest in improving the status of women in Yemen has been the focus of many national and sectoral policies and strategies. In this context one can mention two kinds of strategies: policies and strategies targeting women and gender development directly, and the other kind of policies takes women and gender issues as cross cutting issues within other general and sectoral strategies.

2.1 Women strategies:

National Strategy for Women/Gender Development (2003-2005): the first objective of this strategy supports the country's commitment to the CEDAW and Beijing Approach, as well as the updated National Strategy for Women/Gender Development (2006-2015). The later strategy was updated according to the Millennium Development Goals and the national priorities defined by the Yemeni government to enhance life standards . The WNC worked endlessly to present women's needs and highlight the gender gap and to recommend measures to reduce it.

- National Strategy for Working Women (2001-2011) which focuses on developing and enhancing women's skills and integrating working women in the labor market.
- Gender Strategy in Agriculture Development and Food Security (2006-2010): this strategy focuses on rural women's issues and improving their conditions. The General Department for Rural Women at the Ministry of Agriculture strived to integrate this strategy in the ministry's plans and projects.
- Strategy for Developing Women's Health (2006-2010): this strategy was issued by the General Department for Women's Development at the Ministry of Health and Population . The strategy

emphasizes on reproductive and women's health targeting the youth and young generations. It also concentrates on women working in the health sector and their issues and difficulties they face in their work and how to overcome them.

2.2 General and sectoral strategies:

National Strategy for Poverty Reduction PRS (2003-2005):

This strategy aimed to reducing poverty through a number of policies and interrelated activities. The PRS identified the challenges Yemen faces of which the most important is the high growth rate (3.5 per cent) considering the limited resources. In order to reduce the difficulties of adjusting to the structural reform, a policy for social support was approved (through a Presidential Decree) to financially support (200,000) poor families. In March 1995 the Social Safety Net was established. This network is composed of different bodies, funds and programs to reduce the direct effects of the adaptation policies of the economic reforms: (the Social Care Fund, the Social Fund for Development, the Fund to promote Agricultural and Fish Production, General Work's project, Society Development program, Productive Families program, Disability project and the Rural Development programs). The objectives of the social safety net are:

- a) Reducing living burdens on the poor.
- b) Providing job opportunities for the unemployed and those who can be productive.
- c) Widening the popular participation in development.
- d) Increasing the social cooperation between people.

Women are targeted by these programs in equal or at least proximate numbers to men. For example, the number of beneficiaries from the social care fund until end of 2005 was 746,380 people of which 361,430 were women.

Socio-economic Development Plan (2006-2010):

This is a plan based on the millennium development goals. Gender policies have been integrated in this plan focusing on increasing girls enrollment in schools, reducing maternal mortality rate, increasing women's presence in the labor market, improving the conditions of rural women and increasing their representation in decision making positions. Improving the legislative system to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women is also included in the plan.

Basic Education Strategy (2003-2015):

This strategy dedicated a component to girls' education. More details in article No.(10).

National Population Strategy (2001-2025):

This is composed of three documents: the first points to the challenges and difficulties and the huge gap between the stated legislations and the actual practices which prevents women from enjoying their legal and legislative rights.

The second document is a document of principles. It is based on the international and regional treaties and agreements Yemen has adopted in line with the principles of the Yemeni constitution. Of these agreements is the CEDAW. The 10th articles of the second document emphasizes on achieving justice

between men and women in civil, political and legislative duties and rights. It also emphasizes on empowering women to achieve all their potentials and to endorse women's participation in sustainable development and in the decision or policy making at all stages. It also focuses on women's participation in all income generating activities and also focuses on women's work, health, technology awareness and spreading population education. The document encourages men to live up to their productive role and to take responsibility in the family. It strives to endorse justice and equality values among the youth of both sexes.

The third document which is the population working program (2001-2005) is complementary to the population policy. This document indicated the gender gap in education, work and other social services. It reviewed the laws, systems and traditions contradicting with the principles of equality and justice. The document advocates for the following:

- Achieving increasing education enrollment for girls in the basic, secondary and university levels.
- Encouraging female education in the vocational and technical sectors.
- Broadening literacy activities and opening literacy classes for old illiterate women in their neighborhoods.
- Reducing girls' education fees and exempting the poor girls especially in rural areas.
- Revising the laws, charters and systems that stand against women's access to services, opportunities and resources. And supporting women to avail their rights without being discriminated against.
- Working on fighting all forms of discrimination against women and small girls in the family and society.
- To continuously work on realizing equity and equality between men and women when preparing and executing plans and development programs.
- To continuously direct media tools in phrasing plans and awareness messages to change the negative attitudes and trends which do not support equity and justice.

3.1 Disabled women

The disabled group, especially the females are of the neediest groups despite the absence of sufficient data or accurate statistics on the number and type of disability of handicapped women or disabled people generally. In this context, a fund for care and rehabilitation of the disabled has been established according to Law No. (2) for year (2002) and its executive charter was issued in Law No. (59) for year (2004). The fund aims to:

- Providing stable financial resources for the fund, to support various projects for rehabilitating the disabled.
- Funding projects and activities to care and rehabilitate the disabled.
- Investing the fund's money in projects that would generate profit for the disabled.
- Contribute to funding activities that aim at the welfare of the disabled community according to articles (5, 6 & 8) of the Disabled Care and Rehabilitation Law.

- Coordinating with other funds working in the social security network, to provide various needs for the disabled and supporting the fund's activities.

3.2 The following training and rehabilitation services have been provided to disabled women in the period between (2002-2005):

- Social, cultural and entertainment rehabilitation for 18,650 disabled females. Educational rehabilitation for 7,618 disabled females and vocational training of 4,450 disabled females as well as social rehabilitation for 1,500 disabled females. Social care services have been provided for those females between 2002 and 2005.

Table No. (1)
Number of disabled women who received care and services
in the period (2002-2005)

Category	Total
1- Physical disability	2,244
2- Sense disability	1,492
3- Mental and psychological disability	929
Total	4,665

* Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Disability Care and Rehabilitation Center, Social Care report. (Source: annual reports 2005, Disability Care Fund affiliated to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs).

- The Social Fund for Development also carries out rehabilitation programs for the disabled. It also carries out institutional support program for the organizations working with the disabled such as education and the special tools for educating disabled people. Vocational training is also provided and construction projects that aim at improving the conditions of the disability homes.

It is worth mentioning that the disability fund services do not reach all disabled females around the republic because they can not reach the fund to avail the support or because they don't know of the aid or there isn't a branch in their provinces. It is recommended to activate the fund's role because since its establishment since 2002 it used only 15 per cent of its budget in 2005 because the fund does not have comprehensive mechanisms to reach the target group.

In addition to the fact that disabled females suffer from a double disability: being females and they are disabled. This gets reflected on their private and public lives and how the society views them. In addition to the fact that most disabled women are poor. This is why the state prepared and issued projects and laws regarding disabled people in order to support integrating them in the society and facilitating their living and their access to services such as education, health care or work...etc.; some of these legislations are the following:

- a) Law no. (61) for year 1999 about disability care which guaranteed all constitutional rights for the disabled people and also to establish institutions, establishment and service centers to provide services to the disabled community. Article No. (8)

mentions free medical care for the disabled people and early intervention to limit the severity of the disability.

Article No. (10) states that the concerned authorities must make the structures, and architecture disability friendly when planning for new establishments and constructions. Article (19) obliges state offices whether in the public or mixed sector to dedicate 5 per cent of the vacancies to qualified disabled people. The disabled people are exempted of the health and medical examination fees.

- b) Prime Minister Decree Number (284) for year 2002 about the executive charter for Law No. (61) of year 1999 about disability care, it mentions in its fourth section about employing the disabled, the fifth section about supporting them and the sixth section on their rights.
- c) Law No. (2) for year 2002 about the Disability Care Fund was issued and is considered the first of its kind regionally. The fund has provided stable financial resources for the various projects for care, rehabilitation and development of the disabled community.
- d) The structural decree and the executive charter of the fund was issued in year 2002 to define the policy, objectives and general directions and also establishment of new branches as much as possible in the country.
- e) Minister of Education's Decree No. (407) for year 1999 which allows disabled students to enroll in the schools closest to their homes and to exempt them from fees in the country.

As for implementing these laws and legislations in reality, the extent of implementation during the period (2002-2005) is as follows:

Table No. (2) Shows the nature of rehabilitation disabled Yemenis receive and the number of beneficiaries:

Table (2)

Rehabilitation type	Number
Social cultural and entertaining	18,650
Educational	7,618
Vocational	4,450
Societal	1,500
Total	32,218

* Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Disability Care Fund, Social Care Department-report.

The Social Fund for Development also has rehabilitation programs targeting disability, especially in relation to institutionalization, education, vocational training and infrastructure.

Table (3) describes the programs targeting disabled people during (1997-2003):

Table (3)

Sector	Projects No.	Investment in \$	No. of beneficiaries	Per cent of total investment
Education	43	3,035,646	18,557	58 %
Capacity and institutional building	41	352,187	306	7 %
Physical rehabilitation	5	541,569	24,000	10 %
Vocational training	11	901,290	1,242	17 %
Policy and strategic support	2	36,500		1 %
Total	105	5,258,807	87,212	100 %

* Rehabilitation and Development of Disabled People, Social Fund for Development, May 2004.

Table No. (4) Shows the health services provided to the disabled during (2002-2004):

Table (4)

Description		2002	2003	2004	Total
Operations	Major	26	78	444	804
	Minor		63	193	
Medicines	Continuous	42	348	1,052	2,702
	Temporary		293	967	
Physical therapy		4	73	44	121
Treatment of side diseases		159			159
Diagnostic tests			223	1,157	1,380
Total		231	1,078	3,857	5,166

* Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Disability Fund, Social Care Department- report.

Table No. (5) Describes the kind aid provided to people with disabilities during (2002-2004):

Table (5)

Aid	2002	2003	2004	Total
Wheel chair	138	341	488	967
Hearing aids	13	152	634	799
Medical spectacles	7	20	133	160
Clutches	6	30	45	81
Nero			47	47
Medical pillows and matrices		2	21	23
Artificial limbs			39	39
Special medial equipments		2	2	4
Total	167	561	1,465	2,193

* Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Disability Fund, Social Care Department- report.

4.1 Measures to speed equality between men and women:

Following article number (4) of the convention, women's movement in Yemen proposed taking affirmative action through positive discrimination of the quota system, improving women's representation in the various state elected (Parliament and local councils) and non elected (Shoura Council, Supreme Committee of Elections & Government) decision making positions for a minimum of 30 per cent. Political parties responded tentatively to the women movement's demands via increasing the number of women in the parties' top and middle leadership bodies and promised to provide better chances for women in the elections taking place in September 2006. Despite that, the challenges standing against women's political participation are big because Yemen is a country dominated by a conservative value system. Hence, the quota system will remain a strategic demand of the women movement in Yemen.

Article (5)

Cultural and traditional practices hindering women's development in the society

5.1 These are the prevalent negative traditions and social practices in the absence of community support to overcome them. The family upbringing is based on social concepts regarding women's role in the family. Some families with low education or awareness adopt practices

and attitudes that demean women's status and value. These practices extend to the schools, clubs and work place and stand against women's participation in development decision making along with personal decisions in family life. This is so because women are dominated by the males in their lives, and a male dominating society. There are inherited cultural norms that emphasize that a woman is a secondary factor that should not be counted on. Even the fact that there are many responsibilities and burdens the women shoulders within the house and outside, does not give the woman in such societies any leadership authorities or ability to make decisions. In the male dominated society there is no interest in women's role in the society.

5.2 Prominent phenomena affecting women's participation:

- Poverty in Yemen is one of the most influential factors, because Yemen is one of the least development countries in the world, and is characterized with a traditional typical socio-economic infrastructure. Women are affected by poverty more severely than men because they lack skills and are mostly illiterate and do not have access to educational or training establishments. In the urban areas, female illiteracy reached (40 per cent) while they reach (74 per cent) in the suburbs. (Source: Women Development Strategy).
- Low or non existent access of women to resources or to controlling resources.
- Early marriage especially in the rural areas and high dropout rate of girls from education.

5.3 The government aims to change the typical stereotype cultural concepts hindering women's development. The government focuses on education as a corner stone for empowerment and development of women, and this takes place through adhering to the Millennium Development Goals especially the goal relating to education (education for all) until 2015.

5.4 The gender role between men and women in the Yemeni society depends on the cultural norms and traditions. One of the socially favored roles for women is the reproductive role, as for the economic participation of women it is still not recognized as it does not exceed (22.8 per cent) versus (69.2 per cent) for men. Even so, women's economic participation is limited to the traditional sectors such as agriculture and handicrafts, and most women work in the informal sector according to the updated Women Development Strategy. The average income of families headed by women is less than one third of that headed by men. According to the 1999 household survey, women form 49.9 per cent of the total manpower, and the percentage of females among the non economically active population is (72.1 per cent) while women's percentage in the workforce is (22.8 per cent) (Women Development Strategy 2006–2015).

5.5 One of the most important reasons for women's low contribution in the workforce is the gender stereotyping for women's work and limiting women's responsibilities to domestic duties. Other factors are related to high illiteracy rates among women and low skills and inadequate training. All this shadows women's work and participation in the high management positions in the economic, social, cultures and political establishment, which was reported by the Ministry of Planning to be 4.4 per cent of the total positions.

5.6 Measures taken to change the social and cultural stereotyping:

The national strategies and policies produced in the last four years integrated gender as one of its components. This step shows the acceptance and commitment to the gender approach as one of the development approaches. Among those policies is the Women Development Strategy which calls for changing the stereotyping of women's image in media and the importance of delivering a political and media message supporting women's issues in addition to the population strategies mentioned above.

5.7 Expected roles of men and women:

Article No. (26) of the Yemeni Constitution views the family to be the basic unit of the society and is built on faith, morals and patriotism. What is expected of women and men is to equally participate in building the family and the society in all its fields. The state adopted policies endorse this concept through concentrated awareness and educational campaigns socially and culturally. Of the most important goals in those strategies is equity and justice between both men and women , empowering women economically, socially and politically, eliminating all forms of violence against women, and there has been visible improvement in the educational syllabus for schools to overcome the traditional and typical roles of women and to emphasize on the partnership between men and women on the family and society levels.

5.8 Social and cultural child care responsibility:

This responsibility is generally left to women while men work outside and are considered the bread winners, although they contribute to the raising of children to a lesser degree than women. There has been a gradual development in this regard especially in the urban areas as fathers and mothers alternatively care for their children and their financial requirements. The state provides some support in the case of losing the family's financial supporter because of natural reasons like death, or social reasons like divorce or compulsory reasons such as imprisonment as per the table below:

Table No. (6) Showing the approved cases in the social insurance category in the fourth quarter of year 2005 in the country:

Table (6)

Orphans		Widowed mother		Divorced mother		Missing supporter		Jailed supporter		Just out of prison		Total	
No. of cases	Beneficiaries	No. of cases	Beneficiaries	No. of cases	Beneficiaries	No. of cases	Beneficiaries	No. of cases	Beneficiaries	No. of cases	Beneficiaries	No. of cases	Beneficiaries
22953	88,278	187,345	948,144	18,303	75,908	11,313	58,605	1,611	8,997	101	502	329,815	1,092,245

- Despite this, the number of women working outside home and contributing to the house income in addition to their domestic duties which they usually do without help from the men is increasing. Some well off women use servants to accomplish the domestic chores.
- There is a group of women, about 13.8 per cent of the women supporting families, work inside and outside the house.

5.9 Juveniles care services:

- The state has taken interest in this field through establishing a judiciary system for underage criminals. Nine juvenile courts have been established according to Republican Decree No. (28) for year 2003 in the following governorates: (Sana'a, Aden, Taiz, Ibb, Hudaidah, Hadramout, Dhamar, Hajja, Abyan).

Four of these courts have been headed by women and there are nine juvenile attorneys where there are three female deputy attorneys. There is a great support for females working in the juvenile courts because the society feels women are more capable in dealing with the youth and youngsters.

- There are seven juvenile care centers five for boys and two for girls. Also, currently a juvenile section for the underage inmates is being constructed in the central prison where all educational, training, rehabilitation and entertainment services are provided for juveniles who are serving sentences and can not be placed in the juveniles care centers. Also two general departments have been established in the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Interior to care for the underage children in custody since their arrests in the police centers and until they reach the social care centers. These two departments work on removing minors from the prisons. The General Department for Women's Affairs and Protection of Child Rights at the Ministry of Justice receives and reviews any complaints by the parents or guardians or lawyers about violations of rights.
- A network for children in dispute with the law was established and includes in its membership several government bodies such as ministries of Justice, Interior, Human rights, Social Affairs and the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood. The network includes a group of civil society organizations and international organizations concerned with children such as UNICEF and Rada Barnen. This network exerted many efforts to improve the status of juveniles in Yemen, they directly struggled to combat child trafficking through joint cooperation between the Yemeni government and UNICEF as follows:
 - Field research on the problem which gave initial indicators and came out with a number of recommendations to overcome child trafficking. The programs to limit this problem took place in many domains:
 - a. Media and awareness
 - b. Developing legislations and national laws or amending them in line with the International Convention for Child Rights and international agreements and treaties.
 - c. Improving and heightening security and judiciary measures by the Ministry of Interior's instruments and its security points in boarder cities.
 - d. Protection and psychiatric care and social rehabilitation for child trafficking victims. A center for receiving such children was established in the boarder city of Haradh.
 - e. Training and capacity building for the personnel working in the fight against child trafficking field.
 - f. Monitoring and reporting center was established to document and report child trafficking cases to the Ministry of Human Rights.

Article (6)

Female trafficking and prostitution

6.1 In previous reports mention was made regarding the social attitude towards prostitution in Yemen and the legislative texts which illegalize this action. In the second chapter of the child's law it is stated that children must be protected against all types of economic or sexual exploitation. Article

No. (147) of the same law states: “The state should protect the child from all types of economic and sexual exploitations and the state must take strong measures to protect children from:

- Practicing immoral activities.
- Being used in prostitution or any illegal practices.

There is a law to amend two articles in the Crime and Penalty Law No. (12) for year 1994 about intensifying the prostitution penalty. The project of an amendment text of article (279) states: imprisonment for duration no longer than 10 years is the punishment for anyone who encourages prostitution. If the crime took place based on this provocation then the sentence reaches 15 years. In the case the prostitute is under 15 years of age or prostitution is used as a source of income by the provoker, then the provoker deserves a sentence no more than 18 years. In the case the two situations are true, then the provoker is imprisoned for a duration no more than 20 years. The WNC came forward with this recommended amendment based on article no. 6 of the CEDAW.

6.2 All the legal statements mentioned in the Crime and Penalty Law and the Punishment Measures Law regarding rape crimes, prostitution are to be implemented in real life equally on males and females. Rape stated in article (269) is applied on prostitutes and other women, because the law requires forceful intercourse for the punishment to be valid.

The Yemeni law also punishes any mediator who facilitates prostitution. Article (279) states: he/she is punished with a sentence of no more than 3 years if encouraging prostitution).

The Parliament sessions discussed tourist marriage or the temporary marriage of Yemeni girls to non Yemenis which has been common in the last three years because of the large number of male tourists coming to the country and choose to marry girls generally from poor families. A committee made from Islamic jurisprudence legislators, justice and endowment called strongly for controlling this negative phenomenon for the sake of the welfare of the Yemeni family. The committee called for reviewing the Personal Status Law and to add articles in it to provide legal protection for the family and respecting the holy bond of marriage. The suggestion is that the marriage does not take place unless basic insurances are being made to guarantee the will to continue in this marriage according to the Islamic jurisprudence.

Article (7)

Political and public life

The Yemeni constitution guarantees women’s right to voting and being nominated in elections. Since 2001 and until now the representation of women in the various elections as a candidate and a voter has varied. The number of registered voters has increased and reached more than 3 millions and four thousand voter at a percentage of (43 per cent) of the total registered voters, while there was a noticeable decline in the number of female candidates and of the winners. This has driven women movement to strongly demand application of the quota system no less than 30 per cent in the elected and non elected state bodies.

The President of the Republic had encouraged the political parties not to use women as voters but to activate their participation in the political life. He called for the quota system and increasing women’s percentages in decision making positions saying that this is a must and the only choice is to redeem

the imbalances in women's representation to overcome the problems in the social values system that stand against women's contribution to the public life, especially politics. To rectify the historical accumulation of negative behaviors and practices that alienated women through centuries would need decades of awareness activities and evolution to change the society's value system. Therefore this strategic demand (the quota) has been advocated by women who called on political authorities and human right activists to support it through the coordination committee created for this purpose.

7.1 Participation in the elections Women's representation in elected bodies: Parliament:

Table (7)
**Comparing the number of registered female voters and female candidates
in the Parliament in three electoral rounds**

Electoral round	Registered voters		Total	per cent of females	Candidates		
	males	Females			Female candidates	Males + females	Percentage
1993	2,209,944	478,379	2,688,323	18	42	3,166	1.3 %
1997	3,364,723	1,304,550	4,669,273	28	19	1,331	1.4 %
2003	5,482,793	3,414,640	8,097,433	42	11	1,396	8 %

Source: annual report 2004 on women conditions (WNC).

The political parties made total use of women's votes in a way more like exploitation without providing women any support as candidates. Of the very limited number of candidates (11 women) only five had been affiliated to the political parties while 6 were independent and non of the 11 candidates won.

Table No. (8) describes female votes collected by political parties for their male candidates, despite that the tentative acceptance of the political parties of the quota system indicates transition in the attitudes and will be proved in the coming elections.¹

¹ The presidential and local council elections passed and the results were out at the end of September where only 33 women won in the local councils 30 of them were from political parties as to 29 from the GPC and one from the YSP and 3 independents.

Table (8)
Number of female votes gained by the political parties in 2003

Political parties	Male votes		Female votes		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
GPC	1,977,276	59.09 %	1,487,440	60.19 %	3,464,716	57.78 %
YSP	177,454	5.03 %	114,205	4.62 %	291,659	4.86 %
Islah	815,762	23.14 %	534,012	21.61 %	1,349,774	22.51 %
Nasserite	66,574	1.88 %	43,146	1.74 %	109,720	1.38 %
Total votes for the 4 parties	30,337,066		2,178,803		5,215,869	
Total votes	3,524,964	58.78 %	2,471,085	41.21 %	5,996,049	100 %

Source: Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum.

Local Councils:

The number of candidates in the local council elections that took place in February 2001 was 11 females at the governorate level of which only two females won and 121 female candidates on the district levels of which only 34 won.

Table (9)

Number of electoral center 2025	Number of registered voters		Total	Number of actual voters		Total
	males	females		males	females	
	3,918,430	1,703,380		5,621,810	171,826	
Governorate council	Number of candidates		Total	Number of winners		Total
	males	females		males	Females	
	21,214	11		21,225	417	
District council	7,284	121	7,405	6,497	34	6,531

Source: Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum.

Representation in non-elected bodies:

Shoura Council:

There are only two women in the Shoura Council out of 109 members which leads to a percentage of (1.83 per cent) and this is hardly a participation considering that the membership is based on appointment, an issue which needs reviewing.

Supreme Commission on Elections and Referendum (SCER):

The SCER is made of seven members appointed by the President according to a proposal presented by the Parliament. This year, discussions took place between the political powers in authority and the opposition to increase two members into the commission's body of which non is a women. Keeping in mind that the first commission was formed in 1993 and contained one woman, yet in a positive development a General Department for Women was established in 2005.

Women's representation in the government and judiciary:

Despite the fact that there are two women in the recent government structure in February 2006, yet women's representation in many power positions and decision making positions is very low. The gap between men and women is large although when writing this report there was an appointment of one female judge in the Supreme Court.

Table (10) female representation in judiciary and government

Political and managerial position	Males	Females	Percentage
Government	35	2	2.82 %
Ambassadors	57	1	1.75 %
Commissioned ministers	108	2	1.82 %
Deputy ministers	27	3	7.9 %
General managers	83	11	11.7 %
Judges	1200	32	1.65 %

Source: Annual report on Status of Women 2004, WNC Sana'a.

Civil Society Organizations:

- There has been an increase in the number of civil society organizations in the past few years that they have reached 4000 organizations of which 200 specialized in women, family and childhood. Some organizations became renowned for their work in human rights and carry on many activities in community economic, social, political and civil awareness. This increase is a reaction to article (58) of the constitution: (citizens all around the republic has the right – without violating the constitution – to organize themselves professionally, politically and syndicate wise. They have the right – and the state ensures this right - to create scientific, cultural, social organizations and national unions serving the principles of the constitutions.
- Of those organizations is Yemeni Women Union, Sisters Arab Forum for Human Rights, Islah Charity, Yemeni Monitor for Human Rights, Human Rights Information and Training Center, Women's Research and Training Forum, Al-Tahadi Association for Physically Disabled Women, Al-Saleh Foundation, and Yemeni Family Care Association.
- Of the main activities of those organizations to overcome discrimination against women are:

- Identifying poor people's requirements to achieve the millennium development goals and participation in development plans.
- Providing credits for poor women (facilitated credits for small projects).
- Distributing food stuff on the poor, supporting poor students, prisoners care, and care for orphans and supporting marginalized communities.
- Providing legal assistance for the female prisoners and those in need for legal assistance.
- Political and civil rights awareness for women.
- Endorsing international protection mechanisms and issuing shadow reports.
- Advocacy and lobbying for amending discriminative laws and legislations against women such as the elections law, local authority, personal status, and for human rights issues.
- Training and rehabilitation and training on elections (parliamentary 2003, local council 2006).
- Training and educating youth from both sexes about human right issues.
- Educating the Yemeni society about risks of early marriage and its psychological, health, educational and economic dangers on Yemeni girls.
- Educating the society about the importance of girl's education.

And other activities not mentioned above.

Civil society organizations are concentrated in the urban areas except for a few minorities in the rural areas where services are provided to those communities such as Yemeni Women Union, whose centers spread across 21 governorates in the republic, in addition to a branch in Soqatra island (175 centers overall in the districts and villages). These organizations operate according to the Public Organizations and Societies Law No. (1) for the year 2001. Since then, associations have been established and operating according to this law. There are mechanisms and ways for coordination between government tools concerned with women and civil society organizations which lead to forming two networks as follows:

Yemeni Network for fighting violence against women (SHIMA). Of its main goals is to fight violence against women, and it includes in its membership the WNC, seven branches of the Yemeni Women Union, and 6 civil society organizations. SHIMA started operating in 2001.

The second network is civil society organizations network working in monitoring and evaluating the Poverty Reduction Program. This includes 35 civil societies and is headed by the Yemeni Women's Union.

Despite that, women's participation in civil society organizations is limited. A survey on registered organizations with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs took place in 2001 showed that women's participation in civil society is still limited.

Women in syndicates:

The number of syndicate leadership in various occupations has reached 350 female leaders among the total number of leaderships. In the syndicate committees the number of various working sectors reached 2453. Women represent 15 per cent of the total syndicate members in the republic. The reason for this low percentage, for an example, is the low participation of women in some of the grand economic sectors such as the oil sector, minerals building and construction, transportation, communication, power, water and environment. Women's presence is more visible in the light industries such as food manufacturing, food or fish packaging, leather industries, textiles, cotton harvesting and weaving.

Table (11)
Distribution of the syndicate leadership in the syndicate committees around the republic

Syndicate establishment	males	per cent	females	per cent	Total
Transport and communication	339	95	21	5	420
Medical and health care	317	80	80	20	397
Oil, minerals and chemicals	352	94	21	6	373
Municipality, construction and housing	330	91	34	9	364
Food production, agriculture and fishery	181	90	21	10	202
Monetary, banks and money jobs	283	86	47	14	330
Power, water and environment	375	93	27	7	402
Managerial services	237	86	39	14	276
Leather industries, textile, cloths, weaving	40	93	29	42	69
Universities, vocational training,	91	58	25	22	116
Education media, printing and publicity	32	78	5	14	37
Insurance and pensions	64	86	22	26	86
Total	2,701	88	371	12	3,072

Source: Syndicate Labor Union

Article (8)

Representation and participation at the international level

8.1 Women occupy a number of diplomatic positions such as ambassadors, commissioned ministers, consultants, first secretaries...etc. the number of women working in the diplomatic line are 73 and are positioned as follows:

One female ambassador, two commission ministers, 6 women as consultants, nine as a first secretary, two as second secretary, 6 women as third secretary, six women are diplomatic attachés, one as attaché and 40 women as administrative attaché. Despite the increase in women working as diplomats, their contribution to this field is still very limited.

- As for women's participation in international organizations, there is only one woman as the Regional Director of the Arab Development Program of the United Nations, and another working at the regional office of the Food and Agriculture Organization.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Diplomatic Institute graduated four batches between 2002 and 2006. Many women studied in this institution whether diplomats or interested in this field, and have received qualification certificates for the education and training they received. This certificate will be a basic requirement for new entrance into the diplomatic line or for the promotion of existing diplomats.

8.2 The WNC came forward with a proposal to amend Law No. (2) and its amendments regarding the diplomatic and counselor fields. This law includes articles related to the rights of married diplomats abroad which states in its Article No. (90): (If both spouses are employed with the Ministry they must not be sent on the same mission, or even on separate missions. If one of the spouses is selected, the other has the choice to take an open leave without pay to accompany his or her partner in that mission). This text is considered an obstacle against women's constitutional right, and the WNC proposed the article to be amended as follows: (the Ministry has the right to appoint both spouses – provided they fulfill the seniority condition – in any mission while providing both of them with social support and housing. In case one of them opts not to be sent on the mission, he or she has the right to take an open leave without pay while maintaining their right to seniority and promotion.)

Article No. (82) about retirement age is also questioned for amendment. The call is to raise the retirement age for women to equal that of men of 60 years of age, or 35 years of service instead of 55 years of age or/and 30 years of service. This allows preservation of female diplomatic cadre and allowing women to be in the line until new young females are trained to fill the positions. This is an attempt to maintain a gender balance in this field.

Article (9)

Nationality

9.1 Article No. (44) of the constitution gives the right to a Yemeni nationality to Yemenis or whoever acquires it. This is a right for both women and men. A Yemeni woman has the right to keep her nationality even if she marries a Muslim non Yemeni and gains his nationality, unless she decides to drop her Yemeni nationality and this desire is documented when the marriage takes place or

during the marriage itself as per article number (10) for year 1990 of the same law. A Yemeni woman has the right to restore her Yemeni nationality in case her marriage to a non Yemeni is over if she requests for it. However, Law No. (6) for year 1990 does not grant the Yemeni nationality to the children of a Yemeni woman married to a non Yemeni.

9.2 There was a positive response to the recommended amendment through Law No. (24) for year 2003 which adds a new article to the 1990 Nationality Law. The new article repeated (10) states: (if a Yemeni woman married to a foreigner had children from her foreign husband and has become the guardian and provider for her children either because of being divorced, widowed or abandoned or any reason for a duration no less than one year, then the children are to be treated as Yemenis in all respects so long as they are with their mother. Children who reach adulthood have unconditional right to choose between either parent's nationalities).

9.3 The above text conditions that for the children to get their mother's nationality she has to be widowed, divorced or abandoned for any reason. Therefore, demand was made to ensure this right for women who are still living with the husbands in par with the Yemeni man who has the right to give his children the Yemeni nationality whether he was with his wife or without her. The demand is also to give this right on birth and not until later. The recommended amendment by the WNC to overcome this discrimination is: (a child obtains the Yemeni nationality if he or she is born to a Yemeni father or mother).

9.4 Article No.(14) of the Executive Charter No. (47) for year 1991 about the residency permit of a non-Yemeni husband is recommended to change to: (the non-Yemeni husband of a Yemeni national has the right of a 5 year residency able to be renewed...) this text would be equal to article number 13 of the same charter giving a 5-year residence to the non-Yemeni wife of a Yemeni national. The current law allows for the non-Yemeni husband a two year residency.

Article (10)

Education

10.1 The government of Yemen paid great attention to education considering it as the only way forward for any society, and that the progress of a community is measured by the scientific achievements and development of its human resources. Hence, all national legislations – the constitution and laws – emphasize on education as a right for all. This has been reflected in the general approach of the education policy in all intermediate plans and strategies, such as:

- Yemen's Strategic Vision (2025) aimed at a fundamental transformation in the educational system's structure and methodology so as to be able to compete with the scientific, technical progress and development requirements.
- Women Development Strategy (2006-2015) aims to increase girls' education enrollment rates in the various levels and types so as to reduce the gender gap in education.
- The National Strategy for Developing Basic Education (2003-2015) whereby the fifth theme (of 8 in total) is dedicated to girls education living up to the millennium development goals by 2015.

- The National Strategy for Illiteracy Eradication and Adult Education (1998) focused on basic education drop outs, of which the majority is females. Yemen is now working on a draft document termed (organized principles for illiteracy eradication efforts in the great Middle East and North Africa). This aims to reduce illiteracy to 50 per cent by 2015.
- The National Population Strategy (2001-2025) emphasized on creating annual increase in basic education enrollment especially of girls in order to achieve the “education for all” goal.
- The draft strategy outlined by the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood (2006-2015) pays great attention to school education and is considered a monitoring authority along with the Ministry of Education to supervise the level of implementing pre-school educational programs.
- Poverty Reduction Strategy (2003-2005) and the current strategy (2006-2010) focuses on girls education considering it an important factor in improving the health and nutrition conditions of women and children and reducing fertility rates and hence reducing poverty and developing the society in general.
- Vocational and Technical Training Strategy focuses on increasing the accommodating capacity to 15 per cent of the basic and secondary educational system’s outcomes by 2010, in an attempt to rectify the existing imbalance between supply and demand in the workforce keeping gender issues in consideration.
- Higher Education Strategy and the Secondary Education Strategy are still under preparation and there is an inclination to prepare them according to the gender approach.
- It is generally noticeable that the official and governmental policies and government strategies pay attention to girls’ education, but the problem is in the challenges and obstacles that appear when translating these policies into executive action plans.

10.2 Pre-school education:

The number of kindergartens in the Republic of Yemen in 2006 reached 81 government kindergartens. There are 127 private nurseries but mostly limited to the main cities. Obviously this number does not match the population growth nor does it match the increase numbers in working mothers. Despite the fact that the government pays this educational level interest according to its resources, yet there is not much investment in this sector for many reasons. The most important reason is the lack of societal awareness of this stage’s importance as a preparation phase for basic education. Media is also weak in educating the society of the importance of kindergartens, and there aren’t many suitable nurseries or resources such as nutrition, educational tools and transportation which could reach 500 Yemeni riyals for the government nurseries and 4000 for private ones, and obviously this is too expensive considering the average per capita income.

- To reform this shortcoming, the government took interest in developing this facility and the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood became a monitoring authority on monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Childhood and Youth Strategy (2006-2015). The Council has started working on programs to develop pre-school education. For example, there is a program in partnership with Sana'a University to qualify and train educators for this education specifically, and the syllabus of this has been integrated in the university's curricula, and consequently 60 nannies have been trained from the capital secretariat in pre-school education. It is hoped that the Ministry of Education gives more space to this stage in its educational plans and programs, because this has a direct influence on the working mother.
- The Educational Census (2003/2004) data show that there is proximity between the number of males and females at these facilities. The number of females in kindergartens reaches (6,968) versus (8,336) males. However, there seems to be an increasing gender gap more recently as per the statistics of the General Department for Kindergartens 2006, as the number of females enrolled in public nurseries is 4,948 against 10,425 males and in the private nurseries females were registered as 2,632 versus 6,189 males. An issue that deserves analysis and solutions.
- Despite the fact that the education law stipulates the importance of nurseries, and that the work code has been amended in 2003 to oblige managers to establish nurseries in the workplace or to take care of the children's pre-school expenses, there is hardly any interest in this issue. Some private sector industries provide an expensive low level service and so many women either choose to quit work to take care of their children at this stage. The National Strategy for Childhood and Youth includes development of this early age (0-5 years) and has been integrated in the five-year socio-economic plan 2006-2010.
- The syllabus for this education varies from a place to another and the Ministry of Education's curriculum has not been printed yet.

Table (12)

Number of public and private kindergartens and the number of children gender wise

Description	Number	Males	Females
Government	81	4,948	10,425
Private	127	6,189	2,632

Source: General Department for Kindergartens – report 2006.

10.3 Basic education:

- Between 2001 and 2005 there was immense interest by the state in cooperation with many other bodies to improve basic education and girls enrolling and continuing the education at least until finishing primary education level. Many organizations funded 1902 projects all aiming at reducing girls drop out rate and supporting their basic education especially in the suburbs.

For example, the World Food Program funded a school nutrition project in 88 districts in the republic. The cabinet issued a decree to exempt male students studying from 1st to 3rd grades and girls from 1st to 6th grade from school tuition fees. These are the main steps adding equality and gender indicators to all basic and secondary education statistics for the academic year 2005/2006.

- Despite the great efforts and executed projects and the Ministry of Education's commitment to increasing girls' enrolment in basic education and reducing the gender gap, yet this gap is too wide to achieve the gender equality mentioned in the convention and in the millennium goals.
- Girls between 6 and 14 years old enrollment rates in school are increasing, as they reached 1,518,509 in 2005. However, there is still a large gender gap, for example male enrollment in 2005 for the same age group was 20,226,041 which mean around 68 female students to every 100 male students with a gender gap of 33.8 per cent. The gender gap starts low in the first grade, but increases in higher levels. In 2005, 123,014 girls of the age group between 15 and 17 years old versus 254,776 boys of the same age group. This means for every 100 male students there are only 48 female students. The net enrollment rate for boys is 33.28 per cent against 16.68 per cent for girls.²
- The gender gap increases in the villages despite encouraging efforts such as increasing government jobs for female teachers in the rural areas. There are more than two million children outside schools, of which 1,360,790 are females. Furthermore, the gap between education ratios in the cities and suburbs is quite large. Around 84.8 per cent of males in the cities and 68 per cent in the rural areas are literate while only 59.5 per cent of urban women and 24.3 per cent of rural women are literate.³

² Source: Ministry of Education, General Department for Statistics and Planning 2005/2006.

³ Ministry of Education, educational status of girls in Yemen: endorsing girls education for equal opportunities August 2005, supported by UNICEF and Adra, and taken from the Family Health survey as per the annual educational census report 2003/2004 of the Ministry of Education.

Table (13)

Net and total enrollment rates in basic education 2005

Description	Male	Female	Total	Percentage of females for every 100 Males	Gap
People between (6 and 14 years)	2,748,403	2,528,205	5,276,608		
Students between (6 and 14 years)	2,226,041	1,518,509	3,744,550		
Students of all ages	2,450,272	1,622,022	4,072,294	68.22	31.78%
Net enrollment average	80.99%	60.06%	70.97%	66.2	33.80%
Total enrollment average	89.15%	64.16%	77.18%		

Source: Ministry of Education – General Department for Statistics and Planning.

10.4 Secondary education

- There is a visible increase in girls' enrollment rate in secondary education levels compared to previous years. In year 2002/2003 the total number of both boys and girls enrolled in secondary schools was 549363. This is an increase for boys from 354,743 in 2000/2001 to 388,739 in 2002/2003 with an increase percentage of 4.7 per cent. Similarly there has been an increase in girls' enrollment from 129,830 to 160,624 for the same years with an increase of 11.9 per cent. In 2004/2005 the number of girls has increased to 183,396 against 409,931 males with an increase of 3 per cent for girls' versus an increase of only 0.3 per cent for boys. It is visible that the increase between 2002/2003 and 2004/2005 is double that of males.

Table (14)
Number of students in secondary level

Year	2001-2002		2002-2003		2003-2004		2004-2005	
Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total number of students	354,743	129,83	388,739	160,624	11,016	7,949	4,899	183,396

Source: Ministry of Education- General Department for Statistics and Planning.

One reason for this improvement could be attributed to the relative delay in the age of marriage in the cities, in addition to the provision of education services and girls and families' increasing awareness of the importance of education and gaining skills through training for the labor market. Although poverty could stand against education, it is also a motivation to continue studying in order to improving living standards. The gender gap is still quite high and drop out rates are also high because of many factors such as decreasing outcomes of basic education, failure, crowded classrooms, and lack of sufficient girls schools and female teachers. The number of all girls schools in the cities and villages is much less than boys schools, moreover, girls schools suffer from less qualified educational and management cadre which leads to drop outs and very few girls in the rural areas join mixed schools.

The private sector, encouraged by the government and supervised by the Ministry of Education contributes largely to basic and secondary education in the main cities. The number of private schools (generally with separate branches for boys and girls) has increased from 225 in 2001/2002 to 448 in 2005/2006.⁴

Table (15)

Increasing number of public and private schools from 2001 to 2006-12-02

Years	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
Total	225	242	300	394	448

Source: Ministry of Education, General Department for Public and Private Education.

10.5 School curricula:

At the beginning of 2005 syllabus of basic and secondary education levels were reviewed from a gender perspective, and took some steps to make the curricula closer to the students' lives. But what is also important in addition to ensuring gender sensitive curricula is that the teachers should also be gender sensitive and to be able to overcome the social and cultural discrimination surrounding both boys and girls.

⁴ Ministry of Education, General Department for Public and Private Education data (2001/2002) and (2005/2006).

10.6 Higher education and scientific research:

- The number of universities has increased to be seven government universities and eight private universities teach applied sciences and theoretical courses and are similar to government universities in their curricula. The enrollment rate has increased in year 2004-2005 as the total number of enrolled students was 193,524 in both public and private universities. Girls form 50,319 of this number which makes them 26 per cent of the total batch versus 143,105 male students composing 74 per cent of the total students. In theoretical colleges the enrollment number was 138,905 at a percentage of 71.7 per cent and girls are 17.5 per cent of this number. In scientific colleges the enrollment is 54,523 at a percentage of 28.3 per cent of which 8.5 per cent are girls. Despite the increase in girls joining college, yet the percentage is low and is mostly limited to humanitarian disciplines, as girls enrollment in scientific colleges is very low such as civil engineering, electronics networking, as well as in some theoretical colleges such as commerce as the percentage is 14 per cent for girls compared to 86 per cent for boys. In the engineering college the percentage of girls is 6 per cent compared to 94 per cent except for the dentistry where the girls are 68 per cent and in the linguistics girls are 54 per cent of the total students.
- To overcome the lack of cadres in gender studies the government universities started taking positive measures. For example, the Women's Studies and Applied Research Center established in 1994 was renamed in 2003 Development and Gender Research Study Center and a number of university professors were appointed to work in it, and were allocated with a budget even though it is quite small compared to the other college's budgets. Another center for Women's Studies and Training was established in 1998. Both centers aim at providing higher education and diplomas in gender and development and integrating gender in university syllabus. Since year 2005/2006 gender concepts have been integrated in all the population and water and environment curricula at Sana'a University. Although both Sana'a and Aden universities took interest in integrating gender in some of its centers yet not all of the universities strategies were written through a gender perspective. Moreover, the universities' policies did not use any mechanisms to encourage girls' enrollment in college especially in the scientific colleges or to increase females among the staff and to appoint them in high management, technical or scientific positions except for the Head of a Center of Women's Studies or as assistants to deans of some colleges.

10.7 Technical education and vocational training

- In year 2002/2003 the percentage of girls joining the technical and vocational training reached only 1.9 per cent. The increase in enrollment in this field has increased from 5,715 to 8,049 with an increase of 2,334 students. The increase in girls' enrollment has increased to 4.3 per cent in commerce and computer training and was 5.5 in technical education of the total enrollment. The increase of boys was 6.9 per cent and for girls was 1.2 per cent.
- Gender issues regarding girls' enrollment in specific colleges or in training disciplines and management are still very low. Girls' enrollment in many subjects is very minimal as girls enrollment in technical institutes with two year courses during 2003-2004 was only 21 female students against 3,401 males. In year 2005-2006 the number has increased to 80 female

students' versus 3,059 males. In the three year courses 159 girls were admitted compared to 911 boys in 2003-2004 and this has increased in 2005-2006 to 104 girls and 657 boys.

The total number of girls enrolled in technical institutes in the academic year 2003-2004 reached 337 versus 1,646 boys. These numbers have increased in 2005-2006 to 6,538 candidates only 2,901 boys admitted of which there were 635 female candidates and 494 admitted. The number of short course graduates (continuous education system) with different specializations during 2004 is 48 female students and 313 male students.

- The gender gap also exists in the community colleges for year 2005-2006 as the number of applicants was 534 only 234 were admitted while there were 1,262 male applicants of which 413 were admitted. Here it is worth noting the importance of positive discrimination in educational establishment as most female applicants were accepted so long as they fulfilled the admission requirements.
- To improve women's conditions in this sector there are two projects: the first is a study on the available opportunities for women through this kind of education, and the other is to support priority disciplines in technical training which was delayed from 2000 to 2004.
- The civil society, profit and not profit, and the Social Fund for Development contribute effectively to this kind of education especially in computers, languages, accounting, general administration, management of small projects, and small handicrafts. Because there is more supply, the fees are affordable by the poor layers of the society in addition to the fact that some civil societies provide these courses for free or for minimal fees. Of these societies are the Young Leaders Development Foundation and SOUL in Sana'a, Electronic Society in Aden and Youth Development Center in Taiz.

10.8 Illiteracy eradication and adult education

- There is still a high rate of illiteracy among adults in Yemen despite efforts to eradicate it. The rate for females ten years and older is 62.1 per cent compared to 29.8 per cent, while the general illiteracy rate for men and women in the rural areas is 53.3 per cent and in the urban areas 25.8 per cent.⁵
- The explanation behind the high illiteracy among women is the high school drop out rate either because of early marriage or because lack of all girls school, even if there are schools the females teachers are not necessary available and the girls make up for this through enrolling in adult literacy classes.
- The Illiteracy Eradication and Adult Education Organization got its financial and administrative independence in 1998 and this has helped implementing plans and programs, most important of which is creating new syllabus, awareness booklets, qualifying and training teachers and supervisors, qualifying training and women skills centers.⁶ Of the main challenges in the illiteracy issue are the limited number of centers, low pay for the working staff, limited resources and huge influx of illiterate Yemenis who dropped out of school in addition to the weak literacy programs and inadequate education system that does not match

⁵ Central Organization for Census and Statistics.

⁶ Illiteracy Eradication and Adult Education report 2006.

with the market demands, as well as lack of awareness among women and in the society in general.

Civil society organizations contribute to easing this problem modestly. Among the associations working in this field is the Yemeni Women Union and all its branches, the National Organization for Combating Illiteracy in Hudeidah, Hope Charity in Mukala and in Hajja Youth Social Association.

Table (16)

Showing the number students in primary and continuing education around the republic for academic year (2004-2005)

Description	Number of students in Primary and correspondent phase											
	Primary (1)			Primary (2)			Continued education			Total		
Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
		6084	60901	66985	2899	36001	38900	1191	17799	18990	10174	114701

Source: Ministry of Education, Illiteracy Eradication and Adult Education Organization.

10.9 Supreme Institute for Justice:

- For the first time since the unity in 1990 four female graduates from Law College joined a training to become judges in 2005-2006. The number of female judges was fixed for a long time because of the condition that to be judge graduates from law school should join the Supreme Institute for Justice which for a long time didn't allow girls to join. The segregation was not a legislative condition as such; it was more of a cultural and traditional influence of the administrative authorities running the institute. The elimination of this barrier has led to admitting four females and will allow for more in the coming years.

10.10 Teachers training and qualifying institutes:

- There are 33 training institutes affiliated directly with the Ministry of Education, promoted to the level of supreme institutes in accordance with the National Strategy for Basic Education, so as to make those institutes training posts for teachers during service. There is a specialized channel to provide distance training opportunities on district level. There are also a number of available short term refreshment courses but the trainers providing these courses did not include any female until 2004. Women were not deliberately excluded from contributing in training, its just that they were not included enough. An explanation for this could be that 100 per cent of the training centers are run by males in addition to no existing quota for female representation.⁷
- After emphasis on involving females to limit girls drop out from schools, the percentage of female trainees was between 15 to 20 per cent⁸ of the total trainees in 2005. However, the gender gap persists especially in the rural areas where positive measure must be taken to target females in the training and to ensure special procedures are taken to create an encouraging environment for women in training and to eliminate the cultural barriers limiting women's participation in training especially in the suburbs.

10.11 Education workforce:

- The percentage of females in the total education workforce reached 20.4 per cent in (2003-2004) versus 79.6 per cent males. Of school principles there were only 4.9 per cent are women and the remaining 95.1 per cent are males.⁹
- The number of teachers teaching in basic level education in the villages is 83,233 male teachers and 7868 female teachers. This means there is great need for more female teachers and that the gender gap is huge. This problem would be easily solved when there are a sufficient number of girls in rural schools who could complete their education and become teachers in their own villages.
- Referring to the workforce in education 2005 the indicators show that the balance in the workforce is still no existent. However, the addition of the gender indicator to the ministry's statistics should be credited as an achievement showing awareness in gender issues and attempt towards reducing this gap.

⁷ Girls education status in Yemen: endorsing equal opportunities for girls education.

⁸ Ministry of Education, Training and Qualifying sector.

⁹ Educational census 2002-2004.

Table (17)

Showing the workforce in education according to the supervising body during (2003-2005)

<i>Description</i>	2002/2004	2004/2005
Total work force	205,682	215,490
1. Primary Education	111,702	121,674
Males	89,232	95,534
Equality indicator	0.25	0.25
2. Secondary Education	8,126	8,335
Males	6,364	6,434
Equality indicator	0.28	0.30
3. Secondary primary education	85,854	85,481
Males	67,463	65,445
Equality indicator	0.37	0.31

Source: Ministry of Education – General Department for Censes and Planning.

- Women are still absent in the management level of education institutes as there were only 201 female principals compared to 601 men in the urban areas during the academic year 2003/2004. In the rural areas there were only 81 female principals compared to 6,053 males and also most of the female principals are limited to primary schools.¹⁰
- On the higher management level in decision and policy making women are still absent. Despite the existence of qualified women at the Ministry of Education there were only three women as general managers and one deputy minister for the girls' education sector in 2005 while in the same year a woman was also appointed as director of an educational zone in the capital. Two years ago another similar appointment was made in Aden. The number of employees at the Ministry with its sectors in the capital are 1,450 male employees and 131 female employees mostly working in cleaning, the archives or as secretaries.¹¹
- The gender gap also persists in the education staff in universities where there is an imbalance and in some specializations there are no female lecturers at all. The number of females in the university hierarchy decreases as we go up and they are totally non existent in the decision making positions. No woman was ever appointed as president of the university or deputy. Currently there is no female as a dean of any of the seven government universities and this is a decline because there were three female deans in various occasions in the Education College at Sana'a and Aden universities. Among the eight private universities there is one dean for the girls section at the science and technology university, and was appointed recently as assistant of the university president. The number of female professors in the government universities

¹⁰ Annual Statistics book of the Ministry of Education (2003/2004).

¹¹ Girls' education status in Yemen: endorsing equal opportunities for girls' education.

are only 4 compared to 152 males and 20 female assistant professors compared to 363 males and 194 female contributing professor compared to 1,388 males and 126 female lecturers compared to 579 males.

Table (18)

Number of academic staff in the government universities in humanitarian and applied sciences and according to gender

College	University	Professor		Assistant professor		Contributing professor		Lecturer		Reader	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Humanitarian science colleges	Sana'a Un.	55	3	97	5	316	37	59	22	129	44
	Aden Un.	19	1	66	8	331	67	112	37	125	50
	Taiz Un.	4	0	7	0	63	7	52	13	80	44
	Al-Hudaidah Un.	2	0	3	1	61	2	34	6	128	39
	Ibb Un.	0	0	2	0	32	1	8	0	37	9
	Hadramout Un.	1	0	12	0	94	7	52	5	81	33
	Dhamar Un.	1	0	4	0	27	1	30	1	81	9
	Total	82	4	191	14	924	122	347	84	661	228
Applied science colleges	Sana'a Un.	52	0	92	1	272	29	41	17	97	60
	Aden Un.	11	0	67	5	153	39	42	19	64	49
	Taiz Un.	2	0	1	0	27	3	30	4	46	21
	Al-Hudaidah Un.	0	0	0	0	21	1	15	0	51	12
	Ibb Un.	0	0	0	0	12	0	10	0	26	11
	Hadramout Un.	5	0	10	0	47	0	33	1	75	13
	Dhamar Un.	0	0	2	0	45	0	61	1	105	11
	Total	70	0	172	6	577	72	232	42	464	177
Total	152	4	363	20	1,501	194	579	126	1,125	405	

10.12 Scholarships and missions

- There is no gender discrimination in the competing mechanism for availing scholarships although the number of females availing undergraduate or postgraduate levels is still minimal. This is not due to the low attainment levels but because of social and cultural barriers and prioritizing family for women standing against females perusing higher education abroad. This explains the decrease of female participation in higher education. The number of females sent abroad for studying is only 4 masters and 6 PhDs while the number of female graduates according to table 7-a-b is (17-33 per cent).
- As for the number of females availing undergraduate scholarships they reached 51 versus 168 males to give a percentage of 21.51 per cent. The number of women who availed scholarships include those who were in the waiting list was 73 compared to 285 males. Scholarship programs still need a lot of encouraging mechanisms for girls to go abroad for education. In this issue, there is a shortcoming in studying these obstacles and ways to overcome them by the Ministry of Higher Education and donor organizations and countries – except for some female programs. Creating a more gender balance in this field will help create better efficient qualified teachers in the academic sector.

10.13 Extra curricular activities

- The state does not use a discriminative policy when it comes to extra curricular activities in schools. Sports are a compulsory subject according to Cabinet Decree No. (477) for year 1999. But the other school activities do not receive much attention generally and especially when it comes to girls because of the lack of required tools and sections or rooms to exercise such activities. The Ministry of Education has established the School Activities Department at the Ministry and was concerned to ensure an extra curricular activity is placed in the daily school routine which will include an activity at least once a week for 45 minutes. However, this period is not taken seriously and some times girls are deprived of joining this class as a punishment for not doing homework or so on. There are also some cultural barriers against girls playing sports in mixed schools which are 8,175 schools in the republic making a percentage of 83 per cent of the total primary schools in the rural areas.

More so, the Basic Education Strategy did not include this issue despite its importance, yet it is an important component of the Child and Youth Strategy and became the responsibility of both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth and Sports to coordinate school activities and sports training. In addition to issuing the Parents Board Council Executive Charter, through the Cabinet Decree No. (103) for year 2002, emphasizing parents role in encouraging their children to participate in extra curricular activities in school.

- On the university level, the universities sports union was established which conducts competitions and matches and here male students have a greater opportunity to participate in sports because most government colleges do not have a dedicated sports hall for women.
- The government took interest in female sports when it established the General Department for Women at the Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2003. One of the main achievements of this Ministry is establishing Bilquis Sports Club for girls wherein most sports activities are provided for girls. In 2005, the General Union for Female Sports was established and the

sports clubs and unions charter was amended to include female representation in every sports union where female activities take place such as playing basketball, volleyball, gymnastic, karate, Judo, chess and tennis table. On the civil society level the Yemeni Olympiad Committee was established within which a Department for Women was created in 2000. Of the department's main objectives is to enhance awareness regarding female sports. It also succeeded in organizing the third Asian Conference for Women in May 2005, and ensured representation in regional unions.

10.14 School buildings and classrooms:

- The number of school girls at the basic and secondary levels is still not enough especially in the rural areas where most schools are mixed, despite the great efforts by the Ministry in establishing schools where there is a dire need. The mixed schools are generally not accepted by the conservative societies in the villages which is considered a place where their girls should not go and hence many girls drop out of school starting from fifth grade onwards.

Table (19)

Number of working schools during the academic year (2003/2004) per school and the level of education provided according to the Ministry's database

School type	Primary school	Secondary school	Primary / Secondary	Total
Co-ed	9,224	140	2,384	11,748
Urban	586	39	281	906
Rural	8,638	101	2,103	10,842
Girls	554	40	292	886
Urban	163	36	149	348
Rural	391	4	143	538
Boys	906	120	293	1,319
Urban	216	84	108	408
Rural	690	36	185	911
All types	10,684	300	2,969	13,953
Urban	965	159	538	1,662
Rural	12,291	2,431	141	9,719

Source: Annual education census book 2003/2004.

- Most educational structures whether schools, institutes or universities are more compatible with male students needs than females' cultural and social needs. They were not constructed to encourage girls' presence which in turn does not encourage girls or their families. The standards of constructing educational premises do not take in concern separate toilets for girls, school fences for protecting girls' privacy or separate classrooms for female students where

the society does not encourage mixed education and there are generally no activity grounds for females.

Article (11)

Labor

The equality between men and women in work is a right ensured by the constitution and applied laws.

Legal measures and procedures adopted since 2001

Legislative measure in national laws:

The government has taken the following measures:

11.1 Amending Labor Code No. (25) of 2003 adding new provisions to Act No. 5 of 1995 on the Labor Code. Adds article no. 45 that provides for a child day care facility in an enterprise if it employs more than 50 women. The conditions of establishment of this day facility are to be determined by a decision by the competent Minister.

The same law in its article number five reads: “work is a natural right for any citizen and is a duty on those who can do it, in an equal non discriminative conditions, opportunities and rights must be ensured regardless of race, gender, color, age, religion or language. The state must regulate the right to find work as much as possible though planning for growing national economy”.

Article 42 of the same law stipulates: “men and women are equal in all work’s conditions, rights and duties and relations without discrimination. Gender equity must be achieved in utilization, career promotion, wages, training and social insurance; however measures required for the work’s nature are not considered discriminative”.

The fourth chapter, first part of this law includes a special section on regulating women’s work. It contained 7 legal texts from article number 42 to 47. These legal texts confirmed the principle of equality in accessing opportunities, promotion, training and qualification. It also defined working hours for pregnant women and nursing mothers, maternity leaves and pre-school child care rights.

Civil Code No. (19) for year 1991 in its 12th article, paragraph C, reads: “the occupation of a public job is based on equal opportunities and equal rights of all citizens without discrimination. The state ensures monitoring mechanisms to ensure implementing this principle”.

These texts are in accordance with Article (11) of the CEDAW.

11.2 Working Women Strategy (2001-2011)

The General Department for Working Women’s Development at the Ministry of labor and Social Affairs worked on developing a strategy for working women based on four main objectives:

- Increasing job opportunities for women in the labor market

- Enhancing women's competitive skills in the labor market through training and qualification
- Improving work's environment and working conditions through the legal and legislative system.
- Promoting awareness on the importance of women's work.

The Strategy of Working Women is in total agreement with the strategy for developing women. As the end objective of these policies as mentioned in the developing women's strategy is women's development and eradicating female poverty through providing better access to job opportunities, as follows:

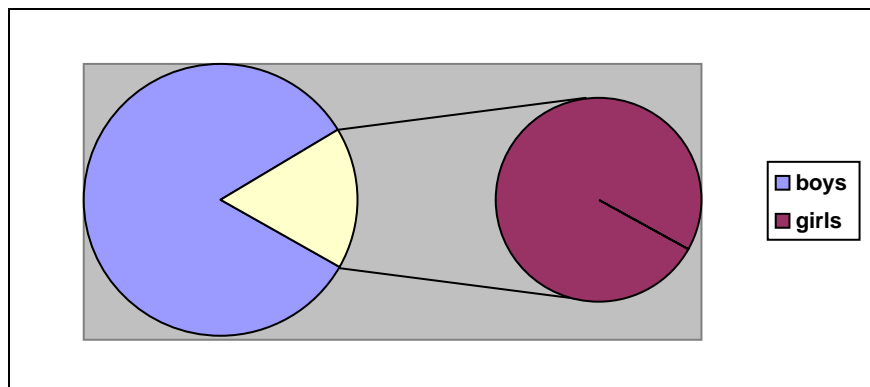
- Increasing women's access to job opportunities from 22.8 per cent to 30 per cent.
- Conducting field surveys on market demands and evaluating and categorizing the female workforce and creating programs to improve women's skills and qualifications.
- Identifying and evaluating the scientific and practical specializations of women in work occupations and following their achievement of occupational rights.
- Working on increasing the financial limit of credits provided to women running small and medium projects, and providing the women with technical help and consultation on managing their businesses and running income generating projects.
- Conducting field surveys on the available infrastructure and the impact of infrastructure services on reducing burdens on rural families.
- Revision of the laws regulating women's work in both public and private sectors.
- Following up the private sector for training and qualifying women in order to integrate them in the labor market and improving women's competitive abilities.
- Activating the legal provisions that oblige business managers to take care of children in the pre-school age.

11.3 Women in the state's administrative body

The number of women in the economically productive age (15 years +) reach around 4.441 million women which composes 50 per cent of the economically active population. However, the participation of women in the actual workforce does not exceed 23 per cent, 17 per cent of which in the urban areas specifically in service sector and in occupations accepted by the society such as education and health.

Women's public employment in the urban areas is mainly concentrated in the civil services sector (17 per cent) versus (83 per cent) male employees. This indicates a vast gender gap in public employment despite the law's emphasis on equal opportunities. However, the qualification standards stipulated in this law could be translated as education and training, which are more available and accessible to males than females. Or even at an earlier stage, in the basic education enrollment capacities where women's enrollment in the best cases does not exceed 50 per cent of the available females while males' enrollment in basic education is 70 per cent or more.

Male and female distribution in public jobs



Source: Ministry of Civil Service.

The distribution of women's work varies according to education and society acceptance of working women. The highest rate is in Aden governorate at a percentage of 47 per cent, Abyan of 36.7 per cent, the capital secretariat of 22.9 per cent and then comes Lahj of 22.8 per cent. The percentage keep on decreasing until it reaches lowest in Shabwa of 7.8 per cent and this is mainly attributed to education level in the area.

In the suburbs, female labor is mostly concentrated in the traditional agricultural sector and mainly in family lands where women are not paid for their labor. The percentage of farmer women who receive pay for their work does not exceed 11 per cent in the best cases.

Table (20)

Female workforce in rural and urban areas

Work type/ occupation	Percentage per cent	Work type	Percentage per cent
Urban		Rural	
Education sector	28.64 %	Agriculture	91 %
General	16.96 %	Simple trades	3.3 %
Transformation industries	16.7 %	Handicrafts	3.2 %
Health and social work	9.5 %	Others	4.4 %
Agriculture	7.7 %		
Trade	6.5 %		
High admin, justice and legislation	1 %		
Sales and services	4.4 %		

Source: Ministry of Civil Service.

11.4 Women's work in the Informal Sector:

A large part of women's work is included in what is known as the marginalized or unorganized sector. Here women would either be working for their own businesses or working for others without pay or for very minimal wages. The type of work varies quite a lot in this sector, starting with women's production inside her home and using family members, mainly women, to produce commodities such as food products, incense rocks (bakhoor), embroidered cloths or table clothes and decoration pieces...etc. Or, they could be moving from one house to another offering their services in celebrations or cleaning or even singing in weddings. There are also some educated women who provide private tuitions to students and health care workers who provide medical services such as delivering babies, dressing wounds, or giving injections. And finally some women work in small trade business through selling limited items in their homes and avoiding taxation for their small businesses.

The rural woman also works in the agricultural sector, which could also be categorized in the unorganized or marginalized sector because it would be a work whereby the woman uses family members without pay. It is generally a source of providing food products such as vegetables, fruit and crops consumed by the family and a part is sold to buy other products that can not be domestically cultivated such as oil, sugar, clothes and fuel.

The danger of the unorganized sector- especially agriculture- is that it is not appreciated financially or mentally. It is not accounted for in the national GDP for two reasons: first it is not paid, and second women's work in cash crops is absent because women do not own these products, or market them or makes use of their returns.

Consequently, this situation requires identifying mechanisms for calculating women's work in this sector, even for housewives who consider their work a part of their natural job in having children, caring for them or domestic chores. The participation could be figured according to the alternative calculations mentioned in the Women's Status Report 2004 which indicated that women's contribution to the national economy could reach 405 billion Yemeni Riyals. By estimating invisible incomes and especially those of women, an increase in the national GDP could be achieved, leading an increase from YR.700 billion to YR.1,105 billion, and hence the average per capita could have increased from \$280 to \$438 per year.

The invisible economic contribution has a great impact in the family's budget. This contribution could be estimated as YR.12 thousand per month and this covers a good part of the family's requirements. And this could be measured against the average wages given to a domestic help hired by working women. It is worth mentioning that women do not consider their work inside or outside home in the agricultural activities a job per say. This also confuses researchers and survey personnel and data collectors which eventually lead to ignoring these efforts and their return despite the fact that they take a lot of women's time and energy.

11.5 Challenges against integrating women in the labor market

Cultural and social challenges:

These are symbolized through rejecting women's work in general or limiting the disciplines of work to education and health care. Even agricultural activities which are of the traditional jobs and of the accepted, even enforced on women since ages have started to be considered not suitable for the

females in the family. This is happening because some conservative groups who migrated from the villages to neighboring countries and managed to save some money started limiting women's work in the farm and hiring hands to help instead.

In fact, the conservative trend is clearly manifested through some religious preachers who condemn women's public work and claim that women's place is the house with the children and that the responsibility of earning the bread is for men, forgetting that there is a great percentage of the women working outside their homes have no male support and that they are forced to be the bread winners of their families such as widows or divorced women. The National Report on Women's Status 1998 estimated this as 13 per cent.

This conservative group also claims that women's participation in public work leads to increasing unemployment among men, who desperately need work, because they form an additional competition. Yet the Yemeni constitution clearly states equality between men and women in this regard and considers work as an honor and duty for all citizens. The truth is that the economic stagnation is the reason behind high unemployment rates among both men and women, and evidence to this is that economically development countries continuously demand more skilled workers who are in many times imported from abroad. Hence, the general good, and development process requires more participation of women in the labor market especially as Human Development reports confirmed that of the main factors hindering the development progress is paralyzing half of the society's – which are the females – capacities and contributions.

Capacity related difficulties:

These difficulties are linked to women's limited access to education and training services and the high rate of illiteracy which force women to work in laborious physical jobs or head towards the marginalized sector. These are the limited choices for unskilled or uneducated workers. The unorganized sector does not provide working women with the legal and social protection available in the public sector or in the formal sector and is highly volatile and unstable. This could be helped by providing women with more opportunities for training and capacity building.

Difficulties in accessing resources, mainly land, loans and information:

In some Yemeni parts girls are deprived of their inheritance especially land and real estate, an act which is against the Islamic jurisprudence or national legislations. Also because of the insurance complications in providing loans, women can not avail credit easily to create small income generating projects to help them overcome their poverty.

In case women do avail the loans they are controlled by the males in their families (mostly the husband). The difficulty in accessing information is yet another challenge limiting women's ability to identify opportunities and to avail consultation and management support to run their small and medium scale projects.

Awareness programs help informing about the dangers of this phenomenon and to promote for women's access to services, opportunities and resources. The spread of education will create, with no doubt, a revolutionary step in people's attitudes and in strengthening women's abilities and knowledge of their rights.

Institutional challenges:

These are represented in the official working hours and those of the private sector compared to the feeble services provided including those for pre-school and young children. Also the office working hours do not match with the school hours which cause working women to feel insecure and instable in her working environment and is pressurized about her children. Many women in the reproductive age opt to quit working in order to be able to raise their children.

The working environment in many places could be termed as unfriendly for women, for example there are no female bathrooms and this issue is more difficult to cope with for pregnant women or those with urinary problems.

Another related issue is the non adherence to employment conditions in public jobs and in promotion, internal and external training opportunities from which women are excluded most of the time.

Legislative reform is considered one of the effective ways to overcome the institutional problems and improving working conditions for women.

Challenges relating to information and data:

Only very few researches and studies on working women's status in the public sector are available. As for information on women in the private or informal sectors there are no data available at all, and has not been analyzed or studied before. This calls for an urgent creation of a database on working women in the various economic sectors and on women's contribution to development being important development resources. Jobs should be publicized for job seekers, in the employment offices and in media. Overcoming these challenges would be an important step in integrating women in the labor market and ensuring their contribution in development.

11.6 In this regard, the WNC has established a primary database on women including data about working women, and this will be connected to the national general network at the Ministry of Planning and will be used for effective monitoring of the national general plan indicators being executed currently.

The main measures taken to overcome the challenges facing working women could be abbreviated as follows:

- Enhancing awareness about women's work through a development approach and using media on a wide scale as well as making use of religious establishments especially the balanced (enlightened) religious trend to advocate and support women's issues and respect their contribution and work inside and outside home. The WNC has successfully cooperated with the Ministry of Endowment and the National Population Council to develop the religious messages and the population message to support women's work. The Yemeni Women's Union has been able to gain the support of some mosque imams and religious preachers to relatively change the demeaning look to women and to be able to differentiate between a cultural heritage and a religious text.
- Educate and train women, and eradicate female alphabetical and career illiteracy so as to allow women to integrate in the labor market where the competition is increasing and the conditions and requirements are getting more complicated. This is happening especially because of the globalization and opening the local markets where human resources are rather ignorant and

weakly skilled to the world. This requires multiplying the number of girls' school enrollment in basic education and to take good measures to reduce the school drop out rates. In addition to improving the educational syllabus to include livelihood skills which will empower them in the real life and participate effectively in the development process. Concentration on vocational and technical training as the heart of social and economic development and opening more scopes for women in this field.

- Creating institutional changes in the laws and systems and charters to improve work environment and facilitate working conditions for women keeping in mind women's reproductive roles as a wife and a mother. Also to take measures to ensure equal opportunities for availing public jobs, promotion and training.
- To encourage the private sector to accommodate female workforce through full time or part time employment of women.
- Translating the objectives of the Working Women National Strategy and the Women Development National Strategy into sectoral plans and programs to improve women's conditions in work. These measures will support Yemen's commitment to the Arab and international labor agreements to protect working women and improving their working environment and conditions.
- Studying and analyzing women's status in the informal sector to identify the size of this phenomenon and its negative and positive effects on women as an individual and on the family and the development process in general. Also to provide suitable circumstances for women to move from the informal to the formal sector where there is social care and legal protection for women.
- It must be clarified that these measures are not only the responsibility of the government bodies but of the civil society, the private sector and the donor organizations, in providing financial, technical and institutional support to improving women's working conditions.

Article (12)

Health

12.1 Health care is of the services guaranteed by the Yemeni constitution for all civilians, males and females in its Article Nos. (30), (32) and (55). These articles ensured the right of health care to all citizens and ensured the responsibility of the state to provide the service through establishing hospitals and health institutions and expanding in provision of free health services and health awareness in the society.

- The health related laws and decrees target all citizens in general and women in particular regarding pregnancy, child birth, postnatal care and care for working mother and child and mother nutrition.
- The state has adopted a number of policies, strategies and programs related to health. It tried to integrate women related issues in these strategies and polices. Of the main strategies mentioned are:

- a) National Strategy for Reproductive Health (2003-2005) and the updated strategy (2006-2010) which included safe motherhood, emergency delivery services, family planning tools, early breast cancer intervention and treatment of cervical cancer.
- b) Women Development Strategy (2003-2005) and the updated strategy (2006-2010) which includes a health component targeting reproductive health, HIV precautionary measures, cancer and provision of basic health care services.
- c) Women Health Development Strategy (2006-2010) issued by the General Department for Women's Development at the Ministry of Health. The strategy focuses on women's health, reproductive health issues for the adolescence and youth and concerns of female health workers through building an information database and identifying the challenges in this sector and how to overcome them.
- d) Poverty Reduction Strategy (2003-2005) which dedicated a special section for health and focused on the importance of providing an infrastructure for health and basic health care services.
- e) National Strategy for Protection and Fighting AIDS (2002) this strategy emphasized on priority fields which are political commitment to protection from AIDS and monitoring and controlling the spread of the infection, livelihood precautionary measure including blood transfer, endorsing a partnership between government and civil societies to fight AIDS.
- f) Malaria Eradication Strategy which aims at eliminating the disease in infected areas, the disease being one of the reasons for pregnant women's mortality.
- g) National Strategy for Childhood and Youth (2006-2010) which focused on issues related to youth, such as reproductive health and protection from sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS.
- h) Third five-year Socio-economic Development Plan (2006-2010) which targets reducing maternal mortality from 366/100,000 live births to 238 in 2010. It also aims at increasing the ratio of births taking place under medical supervision from 26.8 per cent to 45 per cent and increasing use of contraceptives from 27 per cent to 35 per cent. (Population Sector Strategy 2006-2010).
- i) Population Working Program (2001-2005) and the updated program (2006-2010) which focuses in its health matrix on reducing maternal and infant mortality, provision of contraceptives and limiting the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS.
- j) National Strategy for Media and Population Communication (2006-2010), this strategy discusses the mechanism for activating attitude changes and perceptions towards reproductive, youth and population issues in all media tools.

12.2 Institutional development of the health sector:

Some institutional frameworks related to women's health were created:

- population sector 2004 in light of the Republican Decree No. (76) for year 2004 about the organizing charter of the Ministry of General Health and Population which include the following departments:
 - general department for reproductive health
 - general department for women's development
 - general department for health education and population media
 - family health department 2004, which is one of the departments affiliated to the basic health care sector
 - the national foundation for cancer patients centers' support 2004, which is responsible for:
 - establishing cancer treatment centers at governorate levels
 - provision of cancer medicines for free
 - education and awareness campaigns targeting all society layers of which women are a part
 - national annual donation campaigning for fund raising and gathering money for cancer patients

12.3 Infrastructure:

The passing years have witnessed increasing development in the health infrastructure especially hospitals, and basic health care units in a number of the mother childhood centers and health centers. The following indicators show this:

Table (21) the number of hospitals and health cares spread across the country during (2002-2004)

Indicator	2002	2004
Hospitals	151	168
Health centers	614	600
Motherhood and childhood centers	265	333
Basic health care units	2,028	2,075

Source: Annual Statistics Book 2004- Central Organization for Census.

12.4 Women in decision making positions at the Ministry of Health:

- A visible improvement has been achieved in the few past years as a deputy female minister was appointed for the population sector at the Ministry of Health in 2004. 6 women are working as general managers and two women have been appointed as consultants for the Health Minister in 2002.

12.5 Women's health indicators:

- Life expectancy for girls at birth and average age during the first marriage for women:
The life expectancy age for girls at birth was increased from 59.10 years in 1994 to 63.8 years in 2004 (according to the 2004 census). The average age for the first marriage increased from 20.7 years in 1997 to 22.3 years in 2003 (according to the Yemeni survey on family health 2003).
- Annual growth rate and fertility rate:
The annual population growth rate has decreased from 3.7 in 1994 to 3.02 in 2004 (according to the annual population, housing and establishment census 2004) and also the fertility rate has decreased from 6.5 children for every women in 1997 to 6.2 in 2003 (according to the Yemeni survey on family health 2003).

12.6 Infant and child mortality:

The following indicators show no change in the infant mortality rate since 2000 until 2001 which is 75 per 1000 birth. This is because of mother's health care before, during and after birth. Children under five mortality has decreased slightly from 105 per 1000 births in 2000 to 102 in 2003.

12.7 Maternal mortality:

Maternal mortality in Yemen is still of the highest around the world despite the states efforts to decrease it. It reaches 366 for every 100,000 live births (the Yemeni survey on family health 2003). There is a variance between the rural and urban areas and per the education level of the mother. The state has taken measures to face this problem of which increase health service delivery such as mobile clinics and moving health groups.

- According to the reproductive health statistics in 2005, the main reasons for mothers mortality in Yemen are:
Bleeding (39 per cent), laborious delivery (23 per cent), reversion (19 per cent), child birth fever (19 per cent), early marriage and early delivery, repeated pregnancy, rapid pregnancy with short span between each pregnancy, malnutrition which causes anemia, inaccessibility to emergency child birth services in remote areas, unavailable blood transfer centers in all districts and governorates, home deliveries in absence of a qualified medical cadre, difficult roads, lack or absence of medical follow-up during the pregnancy.

12.8 Side diseases related to child birth:

The survey in 2003 revealed the diseases affecting women during child birth are:

Dislocated womb (22.1 per cent); uncontrolled urine (11.3 per cent); urinary canal infection (28.2 per cent) and cervical infection (16.0 per cent).

12.9 Contraceptives:

There has been a an increase in using contraceptives recently attributed to increasing awareness and availability for free in health centers or for cheap prices in markets of government or private establishments especially in rural areas. The following indicators explain this:

Increase in using modern contraceptives from 9.8 per cent in 1997 to 13 per cent in 2004.

Decrease in using traditional contraceptives from 10.8 per cent in 1997 to 9.7 per cent in 2003.

12.10 Pregnancy care:

The safe motherhood project, proposed by the Ministry of Health and being discussed currently at the Parliament, includes a number of elements related to women's health such as compulsory access to health care, preventing exposing females to dangers of early marriage, preventing female genital mutilation, and provision of contraceptives in all health establishments. The Supreme Council for Mother Childhood will announce a special network for safe motherhood which will include a number of associations concerned with working mothers in all fields and not just health.

- The percentage of pregnant women who received medical care is 65.7 per cent in the cities and 34.5 per cent in the villages (source: annual statistics report of the Ministry of Health 2003-2004).
- The percentage of women who took the tetanus vaccination is 38 per cent (family health survey 2003).
- The percentage of women who received postnatal care is 12.8 per cent.
- The percentage of women who gave birth at home has decreased from 84.2 per cent in 1997 to 77.4 per cent in 2003 and the percentage of women who gave birth under medical supervision has increased to 26 per cent in 2004.

12.11 Nutrition:

- The state paid great care to nutrition especially for mothers and children. The World Food Program in cooperation with the Nutrition Department of the Ministry of Health adopted a medium term project (2002-2007) whereby nutrition is provided to undernourished pregnant and nursing mothers and children under five years who suffer from malnutrition. About 41,000 pregnant women, 35,000 nursing mothers and 50,000 children under five years old benefit from this project. Law No. (32) for year 1996 was issued regarding adding iodine to salt. The Cabinet Decree No. (165) for year 2001 was issued to add vitamins A & D in vegetable oil and ghee and adding iron and folic acid to wheat.
- Also the state pays attention to breast feeding, as there is a ministerial decree about a national policy to encourage and promote breast feeding through health establishments, which encourages breast feeding until the sixth month and to continue breast feeding until two years of age with complementary and enhancing pregnant women's awareness (benefits of breast feeding and how to practice it).

12.12 Cancer:

Cancer is considered the next cause for female deaths second to cardiac and blood vessels diseases where the mortality percentage reaches (53 per cent) according to the family health survey 2003. However, health experts predict cancer will become the number one reason for female mortality. The most common type of cancer is Breast and Uterine cancer. Breast cancer as such is the most challenging disease for women because it is very common and is hard to diagnose at an early stage which leads to high deaths. Womb cancer composes 51 per cent of the malignant tumors affecting

women ovary cancer represents 6 per cent and vaginal cancer 1 per cent. The reports of the charity for supporting cancer patients indicate 275 cases of women treated by radiotherapy and 44 women were given Cobalt treatment. As for the beneficiaries benefiting from the establishment's free pharmacy in 2005 were 694 and 612 in the first quarter of 2006.

12.13 Human Immunity Virus (AIDS)

- Many programs and projects were carried out to treat and fight AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. The national program for fighting AIDS took responsibility of carrying out studies and researches and surveys around the republic, and through this the epidemic monitoring project established a primary database.
- The units specialized in awareness carried out seminars, courses, advertisement, and published booklets and newsletters. They also provided voluntarily testing services, hot lines, physiological support and financial as well as moral support to families with a positive HIV member.
- Women took a part in many activities where there were studies focusing on women in coordination with the reproductive health program in 2005 about the sexually transmitted diseases among women. And in 2006 a biological study about HIV among pregnant women.
- Many seminars, awareness programs and training courses took place among women.

Table (22)

Showing the distribution of HIV and AIDS according to gender during (2000-2006)

Year	Total	Male	Female	Unknown
2000	110	64	46	0
2001	107	65	42	0
2002	151	69	33	49
2003	247	165	57	25
2004	214	149	65	0
2005	228	160	68	0
Until June 2006	168	94	64	10
Total	1,989	1,187	684	118

Source: National Program for Fighting AIDS.

12.14 Female Genital Mutilation:

- This practice is common in coastal areas, according to the survey conducted in 1999 and published in 2001. Post the survey a Decree No. (1/3) for year 2001 was issued by the Minister of Health preventing FGM in all private and public health centers, followed by many awareness workshops and sessions targeting health workers, religious preachers, media, women and all other layers of the society between 2002-2004. These activities were conducted under the girls' health project carried out by the WNC in coordination with 47 different

associations in Aden, Hudeidah governorates and also with the Ministry of Public Health and Population.

- The family survey 2003 showed that 56 per cent of Yemeni women recognize FGM and 38 per cent of those had gone through the procedure themselves. Around 22 per cent of the women who were subjected to FGM carried on the tradition on their daughters. The survey shows that 94 per cent of the mutilation takes place in the first month of the child's age.
- One third of those women viewed FGM as necessary for the following reasons:
 1. Traditional practice (41 per cent)
 2. Hygiene (54 per cent)
 3. Religious principle (28 per cent)
- Currently a law is being proposed by the Supreme Mothers & Childhood Council to add article (70) to the Child Rights Law (45) for year 2002 preventing FGM.
- The Safe Motherhood Law presented by the Ministry of Health is being currently discussed at the Parliament includes a number of articles related to women's health and the necessity of receiving health care and preventing any practices that may subject women to health dangers such as early marriage, FGM in addition to providing contraceptives in all health establishments.

12.15 Health achievements of the civil society:

The civil society and private sector contribute to health programs. Of the three thousand plus organizations only very few are health related, the most important of which is the Yemeni Family Care Association, which carries out the following activities and services:

- Awareness lectures, activities and seminars about reproductive health.
- Training in mother childhood health specializations and qualifying health personnel.
- Training health personnel in communication and health awareness services.
- Participating in health, environment protection and water consumption awareness campaigns.
- Participating in vaccination campaigns against deadly childhood diseases.
- Establishing a hot line to provide advice on nutrition for children under five.
- Support and training for traditional midwives.
- Environmental health project in schools.
- Training health personnel in breast feeding.
- Awareness activities on the risks of early marriage and female genital mutilation.
- Publishing educational booklets and manuals on health issues.
- Providing health services to mothers and children through health centers and mobile clinics in rural areas.
- Conducting specific studies and health researches.

Despite all efforts of the government and civil society there are still many obstacles limiting progress in health indicators as follows:

- The state sets out plans and strategies not suitable with its human and financial resources as the budget for the health sector is only 4 per cent of the total state expenditure.
- Depending on external aid in implementing the state's projects.
- Weak implementation of the health laws and decrees.
- Low health care service coverage to 58 per cent.
- Difficult geography and terrains in Yemen, along with the scattered population which limits access to health care services.
- Unfair distribution of health services in the various governorates and between rural and urban areas.
- Imbalance in distribution of health workers as most qualifications are concentrated in the cities.
- Low number of female health workers and absence of gender related data.
- Low wages and minimal incentives in the government health sector which leads to moving to the private sector.
- Women's access to health services is limited because of poverty, remote service facilities, low quality services, social practices favoring traditional medicine.
- More than 25 per cent of women in the reproductive age group suffer from malnutrition.
- Low societal awareness about reproductive health especially the youth.

12.16 Recommended solutions and remedies:

- Activating health laws and decrees especially regarding free delivery.
- Spreading emergency child birth services in the country especially in remote areas.
- Improving the quality of health services provided and repairing health centers.
- Enhancing medical services quality.
- Encouraging private sector and civil society participation.
- Improving the medicines basic policy to facilitate their access to the poor.
- Increasing coverage for family planning services and providing them for free to poor families.
- Adapting the working hours of health centers to become suitable to rural women's routine.
- Spreading awareness in the society.
- Endorsing reproductive health services provision to the youth.
- Qualifying and retraining health workers and especially females.

Article (13)

Economic and social life

13.1 Government of Yemen focused in the Poverty Reduction Strategy (2003-2005) on women's and family conditions and integrating them in development and increasing their participation in public life. The strategy targets development and expanding of the social care systems, social insurance, and the social insurance network activities to include poor families who was affected by the financial and administrative reform policies in order to provide multi benefits for women whether directly or indirectly and for families in general. The insurance and pension's laws in this context are inclusive of both men and women yet there have been some special protection and merits for women like article (19) of the insurance and pension's law which gave women the right to retirement at the age of 55 with at least 15 years of service. The law also has given working women the right to a full compensation in one dose in case they opted to quit their jobs for the sake of the family or for accompanying the husband abroad.

The National Strategy for Women's Development (2003-2005) focused around 4 main issues all aiming to improve women's conditions. One theme is regarding reducing poverty of women and enhancing their chances to financial empowerment and participation in controlling economic and environmental resources. It is worth mentioning that the WNC has worked on updating this strategy in line with the millennium development goals and the new variables of the third Development Plan and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2006-2010), and has therefore set out a number of measures to achieve the mentioned objective:

- Supporting small and medium women's establishments through funding and small credit programs and spreading them around the republic.
- Increasing social insurance support for families supported by women and facilitating small credit projects for them.
- Improving and spreading training and consultation programs provided to women interested in starting up small businesses through credits.
- Increasing the financial limit of credit provided to women to encourage them financially.
- Adopting awareness and educational programs to change the negative concepts and traditional stereotyping of women and men's roles in the society, especially with regard to work, ownership, inheritance and participation in decision making.

The third Socio-economic five year Plan for Development (2006-1010) represented gender policies and requirements as follows:

- Demanding an increase in women's' representation in the labor market from 23.8 per cent to 30 per cent by 2010 through more integration of women in the labor market by an annual increase no less than 5 per cent.
- Providing loans to women, especially women supporting families so as to empower them economically through establishing small traditional income generating projects such as food products and handicrafts.

13.2 A number of financial and practical monetary procedures were taken to help women avail banking services. The monetary system in Yemen accepts cashable insurance items in order to grant credits and financial facilities regardless of gender.

Table (23)

Credits and financial facilities provided during 2002-2004 for agricultural and other investments for Yemeni men and women from the Agricultural Credit Bank

Years	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Value	Number	Value	Number	Value
2002	4,070	1,354,760	277	17,051	4,347	137,181
2003	2,749	1,264,561	218	13,243	2,967	1,277,803
2004	1,767	1,334,235	151	11,398	1,918	1,345,633
2005	11,698	8,331,256	1227	145,229	12,925	8,476,485
Total	20,248	12,284,812	1873	186,920	22,1475	12,471,732

Source: Agriculture Credit Bank, 2005.

The Housing Credit Bank provides facilitated credits to families and individuals and housing societies for building homes or accommodation projects.

Social security network:

The network's mechanisms and programs aim at reducing poverty and unemployment through providing temporary and permanent job opportunities. In addition to providing loans, financial support, and various care services and delivering them to the poor. Of those programs:

- Social Fund for Development (established in 1997 per Law No. 10): The Fund's efforts in development have been multiplied and have effectively contributed to achieving the state's plans in social and economic fields through empowering individuals, families, small establishments, low income and poor groups. The Fund provides financial services and loans for income generating projects and productive services to eventually limit poverty and unemployment. This helps easing the impact of the economic reforms especially on poor and low income women and families, while providing job opportunities for both men and women. The number of beneficiaries of the fund's services exceeds 9 million inhabitants 50 per cent of which are females.

Table (24)**Accumulative number of socio-economic service beneficiaries provided by the Social Fund for Development until 2005**

Beneficiaries		
Gender	Direct	Indirect
Male	4,809,100	1,447,877
Female	4,856,417	1,656,528
Total	9,665,517	3,104,405

Source: Social Fund for Development, annual report 2005.

- The Fund has also achieved many goals in providing basic economic and social services such as: education, health, water, credits, savings and facilitating access to those services. The small and micro establishments' development program represents one of the main three programs of the fund. It is the main factor in supporting small and micro credit programs, through providing this service to 12 different foundation and program. It also provides insurance facilitation to small and micro credit projects and is mostly provided to women.

13.3 Of the main programs benefiting from the Fund's financial services are:

a) National Foundation for Micro Financing:

This was established in accordance to the Public Associations Law No. (1) for year 2001, the foundation was launched in 2003 as the first establishment specialized in micro credit in Yemen. It provides its services such as savings, credit and insurance only to women, and encourages them to establish income generating projects to empower them economically. The foundation provides job opportunities in both rural and urban areas in 9 governorates.

Table (25)**Increasing number of beneficiaries of the National Foundation for Micro Financing since 2002 until end of 2005**

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005
No. of Beneficiaries	501	2,555	6,558	7,959
Total	175773			

Source: National Foundation for Micro Financing – annual report 2005.

b) Al-Tadhamun Foundation for Micro Financing:

This foundation was established through the cooperation of three women associations that were responsible for three programs established by the Social Fund for Development. The foundation aims at financing the deprived groups in the society especially women, so as to enable them of running income generating projects. The foundation works in all the governorates, benefiting 5,140 men and 60,000 women.

c) Small Industries and Establishment Financing Fund:

This fund was established per the Republican Decree No. (39) for year 2002 which stipulated the financial and administrative independence of the fund. The fund targets small creditors who run small projects in the production, services and commercial fields.

Table (26)

Displaying the executed loans from the Small Industries Fund until 2005

Beneficiaries		Percentage
Male	2,912	74 %
Female	1,035	26.2 %
Total	3,947	100 %

Source: Small Industries and Establishment Financing Fund 2005.

d) General works project:

The number of projects executed by the General Works project was 1,270 projects between 2002 and 2005 with a total cost of 86.8 million dollars. The number of beneficiaries is around 7.4 million inhabitants 67.1 per cent were females.

e) National Program for Productive Families:

During the period from 2002-2005 around 21,291 women benefited from this program. The number of training centers affiliated to the program increased to 67 centers in addition to 41 civil society centers.

Table (27)

Outcomes of the Productive Family and Society Centers between 2002-2005

Years	Number
2002	4,152
2003	6,039
2004	5,900
2005	5,200
Total	21,291 women

Source: National Program for Productive Families, annual reports 2002-2005.

13.4 Sports and cultural recreation:

- There is only one woman appointed per Republican Decree (53) for year 2002 as a Deputy Minister for the Theater and Popular Arts Sector at the Ministry of Culture. Women participate in all creative, arts and literary activities such as literature, music, cotemporary arts, acting, singing, popular arts, traditional arts, handicrafts, lectures and seminars, poetry and story telling sessions, tourist trips in addition to participating in many seminars, workshops, conferences and internal and external events. The most significant is Sana'a first young Arab

poets' conference which took place under the Sana'a cultural capital activities in 2004 in which 15 female poets stood out distinctively.

- Between 2003 and 2004 four hundred and fifty titles was published for Yemeni writers of which 20 publications was for female writers. The ninth general conference for Yemeni Writers Union which was conducted in May 2005 resulted the election of a female as a Secretary General of the Union for the first time. The new general secretariat structure of the union includes 11 members of which 3 are women, an event which shows an increase in women's role in cultural life.
- Sports represent another form of physical, mental and spiritual practiced by women. The Cabinet Decree No. (1) for 2005 approved support for female sports and included female sports among the current activities of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. A Women's Department was established in the Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2003 with the following objectives:
 - Identifying female sport figures qualified for planning and organizing and able to manage train and arbitrate.
 - Enhancing the status of female sports in the society.
 - Reforming the social attitude about women's practicing sports.

The Women's General Department at the Ministry of Youth and Sports dedicated five million riyals per year to support women's sports activities and their committees in the governorates. The department called for the acceptance of girls in the Supreme Institute for Physical Sports and consequently the first batch of girls was admitted in this institute in 2005, and the first females' sports club was also established (Bilquis Sports, Social and Cultural Club).

Moreover, the sports unions' charter was amended to include at least one female representative in the girls' sports. The general secretariat approved increasing women's representation to 20 per cent in the secretariat and that the deputy president must be a woman. Government schools are supplied with basic sports equipment and girls' schools are encouraged to allocate sports activities in the weekly timetable.

The Yemeni Olympiad Committee took the responsibility of activating female sports activities and set forth a strategy for women's sports (2000-2004) which includes a working plan to achieve the objectives related to improving women's status in sports by working through three directions: Women's sports and the Ministry of Sports and Youth, women's sports and the Ministry of Education and women's sports and the Ministry of Higher Education. 8 female sports committees in eight governorates were established since the start of the women and sports committee in 2003.

13.5 Challenges and difficulties:

- The small and micro establishments face many obstacles, for example, banks decline their funding requests, absence of creativity and rejuvenation, lack of consultative services relating to production, marketing and training techniques. This affects product's quality and hinders its marketing.

- Modest financing dedicated to social security (social care amounts) which does not suffice in covering the family's basic needs. The government is currently studying increasing these amounts.
- Weak infrastructure in women's sports and cultural fields.
- Limited number of female trainers, arbitrators and lack of national capacities. In addition to the fact that most arbitrating and judging tasks in female sports centers and schools are mainly handed to men. Moreover, there are no sports curricula discussing the importance of females' sports and appreciating their particularities and females various abilities.
- The limited number of girls enrolled in physical education and sports in Yemeni institutes and universities and graduates do not find suitable jobs as trainers, referees and administrators in this field.
- Weak performance of the media, cultural and educational establishments in leading awareness organized campaigns aiming at promoting women's sports and their right to professionalize in this field.

Measures taken to overcome these challenges:

- The state draws out objective policies which aim at enhancing women's economic and social conditions and translating these policies to programs and projects. Examples of this are what the Social Fund for Development did when the banks did not respond positively with the request to fund small and micro establishments. In 2003 the Fund decided to finance the small and micro credit establishment which is the only establishment in Yemen specialized in funding small establishments. Through this establishment, the Fund provided technical support to enhance the management skills of the various projects and also it provides financial support through loans. The Fund provided training for the Handicrafts Association in Taiz, special training for the small credits clients' projects, another project for marketing and a project to manufacture school furniture through small scale manufacturers.
- Inclination to establish Al-Amal Bank for lending poor people per Law No. (22) for year 2002. The Bank aims to effectively contribute to reducing poverty through providing loans and financial facilitation to poor people, especially women to empower them economically.
A feasibility study was conducted by a consultative group and work is still on going to establish the Bank in the best international standards in small credits. Funding of the project is completed from the private sector and now procedures are taking place to avail the license and start working.
- The grant from the Japanese government in 2005 was dedicated to female sports through furnishing and equipping Bilquis Club for girls.
- Expanding the national program for productive families' activities and opening new branches for females as the number of branches reached 67 branches.
- Including many poor families in many districts and governorates in the social care program to include 307,698 cases 50 per cent of which are women and expanding the social care fund's activities to training and loaning beneficiaries.

13.6 Recommendations:

- Increasing education opportunities for women.
- Enhancing awareness among women in laws and legislations to help them to know their economic, civil and cultural rights whether for educated or uneducated women.
- Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the National Plan for Socio-economic Development Programs (2006-2010) from a gender perspective.
- Paying attention to the need to create sectoral and general gender sensitive budgets in which amounts are dedicated to programs and projects targeting women's development.
- Adopting administrative procedures and legislations able of developing and organizing small and micro-credit projects and ensuring that a high percentage of women benefit from those projects. To create the suitable circumstances to transform those projects to self income generating projects.
- The need for cooperation between the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education to provide a suitable environment for female sports activities.
- Building at least one sports hall for females in the main cities in the governorates (Aden, Taiz, Hadramout, Hudaidah, Ibb, Abyan, Lahj, Dhamar and Mahweit) and to issue a decree dedicating certain days in general sport clubs for women.
- The importance of qualifying and training women in all cultural and sports activities (management, training, arbitrating and communication).

Article (14)

Rural women

14.1 The rural woman plays an important role in the vegetation and animal sector in one go. The agricultural sector depends on women largely as 87 per cent of the contribution to this sector is from women of the total female labor force, compared to (44 per cent) men. The agricultural production contributes 18.4 per cent of the total GDP and 7.5 per cent of the total exports. The rural women shoulder the main load in agricultural activities, and most rural families are supported by women because their men usually migrate outside the villages. Despite this important role, there is hardly any recognition of women's efforts in this sector.

The government represented through the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation has adopted a number of projects supporting rural women directly and indirectly in the rural areas. Of these policies is Aden Agenda in 2000, in addition the agricultural policies in the Republic of Yemen which dedicated policies for rural women within the general frame as follows:

- Activating women's role in phrasing policies and rural development strategies.
- Involving rural women in planning and executing agricultural programs and projects.
- Encouraging women to increase their agricultural production and providing women with financial and marketing support.

- Giving a larger role to rural women to take care of a part of their needs.
- Providing the suitable environment for female extension role in rural areas while focusing on income generating projects such as domestic commerce issues.
- Encouraging rural women to restore traditional and cooperation practices in keeping and raising cattle and care of rain dependant agriculture and developing them.

To implement these recommendations the General Department for Developing Rural Women was established in 2000. The Minister issued a decree to promote Rural Women's Sections in the Ministry's offices at the governorate levels in 2001 to Departments. These played a visible role in adopting a number of projects and programs targeting rural women directly and indirectly and based on this decree around 11 women were appointed as head of departments in various governorates. Also many female rural extensions are employed by the government and are positioned in many governorates. Their number in every governorate ranges from 1 to 50 agricultural extensions. On the administrative level, many training workshops and courses were carried out for female agricultural extensions and engineers who provide services to rural women directly in the villages.

14.2 Development projects:

The projects executed by the General Department for Developing Rural Women at the Ministry of Agriculture. The Department carried many activities for rural women during the period 2002-2006.

Table (28)

Projects and activities for rural women between 2000-2005

Project	Establishment and duration	Type	Target groups	Funding agency	Executing agency	Project cost	Remarks
Rural women department support	2000-2003 (3 years)	Support	Rural women	Dutch Embassy	General Depart. for Rural Women Development	One million dollar	Executed in two phases
Female agriculture extensions in Soqatra Island	2002-2003 (1 year)	Support	Rural women	French Embassy (food aid)	Women's section + Gen. Dept for Rural Women	Ten million dollars	
Raising sheep, wool weaving in Amran governorate	2001 – 2003 (2 years)	Support	Rural women	TELEFOOD program + FAO	General Depart. for Rural Women Development	\$4000 from FAO + \$4000 from the Dutch project+ \$2000 from the Ministry	Executed in two phases
Decentralization investment: furnishing Women Depts. in governorates	2003 one year	Support	Rural women	Dutch Embassy	General Depart. for Rural Women Development	\$750,000	
Raising local sheep and goats using modern techniques - Lahj	Two years	Support	Rural women	French Embassy (food aid)	Gen. Dept. for Rural Women Development +Lahj dept. + Al-Khadad Association	YR.14,050,350/00	
Post harvest techniques	2005-2007 (3 years)	Support	Rural women	French Embassy (food aid)	Gen. Dept. for Rural Women Development +Taiz dept. + Talouq Association	YR.29,503,350/00	

Source: General Department for Developing Rural Women, 2006 report.

General projects carried by the Ministry of Agriculture in rural development:

Currently there are two big projects run by two women:

1. Rain fed agriculture and live stock project carried on as per Cabinet Decree (71) for year 2006.

Table (29)

The objectives of the rain fed agriculture and live stock project

Rain fed agriculture and live stock project				
Project duration	Location	Project cost	Funding agencies	Project aim
2006-2011	Hudeidah Hajja Lahj Mahweit Sana'a	33,778,915 \$	- International development body (loan) \$20,000,000/00 - Government (contribution) \$3,778,915/00 - Government \$10,000,000/00	Elevate poverty and improve natural resource management in rural areas. Enable farmers in marketing techniques and systems in rain fed agricultural lands Preservation of soil and water collection

Source: General Department for Planning at the Ministry of Agriculture, report.

2. Comprehensive rural development project in cooperation - Dhamar

Table (30)

The objectives of the rural development project and funding agencies

Rural development project and funding agencies			Funding agency	Project aim
2005-2011	Dhamar	\$22,656,662/00	- International Agriculture Development \$14,014,602/00 - Government contribution \$1,489,143/00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsing food security and improving family income above poverty line • Improving living standards for small farmers and the village communities and to participate in development

Source: General Department for Planning at the Ministry of Agriculture, report.

Additionally there are a number of agricultural development projects providing service to rural women directly or indirectly in all agriculture fields. Such as Al-Dhale project which started in 2005 and was concerned with developing and building the capacities of rural women and integrating them

in the projects component. Raima project worked on creating associations and women centers supporting rural women directly such as Women's Center Friends Association and Tricot Association.

Field studies were conducted to study rural women's conditions and to take measures and remedies to improve their conditions. Of the main studies is the effort and time reducing study in vegetation and animal production, post harvesting and storage.

14.3 Agricultural exhibitions:

There are annual agriculture exhibitions and through these a section for women's products is held such as the silver exhibition for industry, fish and agriculture in 2003, Al-Mukala exhibition in 2005, Al-Hudeidah exhibition in 2006. In addition to women's participation in the local exhibits held regularly in the governorates.

Training, capacity building and cooperation programs with the Arab Organization for Agriculture Development and the National Population Council:

Within the national program for protection from AIDS the Ministry of Agriculture represented by the General Department for Rural Women's Development prepared a proposal for a training program for rural women on sexually transmitted diseases awareness. The follow-up and coordination committee drew a training plan for the following years to enhance awareness of the rural women about these diseases in coordination with the National Program for Fighting AIDS and the National Population Council. Further, workshops were conducted for the Ministry of Agriculture's leaders and training courses for the agriculture extensions in the various governorates to educate about the dangers of this disease.

The Arab Organization for Agriculture Development funded and supported a number of national and regional training courses for the Ministry of agriculture and especially for rural women and personnel working on rural women's development. It also provided funding for many small income generating projects executed in the previous years.

14.4 Cooperative associations:

The recommendations of the third general conference for cooperative societies included in the main directions of the general objectives of the third five years Development Plan (2001-2005) to enhance rural women's participation in agricultural development in order to increase agricultural production.

Decree No. (39) for year 1998 about the cooperative association and unions approved the establishing of women's and mixed associations. These associations include Cooperative Agriculture Union. The number of cooperative agricultural associations with mixed membership is 22 associations and the women's agriculture associations are 4. The total number of female members in mixed association is 991 of the total membership of 3,981. Women's Department was established in the cooperative union in 1999, of its objectives:

- Activating female members in the agriculture cooperative associations.
- Creating job opportunities for women to enhance their living conditions.
- Integrating women in the cooperative agriculture work.

Table (31)
Cooperative agriculture associations mixed and women around the republic
(2002-2006)

Governorate	No. of Associations	No. of Men	No. of Women	Total women associations	Total mixed associations
Sana'a	7	1,454	764	1	7
Taiz	1	87	15	-	1
Ibb	4	109	222	2	2
Amran	3	102	227	1	2
Dhamar	2	164	24	-	2
Lahj	1	79	1	-	1
Hudeidah	2	82	15	-	2
Dhale	2	522	55	-	2
Marib	3	94	27	-	3
Al-Jouf	1	153	2	-	1

Source: Agriculture Cooperative Union data 2005.

Between 2002 and 2006 no association was ever established in Abyan, Sa'ada, Al-Mahweit, Sayoun, Al-Mahara, Aden, Al-Baidha and Shabwa governorates.

The third five year Socio-economic Development Plan (2006-2010) included some policies for rural women:

- Involving rural women in planning and implementing agricultural projects and programs and providing credit and marketing facilitation for women. And also developing agricultural extensions for women in rural areas emphasizing on income generating projects and domestic economy.
- Developing the local breeds of live stock to reach high productive breeds and encouraging rural women to revive traditional cooperative practices in owning and raising stock.
- Improving the animal extensions programs targeting rural women in feeding and barn care.

14.5 Health care services:

The fertility rate in Yemen reaches 6.2 per cent being 6.7 per cent in the villages and 4.5 per cent in the cities. The health conditions in the rural areas is considered low compared with the urban areas in the country. Many diseases are spread in the suburbs and this affects the health of mothers and children mainly and the mortality rate for women in Yemen reaches 366 women for every 100,000 live birth (family health survey 2003). As a result of the many pregnancies, rural women are subjected to many health complications which increase their mortality rate more than urban women. As for infant mortality and under five years old this reached 99.8 for every 1000 live birth being 105.2 in the villages compared to 79.3 in the cities.

The government adopted the National Reproductive Health Strategy (2002-2006) which aim at improving rural women's health and setting programs and plans to support rural women in the health sector. The plans include family planning programs and in addition to enhancing women's awareness the programs which involve men in the family planning education because men are the main decision makers in the family on these issues.

The health guidance programs work in most rural areas and provide health services through what is known as mobile teams and clinics. These are provided by many associations such as the Family Care Association and al-Islah charity. These services reach difficult rural areas and provide contraceptives to remote areas where such services are not available.

The departments and sections affiliated to the Ministry of Agriculture contribute to improving the health situation of rural families through executing a number of activities such as awareness meetings in health and public health and population education and participating in vaccination campaigns in coordination with the health and population offices in the country.

Health services face many difficulties limiting women's access to contraceptives and family planning advice in rural areas because of conservative traditions. Ignorance amongst the rural women regarding the importance and accessibility of these services to her and her family is another factor contributing to their access for health services. Geographic obstacles such as remoteness and absence of asphalt roads add to this problem, in addition to the segregation of population which makes the health service coverage a big problem.

Despite these problems, there are efforts through social marketing of the contraceptives which provides them at a minimal price, and of course they can be found in hospitals and health centers. The percentage of using contraceptives in Yemen reached 23.1 per cent. The modern contraceptives stand at 13.4 per cent (health survey 2002).

14.6 Women's nutritional condition:

The government, represented by the Ministry of Health signed an agreement with the World Food Program for a project to support women and children suffering from malnutrition, tuberculosis and leprosy between 2002 and 2007. The agreement focused on remote areas of the suburbs and underweight women who were given during pregnancy and 6 months after delivery complete meals and also children were given nutritious feeding since birth until five years of age. Ten governorates were targeted including 34 health centers. The number of women pregnant benefited reached 41,000 and 35,000 of nursing mothers. The awareness about nutrition and importance and ways of healthy eating and food production was enhanced through educational tools and sessions conducted by the Rural Women's Development Departments and sections in the various offices and projects.

14.7 Agricultural marketing:

The means and resources rural women use to market their products are divided as follows:

Direct marketing means:

Whereby the rural woman markets her products on her own or using a family member through: Retailers, selling to whole dealers, in weekly markets, in occasions and within the village.

Indirect marketing means:

Whereby the rural woman markets her products through middlemen for a minimal fee:

Retail and whole sellers, periodic exhibitions, venders and roaming sellers, annual exhibitions, cooperative associations, public associations and organizations.

Problems facing rural women in marketing:**Social issues:**

Traditions and practices, increase reproductively rate, land ownership, family head's dealing with the middle person.

Economic issues:

Capital money, calculating the product costs, sense of investment, encouraging women's products.

Technical issues:

Type and components of the product, mechanisms for manufacturing, packaging, wrapping, and storing the product.

14.8 A model for rural women's creditor parties:

Agriculture Credit Bank:

This bank is considered an important loaning agency serving the rural community in general. The loans and financial facilities are given to agriculture and fishery investments and other projects. The percentage of loans given to rural women between (2002-2005) is as follows:

Table (32)
Number of women availing loans from the Agriculture Credit Bank between (2002-2005)

Years	No. of women	Loan amount (YR)
2002	277	17,051
2003	218	13,243
2004	151	11,398
2005	1,227	145,229
Total	1,873	186,920

Source: Agriculture Credit Bank data.

In addition to Agriculture Credit Bank, the Agriculture and Fish Production Promotion Fund and the Social Security Network provide facilitated credits for women in rural areas.

14.9 Challenges and difficulties:

- Spread of illiteracy among rural women along with dominating traditions which limit women's enrollment in education.
- Weak services (water, electricity, transportation) in many villages' especially remote ones.

- Many women's departments and sections at agriculture offices suffer from lack of resources which hinders their performance.
- Low number of media and awareness programs delivered through audio and visual means.
- Weak marketing channels for rural women's products.
- Scarcity of crediting bodies which would lend rural women, as well as feeble credit facilitations.
- Low wages for women working in the agricultural sector.

14.10 Future directions:

- Endorsing institutional structure of the General Department for Rural Women Development on the national and local levels.
- Increasing the number of schools in the suburbs and encouraging girls' enrollment.
- Increasing media and educational programs through visual and audio means to enhance awareness of rural women.
- To eliminate the marketing problems faced by rural women when marketing their products through provision of marketing channels.
- Coordination with the studies centers to ease access to information and updates field studies.
- Encouraging rural women to take loans through the credit authorities and to facilitate available credits.
- Conducting an annual marketing exhibition for rural women's products.
- Conducting field surveys to identify rural women's basic needs.
- Increasing financial support to rural women's programs.

Article (15)

Equality between men and women in front of the law

15.1 According to article number 6 of the Yemeni Constitution, Yemen commits to the universal human rights declaration, the two international conventions on rights and all ratified treaties and agreements. The respect of human rights and defending them is a basic rule in the Yemeni society. Both men and women have rights exercised through the constitution and applied laws discussed in details in the fourth report on the level of implementation of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. That report discussed the articulated articles in the constitution and laws with regard to article 6. For example, just as the man has an independent financial liability the woman does too and so can exercise civil rights like signing, selling, buying and renting contracts, grants and wills and all partnership contracts with others. She also has the right to run her own property and supervise it.

15.2 There are some women in Yemen now working in commerce and are considered businesswomen. The number of businesswomen registered with the chamber of commerce is 60 women in Sana'a, 200 in Aden and 20 in Taiz.

An office for businesswomen was established in 2005 in coordination with the Ministry of Industry and Commerce at the Chamber of Commerce and run by women. This office in coordination with the Ministry executed a number of seminars, courses and workshops on accounting systems, management and operating businesses, and how to develop the capital, modern management and visions for businesswomen. It also targeted the obstacles facing businesswomen in Yemen and the role of commerce chambers in endorsing gender equality, in addition to holding discussions on Yemen's joining the World Trade Organization.

15.3 In the Judiciary System, the Constitution treats women equally to men. Females have the right to seeking justice through courts and demanding their constitutional rights in case violated. She has the right to defend herself in all investigation stages and in front of all courts directly or through a representative or a lawyer. Women can stand before the law as an accuser or a defendant. The state ensures legal aid to those who can not afford it being men or women, and so women have the right to benefit from legal rights. She has the right to testimony before the persecution and justice system. In fact, in some cases women's testimony is prioritized to men's when it is about personal female issues. Women get compensation for the damages inflicted on her or her money by others as the laws conditions compensation to anyone who has been harmed whether he is a man or a woman.

The applied laws relating to women's admission in the legal system do not prevent women from joining this field. There are many women who have joined the justice system and as lawyers since the early seventies of last century without suffering from any obstacles culturally or legally. And now after the unity four females have been admitted. According to the latest judiciary statistics, there are 32 women working in the general attorney and as judges compared to 1500 male judges. And for the first time in Yemen a female judge has been appointed in the Supreme Court of the Republic.

15.4 In the legal defense field, there are many female lawyers with offices run by them or in mixed offices practicing law. There are female lawyers under training. Female lawyers defend their clients before the law equally to male lawyers.

15.5 The Yemeni Constitution gave the right to accommodation to all citizens and the right to movement for men or women. The applied laws detailed the regulation of this aspect and with regards to women living with their families in the Yemeni society, a woman lives with her father being the first guardian and when married she moves to live with her husband. There are cases of women living alone or in a shared accommodation when there are away from their homes either for education or work. Also many women travel outside the country either for education, work, medical treatment or attending conferences and international events and they represent Yemen in international occasions.

15.6 It is known that the judiciary system in Yemen is the individualistic system and so the judiciary power with its three levels: primary, appeal and supreme is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this article.

The administrative bodies are:

The Judiciary Inspection Authority at the Ministry of Justice and General Attorney, complaints office at the Presidential Office, Women National Committee, labor committees at the Ministry of Labor and general complaints and reports department at the Ministry of Human Rights.

15.7 To conclude it could be said that Yemen is committed to article number 15 of the CEDAW and the constitutional texts relating to this article. The reality also shows a progress in women's role in the society whether regarding exercising civil rights or seeking justice, or joining the judiciary system or her right to accommodation and movement.

However, reality also indicates deficiency in practicing legal rights of women because of many challenges such as:

- a) Low legal awareness because of lack of knowledge about the laws and legislations. Relevant authorities are incompetent in spreading legal awareness also because of spread of illiteracy.
- b) The existence of negative traditions and cultural heritage oppose women's seeking justice in front of courts especially in rural areas.
- c) Women are economically dependant on men, especially in the villages and this affects their managing their own lives and businesses, especially married women.

15.8 In order to overcome these challenges, the government represented by the concerned authorities such as the Ministry of Human Rights, Supreme Council for Women and its executive body the Women National Committee and many civil society organizations such as the Yemeni network for fighting violence against women SHIMA, Sisters Arab Forum for human rights, Yemeni Women Union, Human Rights Information and Training Center and the lawyers syndicate. They all executed many projects and activities in this regard such as:

1. Launching a wide campaign to amend discriminative laws against women suggested by the WNC.
2. Executing a comprehensive program to develop and build women's capacities in the judiciary system and law carried by the Sisters Arab Forum for Human Rights
3. Legal protection for female prisoners carried by the Yemeni Women Union in 21 governorates and defending prisoners' rights and also legal awareness for prisoners, judges and lawyers. The psychological and social hearing session's service was provided to 268 violated women. A shelter was prepared for violated women released from prison to train them and empower them to become independent and integrate in the society.
4. Gender workshops and legal rights for women awareness activities were carried on along with the events on women's legal status and judiciary reform and mechanisms for human rights protection.
5. Conducting a National Conference to Combating Violence against Women in March 2004.

6. An international Conference on Women's Rights in the Arab World from words to deeds was held in December 2005.
7. Participation in many external conferences and events about judiciary and violence.
8. A Republican Decree was issued to release 71 female prisoners who have served their sentences but could not afford the bail money. The state paid their debts total of YR. five million riyals on the occasion of Women's Day in 2006.
9. Opening admission for girls who fulfill the criteria to join the Supreme Judiciary Institute.

Article (16)

Family and marriage law

16.1.1 Strong family ties create a congruous society. The Yemeni society, like other Islamic and Arab societies maintain the harmony of the community. A family in the society is made up of a husband and a wife as pillars of the family in addition to the children. The legislations and laws of the Republic of Yemen pay great attention to this aspect.

This is clearly evident through Yemen's ratification of international treaties and conventions. Article (16) of the Human Rights Declaration, and article (10) of the international convention on economic, social and cultural rights and articles (23 & 24) of the international convention on civil and political rights, as well as articles (1, 2 & 3) of the marriage agreement and minimum age for marriage all conquer with this article of the CEDAW.

- The Yemeni Constitution and relevant active laws contain constitutional and legal texts that regulate family and marital relations and obligated spouses to rights and duties. The legislations stem from the Islamic jurisprudence which entitles the freedom to choose a husband and his duties towards his wife. It also states property possession, alimony, custody of children, adulthood and marriage ages, marriage registration, dowry among other issues related to marriage. These issues were detailed along with the related constitutional and legal laws in the fourth national report on implementation of the CEDAW in 1999.

The form and style of the family in Yemen is based on marriage. Article (6) of the Personal Status Law No. (20) for year 1992, defines marriage as "a commitment between spouses via a legal contract through which a man enjoys his woman lawfully. It is also a mechanism for ensuring fidelity and creating a family based on compassionate treatment".

- The Personal Status Law is one of the important laws on which the texts of article (16) of this convention apply to. The Personal Status Law was issued through a Republican Decree No. (20) for year 1992. It was amended through Laws Nos. (24, 27 & 34) for years (98, 99 and 2003) respectively. Despite these amendments, the Personal Status Law still contains many articles which require changing.

16.2 In year 2001, WNC formed a legal team to study this law. The team concluded the need to amend some articles. This issue was forwarded to the Parliament in 2003, where the law was discussed and an agreement to amend article (47) of the family and marriage law was reached. The amended article has become as follows:

“Each of the spouses has the right to annul the marriage if the other has a repelling flaw whether this flaw was present prior to the marriage or happens after the couple gets married. A flaw common to the spouses is madness, leprosy, and..., while flaws restricted to the husband are ..., and tuberculoses. The right to annul the marriage is forgone if an outspoken or implied acceptance is made, except in infectious or chronic diseases which could not be treated where the choice to continue in the marriage or forsake it could be made repeatedly provided the case of flaw is proved through medical records.”

In year 2004 WNC formed another legal team to review laws concerned with women, of which was the Personal Status Law. The team recommended the need to change articles (7, 8, 11, 12,13,14,15 & 139). In addition to including three more texts. All the recommendations are detailed in the following table:

Table No. (33)

Current text	Recommended text
<p>Article (7): adding a statement to the sixth paragraph and to another paragraph.</p> <p>To take place in one session.</p> <p>An acceptance from the adult male guardian that indicates marriage traditionally legally according to his will or his legal representative's.</p> <p>The acceptance by an adult, non criminal person, or his legal representative of marriage from before the decline.</p> <p>Identifying the spouses in the contract by name or surname or any representation that identifies them</p> <p>The acceptance and agreement must coincide and match and not indicative of the time in duration. Any condition which does entitles an illegal act or contradicting to the contract is not valid.</p> <p>Each of the spouses must be free of the marriage barriers stated in the third section of this chapter or any other infectious diseases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must be in one session - An acceptance from the male adult guardian or his representative which traditionally indicates the marriage, or his legal representative. - Identifying the spouses in the contract by name or surname or any representation that identifies them. - The acceptance and agreement must coincide and match and not indicative of the time in duration. Any condition which does entitles an illegal act or contradicting to the contract is not valid. - Each of the spouses must be free of the marriage barriers stated in the third section of this chapter or any other infectious diseases. - Added paragraph (the contract writer must be sure of the consent of the wife to be).

<p>Article(8): the fundamental pillars of a marriage contract without any of which the marriage is illegal are:</p> <p>Husband, wife, they are the location of contract, an agreement and acceptance. The contract could take place through speech, writing and a letter from the absent to the contract location. The dumb marriage may be approved through a clear sign of acceptance.</p>	<p>The fundamental pillars of a marriage contract without any of which the marriage is illegal are:</p> <p>Man, woman, they are the location of contract, an agreement and acceptance. The contract could take place through speech, writing and a letter from the absent to the contract location. The dumb marriage may be approved through a clear sign of acceptance.</p>
<p>Article (11): The marriage of the insane is not authorized unless the guardian gets approval from the judge...etc.</p>	<p>Marriage of the insane is illegal.</p>
<p>Article (12): a man has the right to marry four wives provided the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - he is able to be just - he has financial capability - he informs his current wife(s) 	<p>The husband must inform his current wife(s) that he wishes to marry again. If he hides this information any of his wives has the right to call for an annulment of the marriage.</p> <p>Note: there is a suggestion regarding a fine</p>
<p>Article (14): the person who endorses the marriage contract legally and the wife's guardian must register the marriage certificate at the concerned authorities in one month's time. If one of the above does it, it suffices for the others. The certificate must include required information such as the ages, IDs and the dowry amount.</p>	<p>Adding the following text: and is fined 10,000 Yemeni riyals everyone who does not register the marriage certificate in the duration stated in this article.</p>
<p>Article (15)</p> <p>The marriage of a little girl is legally valid but she is not to be wedded until she is ready for sex, even if she exceeds 15 years old. And marriage of a little boy is not legally valid unless it is proven for the good</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marriage of the young child male or female is illegal until 18 years of age or more. 2. The judge may reduce the age limit if he sees required. 3. A penalty no more than 6 months and a fine no more than 50,000 Yemeni riyals anyone who testifies the maturity of any of the wedded spouses when knowing that either or both are below 18 years old.

	4. A penalty no more than one year and a fine no more than 100,000 Yemeni riyals on anyone who legalizes a marriage while knowing that either or both are below 18 years old.
Article (139) related to custody, as the current law defined 9 years for male children and 12 for female children unless the judge decides otherwise for the sake of the custodian	The custody duration is 15 years for both male and female children unless the judge decides otherwise for the sake of the custodian.
Additional article	The divorced woman enjoying custody of her children has the right to live in the marital accommodation or any other suitable housing. The father has the right to retrieve the house once the custody duration is over.
Additional article	If the judge realizes that the divorce took place without actual reason and would harm the wife in any financial or moral way, he has the right to order a compensation for the damages inflicted on the divorced women, so long as it does not exceed the amount of one year alimony of similar cases. The compensation may be paid together or in installments as the judge sees fit.

16.3 The proposed amendments have been forwarded to the Cabinet in 2005, where it was approved by the Decree No. (91) for year 2005. The Cabinet then stated the Regulation No. (94) for year 2005 to revise the proposed legal amendments of certain laws relating to women. It ordered the formation of a committee consisting of the Minister of Legal Affairs, the Minister of Human Rights and the Chairperson of the Women National Committee. The Minister of Legal Affairs to forward the revised laws to the parliament for discussion and decision.

- The Islamic religion completely rejects forcing a woman to a marriage. This is reflected in the laws which states acceptance or accordance of both spouses without forcing the girl to marry. However, certain forms of compelling still exist especially in the rural areas where girls are married against their will. Yet we can say that during the recent years, such cases have decreased because of the increasing awareness and education levels in the society. As to the duties and obligations when creating the marriage, during the marriage and when annulling it, these are regulated clearly by the Personal Status Law. The responsibilities of the husband include financial care, kind treatment and providing the wife with everything she needs of care and attention. And when ending the marriage, the law defined women's rights to alimony of a certain amount during a certain period.

- Mother's duties and her rights have been defined in the legislations towards the children. The law gave the custody rights to the children in case the husband and wife are separated until the children reach a certain legislated age, after which the children have the right to choose between their parents. The father has the obligation to cover his children's financial needs even if they are no longer living with their mother. In certain cases some fathers refrain from taking this responsibility or they unrightfully try to take the children, which in this case the mother has the right to take this issue to court and take back her children.
- The legislator has clearly kept the good of the children as a priority. The legislator left the choice of the number of children and the span between pregnancies to the agreement between the husband and wife, keeping in mind the husband's financial ability to take care of the children and to provide a dignified life for the family.

16.4 Islam has called clearly to keep at least two years between every pregnancy and to breast feed the baby for two years for the child's and mother's benefit. Yet some women opt to become pregnant in short spans which leads to negative impacts on the society generally and on women specifically as the growth rate reached 3.2 per cent, thus considers of the highest rates worldwide.

16.5 Child custody and guardianship rights and duties have been stipulated by law through giving this right to the mother in case the father dies and there is no paternal grandfather. As for alimony, the legislation decides it is the responsibility of the father, unless he is not able then it becomes of the mother if she can afford it.

Women have custody rights over her children in all living matters such as registering their birth, enrolling them in schools and educational institutions, and also marriage. The WNC successfully amended the Personal Status Law to give mothers equal rights to report a delivery and avail birth certificates of the children in 2003.

The law does not differentiate between personal rights of husband and wife and in the Islamic jurisprudence women can keep their maiden names and can choose the occupation she wants, as the husband does not have the right to force his wife to work in a certain job.

Each spouse has the right to own property, supervise and manage it. Women can legally run and manage their own properties. However, many women can not do so practically, like manage the house furniture because originally it is the husband's according to traditions which oblige him to furnish the house. Yet, these days many working women participate in the furnishing expenses but if a divorce takes place they can not own it back unless they keep the bills and seek justice in courts. Even in courts, many times women are not given this particular right so they rather not start the demand in the first place.

From the above, and from what has been mentioned in article 15, the legal liability of women does not change with the change in her family life before or after marriage.

16.6 There is no clear legal text defining the minimum age for marriage or engagement except for what is mentioned in article (15) of the Personal Status Law:

(The marriage of a little girl is legally valid but she is not to be wedded until she is ready for sex, even if she exceeds 15 years old. And marriage of a little boy is not legally valid unless it is proven for the good.)

Legally speaking, the marriage contract is not valid unless it has been endorsed by court and completed all legal procedures.

However, in reality there are many who get their daughters marry at an early age especially in the rural areas and consider this a private matter no one should interfere in. This could be attributed to their ignorance of the mental, social and health damages of early marriage in addition to the absence of a penalty on those who do break the marriage law.

16.7 Women's work in the house or farm is not accounted for and is considered from the non paid work as the society lists this among the routine daily tasks of women. Also their participation in house hold expenses and furnishing is not credited for in marriage or divorce.

Divorce takes place once the man pronounces the divorce pledge and there is no law that obliges divorce registration, although it is generally reported to the concerned personnel.

- From this, it could be said that this text from the CEDAW has been largely integrated in the Yemeni Constitution and laws and is implemented fairly in the Yemeni society. However, there remains some difficulties against best implementing article number (16), such as:
 - Absence of a legal text to define the minimum age for marriage clearly and prevents any marriage under this age.
 - The existence of negative traditions and practices which encourages early marriage.
 - Women are ignorant about their rights because of the spread of illiteracy especially in the rural areas.
 - In most cases women tend to be followers of men and are not able to make decisions of their own about their personal lives, especially their right to decide the number of their children or the span between each pregnancy and their right in choosing their husbands.

The mentioned difficulties are present more in the rural areas than in the cities because of low education and awareness levels.

- The WNC along with many civil society organizations, executed a number of activities to limit the difficulties mentioned above:
 1. Forming a legal team to study the laws including the Personal Status Law and to present recommended amendments according to the mentioned above matrix.
 2. Organizing workshops, seminars, discussion sessions, media and awareness campaigns on the risks and dangers of early marriage and polygamy. Also campaigning to define a minimum age of marriage not less than 18 years of age in accordance with the international treaties especially the child rights convention.
 3. Publishing a number of leaflets, posters, and stickers on dangers of early marriage.

Measures taken to overcome obstacles

1.1 The issues the WNC discussed in its previous report were:

- a. Early marriage defining the minimum age for marriage and the Personal Status Law.

The WNC presented a proposal for a law that defines a minimum age for marriage not less than 18 years old. The proposal is still being discussed by the concerned authorities. Many awareness activities were carried to highlight the risks of early marriage; these were mentioned in article 2-2 & 2-3

- b. There are discriminative articles in the Personal Status Law regarding polygamy as well as women's right to marriage and divorce. A woman has the right to refuse getting married if she deemed to do so. Also a married woman has the right to break up her marriage if she could not live with her husband any more. She also has the right to go to court and get herself married on her own in case her guardian refuses to get her married.
- c. There is an article which states that a girl is not to be married until she is ready for sex, which is not feasible to know. And the WNC forwarded a proposal to take out this phrase.
- d. Query about educational programs for girls who marry at an early age. This question has been answered in point 2-2 & 2-3.

Mechanisms for spreading the Convention

The convention is spread through direct and indirect mechanisms and is disseminated in the official and non official media.

- Direct mechanisms include training sessions and workshops conducted by the network on fighting violence against women (SHIMA) on the central and local levels with focus on concerned parties such as lawyers, judges, police officers, NGOs and media.
- On the occasion of the international day for fighting violence against women on 25th November 2005, SHIMA organized a large scale seminar on the CEDAW.
- Indirect mechanisms are through wide distribution of the Women Development Strategy which includes the convention as a strategic objective being one of the approaches to women's development and persistent work on supporting the country's implementation of the convention.
- The WNC in cooperation with the Ministry of Endowment published an awareness booklet on the agreement between the convention and the Islamic jurisprudence. The manual includes articles of the convention with religious comments on the texts. Many copies of the booklet were distributed in the national, regional and international conferences conducted inside or outside Yemen and were handed to researchers and media.
- The contents of the convention are approached even if indirectly in the media especially print journalism including Al-Yamania newspaper the mouth piece of the WNC.
- The convention was printed from the women's section at the UN website and distributed largely.
- Workshops on CEDAW were organized for the judiciary control officers and the media.
- There was a wide debate on the contents of the convention during the period of writing the fourth and fifth national reports which shed light on the convention.

- Focus on lifting the reservations of Arab states on the convention was made during the regional workshop on the convention in Beirut in September 2002.
- Before presenting the fourth and fifth national reports on the CEDAW, discussions were carried on the content of the reports.
- The attention of decision and policy makers was drawn to the convention's importance through a publication that was distributed among them at the stage of data collection on the central and local levels. Information was collected from the concerned parties in order to enrich the report.
- During the preparation of this report the training of the working team was covered by the media and the report itself will be presented in a public session in the capital city and governorates before being forwarded to the convention's committee.
- Activities and events relating to the CEDAW were and are being covered by media and receive publicity.
- Sisters Arab Forum prepared their shadow report and discussed it widely in the presence of NGOs and a number of government organizations
- The national report on the level of implementing CEDAW was presented at the Human Rights Information and Training Center in Taiz at the beginning of 2005 before the civil society organizations.

The activities and events mentioned above indicate an increasing interest in the convention.

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Working team

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Articles 1-4

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Articles 5-7

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Article 15-16

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