

A Collaborative Declaration for Participation

Women with Disabilities: Building Sustainable Peace in Yemen



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مؤسسة وئام شباب للتنمية
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For Development

Collaborative Statement for the participation of Women with Disabilities in building the Inclusive and Sustainable Peace



We are the concerned with justice, equality, and human dignity (Signatories to this joint declaration), , and driven by our firm belief that sustainable peace cannot be achieved without the full and effective participation of women with disabilities, and in recognition of the accumulated exclusion and marginalization that deepened the groans and sufferings of women with disabilities, and bound by our duty to advocate for those let down by institutions and sidelined by policies, and in adherence to the values of justice, freedom and dignity, as well as the right of every individual to be a peacemaker without discrimination, we pledge to tirelessly work to empower women with disabilities in Yemen to be active agents in peacebuilding, not mere recipients of its outcomes or silent witnesses to arrangements made in the name of the nation that do not include them.

In light of the successive conflicts in Yemen and the fragile peace formula that have remained captive to the logic of settlements between armed parties, we have found it necessary to question the prevailing models of representation that have, whether intentionally or ignorantly, overlooked the most vulnerable groups, particularly women living at the intersection of disability, gender marginalization, poverty, rural isolation, and institutional exclusion. We affirm that true peace cannot be built without equal recognition of dignity, rights, and the capacity to influence.

And out of our belief that disability excludes as much as society allows, and that exclusion does not stem from incapacity but from the neglect of structures, suppressed awareness, and the absence of justice, we affirm our resolve to:

- Redefine the conditions for engagement in peacebuilding processes to include women with disabilities as partners in reimagining the future of Yemen, not merely as beneficiaries of aid and relief programs.
- Develop tools for rights-based and political advocacy to ensure the redistribution of voice and opportunity in negotiation rooms, state institutions, and civil society.

- Undertake our duty to dismantle the symbolic and cultural systems that have legitimized the marginalization of women with disabilities, and to bridge the gap between law and practice, and between human rights rhetoric and societal reality.
- Accumulate field-based knowledge and institutional capacity that enable women with disabilities to build their independent political discourse and intervene in issues of transitional justice, national reconciliation, reconstruction, and education for pluralism.

We believe with absolute certainty that any peace does not embrace the marginalized is doomed to collapse and reproduce conflict within its institutions, we declare our unwavering commitment to unite our efforts in formulating a participatory declaration that creates a structural, not cosmetic, impact, and redraws the maps of political and social agency in Yemen so that women with disabilities are not merely a footnote in funding reports but a cornerstone in engineering a peace that does not exclude and does not produce marginalization again.

This declaration is not rooted in transient demands but in inherent rights enshrined in international and regional conventions to which the Republic of Yemen is committed, starting with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), which emphasizes full and effective participation, through Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on women, peace, and security, and ending with relevant national references.

With this awareness, we, women with disabilities in Yemen, declare our full commitment to participating in building inclusive and sustainable peace. We present this participatory declaration as an urgent call to all stakeholders to recognize peace as a collective process that is not complete without us, and to design it with all our voices, and through mutual recognition that excludes no one.

We issue this declaration, which is based on a set of fundamental principles and demands that guarantee social justice, and we refer to them as follows:

- **Non-discrimination and equality:** All forms of discrimination based on disability and gender must be eliminated, and equal rights and opportunities must be guaranteed for women with disabilities in all aspects of peacebuilding.
- **Empowerment and autonomy:** Women with disabilities must be supported and empowered to become change-makers and leaders in their communities, and their autonomy and right to self-determination must be promoted.
- **Inclusiveness and diversity:** Peace processes must be inclusive of everyone, with special attention paid to the most marginalized groups, including women with disabilities, and the diversity among women with disabilities must be recognized and their experiences and cultural backgrounds respected, and tools for community communication must be promoted.
- **Effective participation:** Women with disabilities must participate on an equal footing with others in all peace processes, including conflict prevention and resolution, negotiations, decision-making, agreement implementation, and reconciliation and reconstruction efforts.
- **Accountability and transparency:** All public and private sector stakeholders must be held accountable for their commitments to including women with disabilities in peacebuilding efforts, and transparency in decision-making and implementation must be promoted.



We, women with disabilities, call on all stakeholders—governments, United Nations organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society, media, and the international community—to:

First: Participation and Empowerment

- Explicitly include the rights of women with disabilities in all peace agreements and policies, including informal pathways such as community initiatives and civil dialogue, ensuring the right to life, social protection, protection from violence, quality education, equitable work, comprehensive healthcare, and political and social participation.
- Demand the empowerment of women with disabilities in political and social decision-making by providing opportunities for representation in decision-making positions at a minimum of 5%.
- Call for training and awareness programs for women with disabilities on their rights and effective participation in peace processes, alongside vocational rehabilitation programs tailored to their abilities and needs, with effective and transparent implementation of national laws' preventive measures.
- Emphasize that peace is only achieved through mutual recognition and redistribution of power and resources, and that rebuilding Yemen must begin with reshaping the political and social sphere to eliminate structural exclusion.
- Advocate for raising community awareness about the issues of women with disabilities, combating discrimination, and promoting awareness in alignment with relevant international conventions.

Second: Prevention, Protection, and Recovery

- **Activate Rights and Inclusion in Decision-Making:** Ensure the full and effective participation of women with disabilities in all societal aspects, including peacebuilding, on equal footing with others, and their inclusion in all decision-making levels related to conflict prevention and resolution, relief and recovery efforts, reconstruction, development, and implementation of inclusion commitments in local and national plans, ensuring sustainable civil liberties for components related to persons with disabilities to guarantee social justice.
- **Enhance Accessibility:** Provide access to all physical, informational, and communication environments, with necessary accommodations to enable women with disabilities to participate, including collecting and analyzing data disaggregated by disability, gender, and age to understand their specific challenges and effectively meet their need.
- **Ensure the protection and safety of women** with disabilities during and post-conflict, providing effective mechanisms for access to justice and compensation for violations. We demand respect for the freedom and independence of civil society organizations advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities as key partners in both disability and feminist components, defending their rights to ensure access to justice, services, and reduced exclusion, marginalization, and deprivation.
- **Promote Cooperation and Resource Allocation:** Raise community awareness about disability issues and the culture of inclusion, building strong partnerships between women's organizations, disability organizations, peacebuilding entities, governments, and international organizations to share expertise, knowledge, and best practices to enhance the inclusion of women with disabilities. Allocate sufficient resources to ensure their effective participation in peacebuilding and support organizations representing them to invest in empowerment programs that enhance their capacities to contribute to social change.

- **Provide Basic Needs:** Implement laws ensuring the economic, health, social, and civil rights of persons with disabilities, including a minimum of 5% representation in all government sectors, providing financial support and microloans for their projects, facilitating market access and product marketing, ensuring comprehensive health insurance, equipping health facilities to meet their needs (e.g., private delivery rooms, designated pathways, and bathrooms), providing assistive devices, psychological support services, combating stereotypes and discrimination, promoting social integration, facilitating access to public services and transportation, activating national mechanisms for social security, reducing stigma associated with disability, providing specialized psychological support, and recognizing their leadership and influence capacities.

We, the women with disabilities, also commit to following up on the implementation of this declaration and holding all stakeholders accountable for their commitments. We call for establishing effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure tangible progress in including women with disabilities in peacebuilding efforts and urge all relevant parties to adopt and implement this declaration to build an inclusive and just society that ensures the rights and participation of all.

Names of signatories:

A non-profit organization founded as a youth initiative in 2019, later becoming a formally licensed foundation in Taiz. The foundation has implemented diverse activities in several governorates, including Sana'a, Aden, Hadramawt, and Shabwa.

It aims to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, improve their participation in society, and enhance their representation in political work and decision-making. It also aims to promote their opportunities to access quality education and participate in community and economic life through advocacy, providing learning and protection programs, rehabilitation, and training.

The foundation's activities include providing educational programs tailored to persons with disabilities and offering direct educational support. It also works to raise community awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities and provides protection programs aimed at safeguarding them from risks, exploitation, and violence.

