

RESEARCH REPORT: COVID-19 SERIES



Peace and Conflict-Covid-19 Nexus: The Impact on Women's Inclusion in the Peace Process in Yemen



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This report is part of a body of work and a set of connected research projects on Covid-19, peace, and conflict. Please visit <https://peacerep.org> to find out more about our research projects on Covid-19.

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Supported by the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Covid Collective is based at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). The Collective brings together the expertise of UK and Southern-based research partner organisations and offers a rapid social science research response to inform decision-making on some of the most pressing Covid-19 related development challenges.

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About the Peace Track Initiative (PTI): PTI aims at localizing and feminizing the peace process through promoting inclusion and enhancing feminist knowledge leadership in the Middle East and North Africa with a focus on Yemen. PTI has positioned itself as a Track II partner promoting feminist peace processes. PTI working areas focus on promoting the inclusion of women and marginalized groups in the peace and political processes, as well as, promoting the protection of women's rights, and amplifying feminist knowledge leadership. PTI employs a human-rights-based approach to our programs. PTI operations are guided by the CEDAW, UNSC 1325 resolution and its relevant subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace, and Security, and internationally agreed on human rights frameworks. PTI was founded to support the peace process in Yemen and MENA region. It was incubated in Geneva at the Geneva Center for Security Policy in 2017 and then incorporated in Canada as non-profit incorporation (Registration No.: 1046074-5) on 22nd October 2017. The PTI is hosted at the Human Rights Research and Education Center, at Ottawa University in Canada. PTI has an office that is hosted at To Be Foundation for Rights and Freedom in Aden, Yemen. The authors would like to express their gratitude to the women who graciously gave their time to participate in this consultation. The authors are grateful to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) for peer reviewing this publication and to PeaceRep for their support to this project. Thanks to Allyson Doby and Rick Smith of Smith Design Agency for proofreading and production work.

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Introduction

This report is the third in a series that has examined the connections between Covid-19 and the conflict in Yemen in considering prospects of broader inclusion, i.e. women, when rethinking the peace process. The first report, produced by Yemen Policy Center¹ examined community relationships with security institutions in Taiz governorate and its impact on the Covid-19 response. The second report,² led by PeaceRep: The Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform (formerly the Political Settlements Research Programme (PSRP)), examined Covid-19 local and community level responses led by health professionals and CSOs in Taiz and Hadhramaut and how it intersects with the practices of other parties in conflict. Brief preliminary findings from the second report are set out below which complement the findings of this report on Covid-19, peace processes and their impact on women's participation in Yemen.

Throughout the pandemic, the peace process continued to stall in a context of wider country levels of violence escalated across key frontlines and parties who appeared to advance their conflict agendas or push forward their political agendas.³ The UN Secretary General's global ceasefire call in March 2020 produced some initial welcoming responses by conflict parties and claimed to be instituting forms of ceasefire, but shortly after reneged⁴ unchanging the situation. The peace process largely witnessed a failure of any of the major negotiations to progress, despite the existence of the December 2018 Stockholm agreement⁵ meaningful implementation in the Port of Hodeidah, to which it largely relates, also faltered. By June 2020, the UN envoy to Yemen had conducted the first mass online consultation with Yemenis on the opportunities and challenges to peace in Yemen. A little over a year later in August 2021, the United Nations had put in place the new envoy Hans Grundberg. In his October 2021 briefing to the UNSC, Grundberg reported having held numerous consultations with Yemeni, regional and international actors, including meetings with Yemeni women, and in his January 2022 briefing, he vowed that these consultations would continue to be 'deepened'.⁶

This report, partnering with Yemen Peace Track Initiative, focused on a group of women activists who have sought to influence the direction of negotiations, despite the impact of the pandemic on their lives, to explore their perspectives on the relationship between the Covid-19 pandemic and the peace process, and how they perceive their own inclusion and that of other women affected. This report aims to amplify Yemeni women's voices on how Covid-19 affected them personally and professionally. It highlights the restrictions on women's broad participation resulting from the pandemic, and how that impacted their work on the ground. The report provides policy recommendations from the participants.

Overview and Methodology

In support of PeaceRep: The Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform, Peace Track Initiative (PTI) conducted a consultation session with 11 Yemeni women leaders about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic responses on the conflict in Yemen. The 11 women who participated in the consultation are all political and civil society leaders and experts who work in the field of peacebuilding in Yemen, based inside and outside of Yemen, and with diverse geographical and political representation. Among the women, three are founders of organizations or networks, as well as a judge, a lawyer, a university professor, a union president and a member of a political party. The organizations represented were Wogood for Human Security Foundation, Awam Foundation for Development and Culture, To Be Foundation for Rights and Freedoms, and Food 4 Humanity. The networks represented were the Women Solidarity Network, the Women Technical Advisory Group (OSE affiliated), the Yemeni Women Coalition for Peace, and the Yemeni Women Pact for Peace and Security (UN Women affiliated) (see Annex I for participants' names and titles). Five other women were contacted and invited, but due to other commitments couldn't attend, including the Mothers of Abductees representative.

The session took place on the 29th November 2021 from 15:45 to 18:15 CET and was conducted in the form of a virtual roundtable discussion using Zoom as the platform. Arabic-English-Arabic interpretation was provided, allowing communication between the researcher and the participants during the introduction and the conclusion of the consultation session. The director of PTI, Rasha Jarhum, facilitated the discussion during the session and used Arabic as the first language.

The Impact of Covid-19 on the Peace Process

As the world was put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the UN saw it as a possible opportunity to implement ceasefires. In practice, the peace process in Yemen was deprioritized and put on hold as conflict escalated, and women have been highly affected by this hold. Some participants stated that many people had hoped that the pandemic would end the war in Yemen, drawing comparisons to the way in which the Spanish flu contributed to ending World War I. Other participants argued that in reality the opposite had happened, as the pandemic has actually led to an escalation of conflict, and increased child recruitment and other forms of forceful recruitment to the frontlines. They noted that new frontlines had opened up during the pandemic in Al-Bayda, Marib, Al-Dhale, and the Western coast. A participant shared, "While the world was busy dealing with the pandemic, the fighting parties in Yemen took advantage of this to escalate the conflict."

Themes of accountability and momentum within the peace process came up in other ways. One of the participants argued that peace processes require communication and connection in person, so that the results can be measured and built upon and that online political participation lacked this aspect. She explained that face-to-face connection is important to build trust, which is greatly needed in the peace mediation process. Importantly, participants also noted that the UN Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire in order to focus on addressing the pandemic was not respected in Yemen. It was noted that Saudi Arabia declared a ceasefire for only two weeks, with the Houthis refusing to comply. An interlocutor stated, "If anything, the war has become more violent since the start of the pandemic. In fact, the interruption of the Yemeni political process during the pandemic contributed to more aversion between the parties."

The participants asserted that only the women were the ones who responded to the UN Secretary-General's call for a ceasefire and held activities and events promoting an immediate ceasefire throughout Yemen. As for the November 2019 Riyadh agreement,⁷ the participants noted a lack of implementation. A participant stated, "Although there is currently a ceasefire, the forces are still present in Shokra and Shaykh Salem in Abyan which complicated the conflict."

In real terms, women's political participation during the pandemic continued to be limited and remains a pressing issue in Yemen's peace process. Nevertheless, Yemeni women were and are perceived as being on the frontlines in responding to Covid-19 and also promoting peace in Yemen.

Yemeni Women's Formal Political Participation during Covid-19

Since the beginning of the war, women's political participation has been limited and it has worsened by the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, disproportionately impacting women. During the round table discussion, the participants noted both positive and negative experiences in terms of political participation during the pandemic. One of the participants recalled the former UN Envoy Martin Griffiths holding a small number of virtual meetings during the lockdown, but that political negotiations within the peace process were halted overall as a result of the pandemic, negatively affecting women's political participation. Although there was no formal peace process in 2020-2021, the informal political meetings and militaristic advancement on the ground, for example in Marib and Al-Mahra, also restricted women from participating in these spaces. Moreover, it was noted by participants that there is a general lack of follow-up process or feedback regarding the results, outcomes or effectiveness of the online consultation meetings.

One participant explained, "After a Zoom call, women feel isolated again. We do not know the results and immediate reactions. The ability to lobby is not possible via Zoom which is a big part of women's political participation." It was also noted that women's participation in political parties had been further affected by the pandemic, with one woman explaining that political party meetings are held in informal settings at Qat sessions or 'Qat chews'¹⁸ that naturally do not include women. One of the participants said that they find out about these meetings after they are over, sometimes via social media. Political parties' influence has been almost non-existent since the beginning of the conflict in 2015. The remaining political activities were restricted to men. Needless to say that political parties in Yemen did not have a vision or a plan on dealing with Covid-19 in Yemen.

Nonetheless, the pandemic opened up new online platforms for women to voice their opinion and connect in ways they were not able to do throughout the conflict. Participants noted that Zoom and social media activism increased during the pandemic, even among women living in rural areas who have access to the internet, which they noted was usually limited due to poor internet infrastructure and electricity cuts. Furthermore, it was noted that online participation provided a solution to customary guardianship rules that prevented women's participation due to restrictions on their mobility or other imposed conditions that are part of using mahram (a male guardian) to travel.

It was noted that online activism and participation also opened channels of communication between different organizations, opening up room for collaboration and information sharing. Additionally, it allowed more than one woman from the same organization to participate in events and meetings, whereas before the pandemic this was limited to mainly one person from each organization. Online platforms also began to provide opportunities to reach international organizations and spaces for activism, opening a window for new collaborations and helping shed light on the efforts of women-led organizations in responding to the humanitarian situation in Yemen and on their peacebuilding efforts at the community level.

These platforms gave women-led organizations' work more recognition and facilitated access to funding. However, participants did also note that although women became familiar with using new digital tools, they were vulnerable to digital attacks including their accounts being hacked or having their events derailed or attacked by inappropriate online acts. A number of participants noted that the Houthi group prevented representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs) from attending meetings related to peacebuilding unless they had a permit, however these permits had never been issued. These restrictions extended to participation on Zoom calls. One participant added to this, suggesting that the Houthi group equates any discussions on peace and peacebuilding with surrendering.

Finally, logistical issues were noted as a huge challenge for participating in events outside Yemen, including securing visas and accessing vaccines. Accessibility of vaccines prevented women from participating in peacebuilding consultations. A woman shared, "I was not able to attend a meeting on peacebuilding on Yemen in Germany because of the vaccine requirements." A participant shared "It was very complicated to obtain a visa to US or UK and I was happy that I obtained both, but then the pandemic happened and the travel ban was issued. I was not able to travel and they have now expired."

Although the pandemic may have provided an opportunity for women to participate digitally, there needs to be a way to improve online engagement and lobbying efforts to ensure that it is meaningful.

Measures of Response to Covid-19 in Yemen

The 2020 Covid-19 pandemic has added a new layer of struggle for Yemenis who live in dire humanitarian conditions. Against the backdrop of Yemen's already weakened health and economic infrastructures, local authorities' measures were perceived to be inadequate and there is still no accurate monitoring for Covid-19 cases in Yemen. One woman said, "During Ramadan 2020, many people passed away from Covid and many more were infected with Covid, but there were no statistics, reporting or diagnosis. Thus, it is difficult to assess the catastrophe in Yemen as a result of Covid." In this section, the participants highlighted the inadequate governmental response to Covid-19, the unqualified hospitals and isolation centers, the increase of weaponization and drug flow, as well as the double burden of environmental crisis induced catastrophes during the pandemic.

Upon the establishment of the Supreme National Emergency Committee for Covid-19 (SNECC) by the Yemeni government in March 2020 and allocation of 5 billion Yemeni Riyals to the body, the participants observed and agreed that hospitals and health facilities were not well equipped to receive Covid-19 patients. It was also noted that many doctors left the country and many other doctors and health responders lost their lives as a result of working in the frontlines due to inadequate protective gear or training in pandemic health related emergency situations. The participants noted a number of organizations including Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and Kuwaiti funding in Aden to be key players in providing support and combating the pandemic, and it was described that their role was more effective than that of SNECC, noting that MSF only had 20 beds for Covid-19 patients.

In addition, one of the participants who lives in Sana'a shared her experience of returning to Yemen from abroad at the beginning of the pandemic. She arrived on the last flight to Aden before the travel ban was imposed and was forced into a 14-day quarantine before entering Sana'a. The isolation centers were not well-equipped, and she indicated that "the chance of contracting Covid-19 in the isolation center was high." She then decided to travel to Sana'a, navigating an already challenging security situation and dangerous road infrastructures. As she reached the first Houthi armed group checkpoint, she was refused entry. "I was deprived of my own home and my own children and I had to find another route, and I was smuggled back to Sana'a," she shared.

There was an overall perception that illicit economies such as the flow of arms and drugs increased during the pandemic. "The seaports remained unsupervised, allowing more arms and weapons into Yemen," another woman asserted; "smuggling arms and drugs increased especially in the Western costs," one woman explained.

Throughout the pandemic, the group highlighted that cases of arbitrary detentions of women increased during the pandemic in Sana'a, Marib, and Taiz. They shared the experience of Intisar Al-Hamadi and her friends who were detained in Sana'a and stated that as the courts were closed during the lockdown, there were no opportunities to release women through the judicial process.

One of the participants described conflict parties issuing travel bans and regulations on goods transportation in order to negatively affect the other party which intensified the conflict. It was noted that as a result of the bans and regulations, there was a shortage in goods, medicine, and services which affected people in Yemen. In this way, the participants also noted that when the Covid-19 vaccine was provided to the government in Aden it was then shared with the Houthi group, who in turn denied the vaccine provision and would not distribute it to people in their areas. Additionally, another participant said,

"In fact, the Houthi armed group refused to declare Covid-19 as a pandemic in their controlled areas and called it a "conspiracy". They took oppressive measures towards those who go to hospitals or state that they have Covid-19, which affected the health monitoring in Sana'a."

More broadly, participants noted that the response to Covid-19 was used as a way of masking corruption. It was noted that internally displaced persons (IDPs) were one group that were not supported under the pretext that funding had been allocated to address the evolving range of further health challenges posed by Covid-19. A woman elaborated,

"Corruption increased during the pandemic, medicine was not available all the time, and there were added fees to PCR tests. Furthermore, WHO allocated 12 cars in Aden to respond but only two were available, they were eventually found with armed groups in Aden."

The pandemic created conflict between the government and the Southern Transitional Council (STC) in Aden, who had a feud over who should lead Aden's health facilities. One of the participants said,

"The government and STC fought over managing Al-Amal health facility in Aden which affected its performance in responding to Covid-19. This conflict weakened the response to Covid-19 that reached to spreading rumors about merciful killing in health facilities receiving COVID patients. Another incident was shutting down the Kuwaiti-funded oxygen factory in Aden."

As well as these political issues shaping the Covid-19 response, the impact of environmental pressures were also noted, with some participants describing devastating floods in the Southern part of Yemen during the beginning of the pandemic, resulting in flood-linked illnesses. The overall conditions made it even harder for the already weakened health monitoring systems to document the cases of illness and identify what patients had contracted. In Aden, there were around nine pandemics happening at the same time that had similar symptoms to Covid-19. People were not diagnosed correctly due to weak health monitoring and it tended to be the case that responding strategies were hard to develop because there is no monitoring and evaluation. A woman stated, "Although there were better response procedures during the second wave, the facilities remained dysfunctional. There were 3900 cases and 280 deaths in Aden."

The response to Covid-19 in Aden also affected women's access to family planning clinics and safe childhood centers. Participants described the Covid-19 response as creating a shortage in medicine for people with chronic illnesses like diabetes and high blood pressure due to the interruption of supply lines. The frequency of wide ranging challenges pushed the peacebuilding agendas aside. One woman stated, "the people in Aden are not concerned with peacebuilding when they are trying to survive a pandemic and poverty." Another added, "Many doctors passed away from Covid in Abyan which further weakened the health structure. The schools were also closed and many female teachers stopped going to schools, especially those living in faraway areas."

The Covid-19 measures imposed by the national parties were perceived to have operated more as security measures or tactics of war rather than as measures to respond to the pandemic for people. Measures were used to mask corruption and to seize an opportunity to smuggle in arms and escalate the conflict. The lack of emergency-related training to health responders and the weak health infrastructure were perceived to have contributed to intensifying the humanitarian situation in Yemen. The participants agreed that the people in Yemen are struggling economically and thus, many Yemenis did not take the pandemic measures seriously or simply could not follow them.

Women and Women-led Organizations' Response to the Pandemic

Despite the difficult situation in Yemen during the pandemic, Yemeni women remained active at the grassroots level. Participants agreed that women-led organizations worked on raising awareness around the pandemic and providing aid including masks, food and other hygiene items, however it was also noted that some women-led organizations in Yemen shut down during the pandemic. It was also noted that at the beginning of the pandemic, Covid-19 donor organizations were still demanding the implementation of activities but later on started re-allocating their funding towards Covid-19 emergency responses, halting peacebuilding projects.

Equally, other participants including the Wogood for Human Security chairwoman said that they moved their work online and reduced working hours to protect their staff. They also distributed masks, sanitizers, and cleaning supplies for their staff and fronted a coalition of women-led organizations focusing on Covid-19 responses in Yemen. Wogood for Human Security also played a major role in monitoring the authority's Covid-19 response in Aden. They published six statements with practical recommendations to improve the response to the pandemic directed at Aden local authority and central government levels.

Another example of organizations extending beyond normal activities to address the pandemic was the Yemeni Women Coalition for Peace. The organization, which focuses on advocating for the release of women arbitrarily detained, also worked on raising awareness of the pandemic and distributed masks and sanitizers to the public. Yemeni Women Coalition for Peace also played an important role in helping IDPs during escalating levels of violence, especially women. They worked towards helping women who had to give birth in IDP camps, and they also worked towards recording deaths in IDP camps from Covid-19. The Yemeni Women Coalition for Peace described the challenges they faced in their mediation to release women from Houthi prisons and explained that their arguments focusing on the importance of releasing the women to prevent the spread of the pandemic did not work. They noted that three women passed away inside the prisons as a result of Covid-19 and that the prison's doctor had also passed away as a result of Covid-19.

Donors' policies to redirect all funding to the Covid-19 pandemic complicated the situation for women-led organizations. Women-led organizations working in peacebuilding were extremely affected as peacebuilding activities were deprioritized and progress stalled. One of the participants stated that the funding decreased during the pandemic and available funding was only allocated to Covid-19 responses. Emergency funding affected women's protection programmes as well, especially for women who were released from arbitrary detention and needed funding to rehabilitate and/or relocate. One participant stated that funding for NGOs and civil society was seized by the Houthi group.

Furthermore, in other instances where resources did not materialise on the ground whether for political or conflict driven reasons, women-led organizations and the Women's Union in Abyan played a crucial role in raising awareness about Covid-19, such as commencing projects to sew masks and distribute them for free. The organization Food for Humanity was also among the first responders in Taiz, Aden, and Al-Hodeidah, with their chairperson stating that, "During the first months of the pandemic in Yemen, the government and WHO Yemen were absent. Meanwhile, the situation was complicated and there was a shortage of batteries for PCR machines. We had to step in and fill the gap."

Food for Humanity were able to train more than 300 nurses on emergency responses to Covid-19 and were able to access remote places that international organizations including WHO were not able to reach, providing much needed services and Covid-19 response aid to these remote locations. One of the major challenges Food for Humanity faced was raising awareness on cleanliness and washing hands, noting the extreme challenges for people to access clean water and sanitation services especially in areas with little to no access to water. Additionally, the group worked in facilitating the successful release of detainees. In this way, it is worth noting that women's gender roles, mainly as caregivers for infected people in the family home, put them at increased risk of contracting Covid-19.

Despite the challenges that the pandemic brought to Yemen and despite the reallocation of donors' funding, women-led organizations were able to help alleviate pressures in a range of areas as part of the overall response in Yemen. Women-led organizations were also able to access areas that the Yemeni government and international organizations were not able to access. Alongside all of this, women-led organizations were also able to release detainees and help those in conflict-affected areas. Despite low funding, women-led humanitarian organizations were able to reach remote areas, raise awareness on Covid-19 pandemic, and provide protective gear as well as humanitarian assistance. This is perceived as peacebuilding efforts in Yemen during the pandemic.

The Pandemic's Economic Repercussions on Yemeni Women

The pandemic played a huge role in impacting Yemeni women's economic status as women were forced to stay in lockdown, which negatively impacted their economic activity. There were women who were able to work from home, but it was often not enough in terms of bringing in the necessary resources. Throughout Yemen, there were different lockdown restrictions, but they were consistently discriminatory and tended to disproportionately impact women, even down to instances of barbershops only being closed for a short time while women's hair salons remained closed for a longer time.

Indeed, at the beginning of the pandemic, restrictive measures in Aden were issued which affected people's jobs, especially those working for daily wages. Eventually, people stopped following those restrictions and risked their lives to combat poverty and secure their livelihoods. It is worth noting that this economic hardship was coupled with public sector salaries having not been systematically disbursed since 2016.

In Abyan, for example, it was noted that many women were the head of the household because the male figure either passed away, was fighting on the frontlines, or stopped working. The escalated conflict in Abyan prevented people from going to the coast, affecting families dependent on fishing or families whose leisure time was spent by the sea. This affected women's economic status within the fishing industry, where women worked making fishing nets or as fishers. The pandemic also played a major role in closing small businesses and credit unions. Credit unions and small fundings in Abyan stopped as people lost their jobs and were not able to pay back their loans.

The whole world is now facing economic repercussions as a result of the pandemic, and in Yemen, the situation is more difficult. Participants have shared their concerns about Covid-19's economic repercussions layered upon a pre-existing humanitarian crisis and an already weak economic situation, whereby people do not have the privilege to work from home and are willing to risk their lives to gain their daily wages.

The Social and Psychological Impact of Covid-19 on Women

As set out, the economic pressure increased during the pandemic and lockdowns, and as a result, domestic violence against women increased. Participants described how women's household burdens increased as male family members stayed at home during the lockdowns. One of the participants stated that more women died as a result of domestic violence during the pandemic.

It was also noted that women working in the humanitarian sector were affected psychologically. One of the participants declared that she is finding it difficult to go back to work, noting burnout and depression. Similarly to this, there was a consensus that many young people had lost their jobs during the pandemic which has led to an increase in the rates of unemployment. One woman said, "suicide rates and drug overdose cases have increased among young people in Yemen when they lost their jobs during the restrictive measures." It was also noted that the health conditions of women detainees in Houthi armed group prisons are in poor conditions, with one participant stating,

"The Central Prison in Sana'a has 400 women detained when it can only occupy 60 prisoners. Some women have their children with them. There is, unfortunately, no reporting for Covid-19 cases, there are cases but they are diagnosed as high fever or flu."

Following reflection, the group found that the pandemic has intensified the pressure on people in Yemen, leading to high rates of domestic violence, suicide, drug overdose, and feelings of hopelessness and depression. Women working in the humanitarian sector have suffered from mental burnout as a result of increased responsibilities and increasingly deteriorating humanitarian conditions during the pandemic.

Recommendations

The following recommended actions have been synthesised from the roundtable discussions, mainly to the parties involved in the conflict and the UN Envoy's office:

1. Prioritize women's political participation in peace negotiations, and address the challenges obstructing women's participation. This includes logistical support, including help obtaining visas, Covid-19 vaccines; travel costs for face-to-face meetings, digital tools, and digital security training for online meetings.
2. Ensure that virtual platforms do not replace face-to-face meetings and develop a feedback mechanism for women participating in online platforms, including sharing contact information of participants (who have given consent) to facilitate lobbying and advocacy.
3. Encourage women's efforts in lobbying for their political rights and advocating for women's meaningful participation.
4. The UN needs to strengthen its strategy on women's inclusion, based on assessing and evaluating the mechanisms and processes of women's inclusion.
5. The UN needs to partner with women-led organizations that can add value and address UN limitations in reaching out to local communities and remote areas.
6. Ensure enough funds are allocated for women-led organizations that can cover core operational funding and their mandated project activities, without compromising funds allocated for peacebuilding activities.
7. Ensure that the funding is based on the needs and priorities of women and their communities.
8. The conflict parties must collaborate and engage with civil society organizations in coordinating the Covid-19 response, in order to ensure people's interests are prioritized and not politicized. This type of collaboration will address humanitarian emergencies which can facilitate longer-term national reconciliation and trust-building.

9. Address economic failures in Yemen to combat poverty and help Yemenis secure their daily living necessities.
10. The international community needs to exert pressure on conflict parties to work towards a ceasefire agreement and peacebuilding.
11. Address and allocate funding to mental health supports, especially for women working in humanitarian organizations.
12. Address the increase in domestic violence and create a safe reporting mechanism for survivors in all areas of Yemen.
13. Work towards the Women, Peace and Security agenda with a comprehensive and cross-cutting approach in responding to Covid-19 in different contexts, including prioritizing a gender analysis that can be applied in the current context.
14. Increase protection and support measures for women's rights and human rights defenders.
15. Urge to address gender-based violence in all its forms and dimensions, including cyber violence against women.

Annex I: Participants' Names and Titles

Name	Title
Maha Awadh	Political Activist and the Head of Wojood for Human Security Foundation
Afra'a Hariri	Lawyer and member of the women advisory group to the UN Envoy to Yemen
Eman Shaif	Judge and member of Yemeni Women Pact
Dr. Balqees Abo Osbaa	Professor at Sana'a University and Head of Awam Foundation for Development and Culture
Aisha Taleb Abadel	Member of the Southern Transitional Council and Co-founder of Southern Feminist Coalition
Wahbia Sabra	Member of the Socialist Party, member of the Yemeni Women Pact
Noora Aljarawai	Founder of Yemeni Women for Peace Initiative member of Women Solidarity Network
Laila Al-Shabibi	Executive manager of To Be Foundation for Rights and Freedoms
Muna Luqman	Founder and chairperson of Food 4 Humanity
Amena Al-Abd	Ambassador of GoodWill and the President of the Yemeni Women's Union in Abyan
Requested anonymity	Requested anonymity

¹ Al-Hamdani, R., Transfeld, M. (2021). *An Opportunity in Crisis? Policy Report April 2021 Covid-19 and State-community Relations in Taiz* (Yemen Policy Center Policy Report). Berlin: Yemen Policy Center.

² Wilson, R., al-Hamdani, R. (2022). The peace and conflict nexus with Covid-19 in Taiz and Hadhramaut (forthcoming).

³ Bell, C., Epplé, T., Pospisil, J. (2020). *The Impact of Covid-19 on Peace and Transition Processes: Tracking the Trends* (PSRP Research Report: Covid-19 Series). Edinburgh: Global Justice Academy, University of Edinburgh. Pg. 6

⁴ Wise, L., Badanjak, S., Bell, C., and Knäussel, F. (2021). *'Pandemic Pauses: Understanding Ceasefires in a Time of Covid-19'* (PSRP Research Report). Edinburgh: Global Justice Academy, University of Edinburgh.

⁵ For information regarding this agreement, see PA-X Peace Agreements Database, University of Edinburgh. Available at: <https://www.peaceagreements.org/view/2121/Stockholm%20Agreement>

⁶ Grundberg, H. (2022). *Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General for Yemen briefing to the United Nations Security Council, January 2022*. Available at: <https://osesgy.unmissions.org/briefing-united-nations-security-council-special-envoy-yemen-hans-grundberg-0>

⁷ For information regarding this agreement, see PA-X Peace Agreements Database, University of Edinburgh. Available at: [https://www.peaceagreements.org/view/2235/Riyadh%20Agreement%20between%20the%20legitimate%20Government%20of%20Yemen%20and%20the%20Southern%20Transitional%20Council%20\(STC\)](https://www.peaceagreements.org/view/2235/Riyadh%20Agreement%20between%20the%20legitimate%20Government%20of%20Yemen%20and%20the%20Southern%20Transitional%20Council%20(STC))

⁸ Qat leaves, chewed as a stimulant, a majority of the population consume the narcotic often at social gatherings at which local issues and politics are discussed by a range of societal or community figures. Qat chewing is also widely embedded in Yemen as a sociocultural practice among the wider public.

About Us

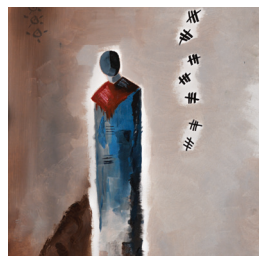
PeaceRep is a research consortium based at Edinburgh Law School. Our research is rethinking peace and transition processes in the light of changing conflict dynamics, changing demands of inclusion, and changes in patterns of global intervention in conflict and peace/mediation/transition management processes.

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