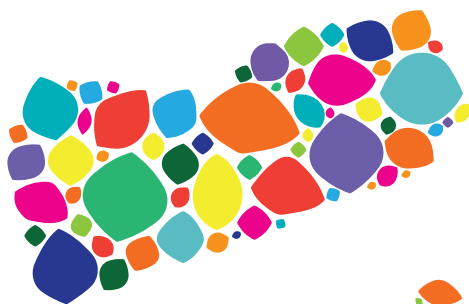




# Women in Hadramawt Organize to Alleviate Travel Restrictions, Providing a Model for Civic Engagement

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Cover Photo : View of Mukalla, Hadramawt, on August 2, 2021. // Sana'a Center Photo by Ahmed Waqqas



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## INTRODUCTION

Since the start of the Yemeni war in 2015, the capabilities of the internationally recognized government have weakened dramatically. It no longer maintains the traditional functions and attributes of a state, most notably sovereignty over its territory or control of the integrity of its borders. The government has been further hampered by the patchwork distribution of its military and security forces on the ground and a reliance on foreign partners. In the southern governorate of Hadramawt, state security weaknesses allowed the fall of the coastal city of Mukalla to Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in April 2015. Left vulnerable by the redeployment of security forces to other fronts, the city remained occupied until AQAP was expelled by troops from the United Arab Emirates and Yemeni army the following year. But the reestablishment of government control did not precipitate a reopening of the city's transportation infrastructure. Al-Rayyan International Airport and the eastern Al-Dhabba road, a major artery linking the city with the country's east, remained closed, with deleterious effects. Residents faced significantly higher transportation costs and longer travel times as they were forced to use alternate routes or forgo travel entirely.

In the context of diminished state control, Yemeni citizens have taken it upon themselves to organize in defense of their rights and to mitigate the severity of the conflict's repercussions in their communities. Advocacy campaigns have emerged to defend civic rights and convey grievances to decision-makers, in an attempt to improve the situation on the ground. Following the recapture of Mukalla, Hadramawt Women for Peace, a team consisting of eight women, launched an advocacy campaign to reopen Al-Rayyan airport and the eastern Al-Dhabba road. The initiative ultimately succeeded in reopening the road and alleviating effects of the closures, empowering and encouraging local residents to organize in support of change.

This paper aims to shed light on the role of advocacy campaigns in building a cooperative social infrastructure to solve local issues and promote peace. It examines how and under what circumstances Hadramawt Women for Peace was able to coordinate an effective advocacy campaign. The paper discusses the closing of the airport, studies the campaign's work and programs, and examines the social context of the campaign. The



paper also highlights the difficulties and challenges faced by the women's advocacy campaign and studies the strategies and methods they used to overcome these, in order to generalize their experience and spread awareness of the important role of women in conflict mitigation.

The article utilizes an analytical descriptive approach. Personal and telephone interviews were conducted during the months of April and May 2021 with members of the advocacy team: Sulaf Abboud al-Hanashi, Abha Abdullah Baawidan, Raeda Saeed Ruwaished, Abeer Mohsen Babair, Amani Khalil Bakhribah, and Shaden Yeslam Bazhir. An interview was held with Samiha al-Hanashi, a business and project management consultant, to elucidate the consequences of the closure of eastern Al-Dhabba road. Further interviews were conducted with Hesham Bajaber, a lawyer and human rights activist; Osama al-Amoudi, an activist in youth initiatives and founder of the Peace and Building Foundation; Magdy Baziad, director of Nama Radio; and Sheikh Khaled Mohammed al-Kathiri,<sup>[1]</sup> a tribal leader, in order to understand the perceived successes of the campaign and its impact within the governorate of Hadramawt.

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1) Sheikh Khaled Mohammed al-Kathiri, a prominent local sheikh, is the author's uncle.

## THE RESTRICTION OF TRAVEL AND COMMERCE

The war has caused immeasurable suffering to the Yemeni people. In active conflict theaters, the fighting continues to leave the dead and displaced in its wake; other areas are under siege or suffer the absence of provisions and facilities necessary for people to live a normal life. These limitations include some of the most basic tenets of dignified human existence, including freedom of movement. Such deprivations were visited on the residents of Mukalla, the capital of Hadramawt, Yemen's largest governorate, with the closure of Al-Rayyan International Airport and the eastern Al-Dhabba road.

Al-Rayyan International Airport is the third-largest in Yemen, after Sana'a and Aden. In addition to operating domestic flights, it serves to connect the cities of Hadramawt to a number of other countries in the region. This access is of great importance to residents of the governorates of Shabwa, Hadramawt, Al-Mahra and Socotra. Al-Rayyan Airport is also economically significant – residents of Hadramawt and neighboring governorates heavily relied on it for various types of travel. Along with the Seyoun airport, Al-Rayyan was among the most important resources for the nation's economy before the war.<sup>[2]</sup>

The airport was closed after AQAP took control of Mukalla in April 2015. The army regained control of the city with the support of Saudi-Emirati coalition forces in April 2016, but the airport remained closed for maintenance work, according to local authorities in Hadramawt.<sup>[3]</sup> Although local authorities repeatedly promised to re-open the airport to commercial flights after the completion of maintenance operations, it remained shuttered. The failure to reopen provoked increasing popular anger, especially after military flights and the travel of Yemeni officials loyal to the UAE resumed.<sup>[4]</sup> Media outlets alleged the reason for its continued closure was that Emirati forces had transformed the airport into a military base, hosting secret prisons where it held and tortured detainees. The airport's reopening was reportedly suspended at the behest of coalition forces, particularly Emirati ones.<sup>[5]</sup>

2) Abdul Latif Salmeen, "Mass anger in Hadramawt due to the continued closure of Al-Rayyan Airport [AR]," Sahafaty, February 24, 2020, <https://sahafaty.com/news13843429.htm>

3) Ahmed Baabad, "The UAE disrupts Al-Rayyan Airport and refuses to open it to citizens except with these conditions! [AR]," Al-Mahrah Post, April 6, 2018, <https://almahrahpost.com/news/784#.YWr1K1XP3Iw>

4) "Al-Rayyan International Airport...The closure exacerbates the suffering of Yemeni travelers [AR]," Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, February 12, 2019, <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/مطار-الريان-الدولي-الإغلاق-يفاقم-معاناة-المسافرين-اليمنيين>

5) "Abu Dhabi transformed Mukalla Airport into a military base and established a secret prison in it [AR]," Al Sharq, April 7, 2018, <https://al-sharq.com/article/07/04/2018/إماراتية-بأوامر-مطار-المكلا-مغلق>

The closure had a serious negative effect on citizens and exacerbated the suffering of patients and elderly travelers in Hadramawt and neighboring governorates. To receive treatment abroad, patients now had to travel more than 360 kilometers overland to reach the city of Seyoun and its airport. A female resident of Mukalla said, “We did not find a quick reservation, so we had to look for tourist trips, but none were available. All available flights had late departure dates. This is in addition to the distance we would have had to cross from Mukalla to Seyoun, which would be exhausting and a real danger to the patient. In the end, we had to transfer him from one hospital to another until he took his last breath.”<sup>[6]</sup> With Al-Rayyan closed, the price of transportation increased enormously. To get from Mukalla to the airport had previously cost 2,500 Yemeni rial (YR), but the trip to Seyoun could cost YR50,00, not including the likely need for accommodations in the city. In emergencies, transportation fees could reach YR180,000.<sup>[7]</sup>

Citizens’ suffering was compounded by the closure of the eastern Al-Dhabba road, which connects the city of Mukalla to the districts Al-Shihr, Al-Dees Al-Sharqiah, Ar-Raydah wa Qusayar, and the Omani border. The Al-Dhabba road was the main route by which hundreds of students and employees traveled to their universities and jobs in the city of Mukalla, as it was the shortest and safest to use. But the road was closed due to security concerns, part of an effort to protect the port of Dhabba.<sup>[8]</sup> The only extant alternative was an old, longer road, on which transportation fees were higher. The journey and price were prohibitive – as a result of the closure, many students stopped attending university.<sup>[9]</sup>

In response to the prolonged closures, a group of eight women established a community advocacy group, Hadramawt Women for Peace,<sup>[10]</sup> and launched an innovative campaign<sup>[11]</sup> to pressure and influence decision-makers to reopen the eastern Al-Dhabba road and Al-Rayyan International Airport.

6) Hadramawt Women for Peace, “Lest We Forget”, The Democratic Institute, March 16, 2019.

7) Samiha al-Hanashi, Business and Project Management Consultant, personal interview with the author, April 9, 2021.

8) “Prohibited traffic .Why do the Hadramawt coast authorities insist on closing the Al-Dhabba road? [AR]” Al Masdar Online, May 19, 2019, <https://almasdaronline.com/articles/167777>

9) Ammar Al-Salem, “People of the eastern regions of Hadramawt appeal to the Governor of Hadramawt [AR]”, Al-Mandeb News, December 13, 2017, <https://almandeb.news/?p=78221>

10) Hadramawt Women for Peace consists of: Abha Abdullah Baawidan, President of Al-Amal Feminist Foundation; Sulaf Aboud al-Hanashi, Head of the Youth Support Fund in Hadramawt Governorate; Raeda Saeed Ruwaished; Atiyat Abboud Badawi, a member of the Southern Transitional Council leadership; Abeer Mohsen Baba’ir, broadcaster and educator; Aisha Ali al-Jaidi, a feminist activist; Amani Khalil Bakhriba, a feminist and social activist; and Shaden Yeslam Bazohir, a feminist activist and a university doctor.

11) An advocacy campaign is an organized movement to achieve a desired change in a specific area with specific targets, or to defend the rights of any citizen or group that has been robbed of them. Available resources are effectively utilized, while all efforts are tightly coordinated to achieve short-term goals that have been meticulously set as a starting point for the campaign. “Theoretical Background in Advocacy and Lobbying in NGOs and Institutions [AR]”, Social Fund for Development - Yemen, February 5, 2011, [http://www.sfdyemen.org/ar/uploads/issues/الخلفية\\_النظرية\\_في\\_20120915-123846المناصرة.pdf](http://www.sfdyemen.org/ar/uploads/issues/الخلفية_النظرية_في_20120915-123846المناصرة.pdf)

## ORGANIZING AND ADVOCACY

Hadramawt Women for Peace was established in March 2018, an output of a National Democratic Institute project to enhance the capability of women to participate effectively in peacemaking.<sup>[12]</sup> Following these efforts, the women went on to organize four focus sessions targeting local authorities, the security leadership in Hadramawt, community figures, youth, political parties, and the media. The sessions' purpose was to locate the most important and sensitive issues related to the lives of citizens. The reopening of Al-Rayyan International Airport and the eastern Al-Dhabba road was chosen as a priority, given the harm the closures inflicted on all segments of society.<sup>[13]</sup> Based on the priorities identified, the women tapped into their contacts, experience and expertise to begin implementing an advocacy plan based on the findings of the focus groups and discussions with representatives from local communities.<sup>[14]</sup>

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12) The author is a trainer in peace sensitive activism, gender and advocacy, and worked in this program.

13) Ahmed Bu Abes, "Hadramawt Women for Peace . a struggle to open Al-Rayyan Airport and Al-Dhabba International Road [AR]," Al-Madaniya, June 18, 2019, <http://almadaniyamag.com/ar/2019/06/18/نساء-حضر موت-من-أجل-السلامة-نضال-من-أجل-ف/2019/06/18/>

14) Sulaf Abboud al-Hanashi, Head of the Youth Support Fund in the governorate of Hadramawt, personal interview with the author, Hadramawt, May 27, 2021.



## NETWORKING AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

The women understood the need to engage officials from local authorities and get their buy-in, as well as the importance of wider engagement and outreach with youth, media, private sector, academics and political parties. Dr. Abha Ba'awidan, a member of Hadramawt Women for Peace and head of Al-Amal feminist foundation, described networking as the bedrock of successful advocacy campaigns, as it helps ensure a campaign will not collapse.<sup>[15]</sup> Hadramawt Women for Peace held meetings with the governor of Hadramawt, Major General Faraj al-Bahsani, the staff command, and local authorities to discuss the reasons for the continued closure of the airport and to understand their positions on the issue. Other meetings were held with social and tribal figures to explain the situation and the desire to change it.<sup>[16]</sup>

The team held workshops on the potential roles of civil society organizations, youth initiatives, the media, merchants, academics, security forces, and religious and social figures in helping advocate for the reopening of the Al-Rayyan airport and Al-Dhabba road. Workshops were attended by representatives of political parties – Mohammed al-Hamid, secretary of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), Mohammed Balateef, head of the political department of the Islah party in Hadramawt, and leaders of southern Hirak factions. Workshops provided social protection for the campaign, especially after it was attacked on social media and subjected to harassment by those who opposed its aims and methods.<sup>[17]</sup>

Dr. Shaden Yeslam, a feminist activist, university doctor and member of Hadramawt Women for Peace, said that at the beginning of the workshops, direct threats were made via telephone by people who claimed to represent security agencies. She said that they were asked to stop the campaign, particularly the workshop in which the Chamber of Commerce was participating. Yeslam said she received a call from a member of the region's leadership who told her the governor requested she stop the workshop, alleging that hostile forces funded by Qatar, Turkey and Iran were seeking to undermine stability in Hadramawt through such campaigns.

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15) Abha Ba'awidan, President of Al-Amal Feminist Foundation, personal interview with the author, Hadramawt, May 23, 2021.

16) Hadramawt Women for Peace, "Lest We Forget," The Democratic Institute, March 16, 2019.

17) Ibid.

Yeslam states that she told him the campaign would carry on, that he was a military figure who had no authority to interfere in civil matters, and that the governor's director could communicate with her and the rest of the team directly. She said he refused her request. Yeslam reached out to a tribal sheikh with whom Hadramawt Women for Peace had spoken before launching their campaign, in order to explain the team's objectives. Less than an hour later, the sheikh contacted Yeslam and told her that things were fine. She accompanied him to the Security Department where they met with Brigadier General Munir al-Tamimi. She explained the objectives of the campaign to Al-Tamimi, further expanding the team's network of important contacts and advocates of their cause.<sup>[18]</sup>

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18) Shaden Yaslam, feminist activist, university doctor and member of Hadramawt Women for Peace, phone interview with the author, May 30, 2021.

## A MULTI-PRONGED STRATEGY

The campaign did not only build relationships with relevant officials but relied on a diverse set of methods for community organizing.<sup>[19]</sup> This distinguished it from earlier advocacy campaigns in Yemen, which have adopted traditional approaches, such as holding workshops and communicating with decision-makers without a detailed plan or tangible goal. Traditional advocacy campaigns have been characterized by a top-down approach that does not widely involve the community. A campaign to reduce rents was notably unsuccessful because it failed to engage the relevant authorities and excluded important stakeholders, such as real estate owners. Its only achievement was that the governor ordered the forming of a committee to set rent prices along the coast, but no tangible progress has been made.<sup>[20]</sup>

Raeda Ruwaished, a feminist leader, peace trainer, and member of Hadramawt Women for Peace, believes that the goal of advocacy campaigns is to spread a new spirit in the community, reveal the strengths and weaknesses in community-building efforts, and help society organize itself for communal benefit. This is what happened through the formation of a community committee to follow up on the re-opening of Al-Dhabba road and Al-Rayyan airport. The groups which exerted pressure on behalf of the campaign included unions, painters, and radio stations.<sup>[21]</sup> The campaign would build its strategy to take advantage of their strengths.

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19) Community organizing is a process organized by a group of people to take measures to influence the surrounding policies or culture by uniting people to resolve matters that concern them. They set plans to determine how to improve the performance of their area. It is a form of leadership that empowers a social group or category to achieve change.

20) "Al-Mukalla, a young man decides to postpone his wedding for failing to find an apartment to rent despite searching for one for six months [AR]," Al-Masdar Online, March 18, 2019, <https://almasdaronline.com/articles/165473>

21) Raeda Ruwaished, member of Hadramawt Women for Peace, feminist leader and peace trainer, telephone interview with the author, May 25, 2021.



## MANAGING A MULTIMEDIA CAMPAIGN

### *Online*

Amani Bakhriba, a community and feminist activist, described managing the online campaign as similar to managing combat operations, due to the hostile reactions the campaign received on social media. Women participating in the campaign were denounced as traitors with hidden agendas. Many said that the very fact that the participants were women meant they could not achieve anything, due to traditional social limitations on their roles. The campaign opted for restraint and avoided engaging in arguments that could distract from the team's efforts, focusing on narrating the stories of those harmed by the closure of the road and the airport. Instead of just holding workshops, the advocacy campaign developed into what Bakhriba termed 'a popular national campaign.'<sup>[22]</sup>

### *Radio*

The campaign held a series of radio interviews on local stations, including: Nama Radio, Al-Amal Radio, and Salamatak Radio, which gave it an opportunity to increase the number of its supporters. Magdy Baziad, director of Nama Radio, said: "The radio campaign achieved several unexpected successes, as it created a state of community solidarity and resulted in media interaction. It conveyed a voice other than the voice that the authorities like to hear, but in peaceful, successful, and strong ways."<sup>[23]</sup>

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22) Amani Bakhriba, feminist and community activist, phone interview with the author, May 29, 2021.

23) Magdy Baziadm, director of Nama Radio, personal interview with the author, Hadramawt, April 7, 2021.

## *Art*

The advocacy campaign also utilized one of the most effective means of communicating suffering: art. An exhibition of artists was organized, in which painters of all age groups advocated for the reopening of the airport. Children were among the most prominent participants as they expressed their feelings on this issue. Abeer Babair, a broadcaster and educator, said, "The art exhibition was an effective tool thanks to the expressive paintings by the artists of Hadramawt. Children also helped paint to express their frustration with the closure of the airport and demand its reopening."<sup>[24]</sup> A short film entitled, "The Longest Way to Our Dreams" was also produced, showing the suffering of the people of Hadramawt.<sup>[25]</sup>

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24) Abeer Mohsen Babair, broadcaster and educator, phone interview with the author, May 22, 2021.

25) "The Longest way to Our Dreams [AR]," short film, March 11, 2019, <https://www.facebook.com/womenForPeace/videos/2243572945972173>





## MEETING WITH VICTIMS

The campaign also held sessions to listen to those directly affected by the closure of Al-Rayyan International Airport, to better understand the suffering of citizens when it comes to transportation and the right to treatment, and to involve them in advocacy. During these sessions, residents conveyed the suffering and hardship they incurred while traveling abroad and on the road to Seyoun airport. These sessions succeeded in facilitating community interaction, as citizens discussed the matter among one another, and drawing media coverage on the issue.<sup>[26]</sup> The team issued a booklet entitled, “Lest We Forget” of stories told during the sessions, which was distributed in the city of Mukalla.<sup>[27]</sup>

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26) Abha Ba Owaidan, President of the Feminist Hope Foundation, personal interview with the author, Hadramawt, May 23, 2021.

27) Hadramawt Women for Peace, “Lest We Forget,” The Democratic Institute, March 16, 2019.

## CHANGING STEREOTYPES ABOUT YEMENI WOMEN

Yemeni women face difficulties and obstacles that hinder their participation in political work. The prevailing tribal culture, customs, and traditions do not treat women as equal to men, but rather reinforce the idea that men and women have their own fields, and that men are the most capable in difficult fields, including politics. Women grow up knowing that there are boundaries they are not permitted to cross.<sup>[28]</sup>

Sabreen al-Karbi, coordinator of the human rights office in the governorate of Hadramawt, spoke about the role of Hadrami women: “Despite the suffering experienced by Yemeni women, and the fact that they are the most affected by the ongoing conflict, they are at the forefront of the peacemaking scene, whether through their role as a mother and wife at home, in their work, or on the street. [This is] despite the number of difficulties and obstacles they face during times when they do not receive any help or assistance, simply because they are women.”<sup>[29]</sup>

Alia al-Hammadi, a leading member of the Women’s Association in Hadramawt, agreed: “There is no doubt that Hadrami women have positively contributed to building peace in several instances. An example is how they led the demonstrations during Al-Qaeda’s control of Mukalla, despite all the risks that they faced, such as assault or murder. Despite this, women were at the forefront.”<sup>[30]</sup> Through their advocacy campaign, Hadramawt Women for Peace helped change the societal norm that limits the role of women to the home, and empowered women in Hadramawt by laying claim to a new role of participation in civil life.<sup>[31]</sup>

28) Eman Omar Al-Lhamdi, “The obstacles to empowering Women from attaining their legal rights in the Republic of Yemen: A Sociological Study on Women in Hadramawt Governorate,” *Al-Andalus Journal for Human and Social Sciences*, p. 19, Volume 5, September 2018, <http://www.andalusuniv.net/magazine/19/3.pdf>

29) Sabreen Al-Karbi, “Peace Pioneers in Hadramawt . A Team That Achieves What Men Can't Do [AR],” *Al-Ayyam*, September 21, 2021, <https://www.alayyam.info/news/8QUMSHV8-CJZ27E-CFED>

30) Alia al-Hammadi, a leading member of the Women’s Union in Hadramawt, personal interview with the author, Hadramawt, May 19, 2021.

31) Ahmed Bu Abes, “Hadramawt Women for Peace: The Struggle to Reopen Al-Rayyan International Airport and Al-Dhabba road [AR],” *Al-Madaniya*, June 18, 2019, <https://almadaniyamag.com/ar/2019/06/18/-من-أجل-السلام-نضال-من-نساء-حضر موت-من-أجل-السلام-نضال-من-أجل-ف>

## CONCLUSION

Societal forces provide the real support for any advocacy campaign. The role of a campaign is not only to achieve its stated goal, but to co-opt and build these societal forces with it. In the short term, they can be mobilized on behalf of a campaign's aims and help protect the campaign's successes. In the long term, the empowerment of communities allows them to better defend the rights of their members. In countries engaged in protracted conflicts, such as Yemen, advocacy campaigns can strengthen community ties, which may help reduce conflict and build peace. Hadramawt Women for Peace has succeeded in creating a strong community organization through networking and engagement. The team was able to protect their campaign and form an organized community movement around one of the most important issues impacting the citizens of Hadramawt.<sup>[32]</sup>

The advocacy campaign emerged during exceptional, high-risk circumstances. Furthermore, the campaign targeted areas that had been repurposed as military bases. Influential actors refrained from participating for security reasons, as they feared repercussions. Human rights activist Hesham Bajaber said that launching the campaign at that time was not easy, as the airport was being used as a military detention center and the road to Al-Dhabba was like walking into a large military base.<sup>[33]</sup> The campaign was able to overcome these difficulties through planning and preparation that included evaluating the risks and available alternatives, and building a network of relationships capable of protecting the campaign and its goals. Hadramawt Women for Peace created a non-traditional advocacy framework in terms of style, methodology and tools, which has become a role model for other campaigns.<sup>[34]</sup>

Hadramawt Women for Peace was able to empower women in Yemeni society, specifically within Hadramawt. Although Al-Rayyan airport remained closed, local authorities reopened the eastern Al-Dhabba road in July 2018.<sup>[35]</sup> This should not be

32) Sheikh Khaled Mohammed al-Kathiri, personal interview with the author, May 29, 2021.

33) Hesham Bajaber, lawyer and human rights activist, personal interview with the author, Hadramawt, May 29, 2021.

34) Osama al-Amoudi, a youth activist in youth initiatives and founder of the Peace and Building Foundation, personal interview with the author, Hadramawt, May 28, 2021.

35) "The Command of the Second Military Region in a statement: We confirm the closure of the road was a precaution to fully secure the vital installations of Al-Dhabba [AR]," July 29, 2019, [https://www.tarebhtoday.com/2018/07/blog-post\\_601.html?hl=fr](https://www.tarebhtoday.com/2018/07/blog-post_601.html?hl=fr)

viewed as a failure of the campaign – the decision to reopen Al-Rayyan is linked to the regional powers that control its operation.<sup>[36]</sup>

Advocacy campaigns can play an effective role in defending citizens' rights and mitigating conflicts, especially in societies destabilized by conflict. But in order to play this role, they must possess a high organizational capacity and capabilities that qualify them to become legitimated as a link between citizens and decision-makers. The Hadramawt Women for Peace campaign succeeded by establishing mechanisms for managing its messaging and initiatives, through which it was able to bring the attention of officials and decision-makers to bear on the damage caused by the closure of Al-Rayyan International Airport and eastern Al-Dhabba road. Its influence extended still further, contributing to a changing societal perception of the role of women. The team was able to demonstrate that when given the opportunity, women are more than capable of managing political advocacy campaigns, influencing Yemeni society and building peace.

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36) "A Yemeni minister complains about the Emirates operating flights to Al-Rayyan Airport in Hadramawt without coordination [AR]," Al-Jazeera, September 10, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.net/news/politics/2019/9/10/وزير-يماني-يشكو-تسيير-الإمارات-رحلات>



## RECOMMENDATIONS

### *To local authorities:*

- Support conferences in Hadramawt and the Republic of Yemen to highlight the role of women in advocacy campaigns and decision-making.
- Develop policies to encourage political roles for women and urge institutions and organizations to encourage and support women.
- Encourage women to assume leadership positions and to represent the Yemeni community abroad, because of their valuable experience in local issues.
- Prepare a strategic vision that helps strengthen the role of women in all fields.
- Improve the educational environment for girls at all levels, and support the principle of equal opportunity without discrimination.

### *To local and national civil society organizations:*

- Prepare special programs to enhance the capabilities of women.
- Create platforms for sharing, that women might benefit from the experiences of other advocacy campaigns and initiatives.
- Hold seminars specifically for women, to increase their awareness of their rights and educate them on how to defend them.

### *To media organizations:*

- Highlight female role models and their ability to change and break the restrictions imposed on women.
- Spread a supportive culture of equality and equal opportunity for women.

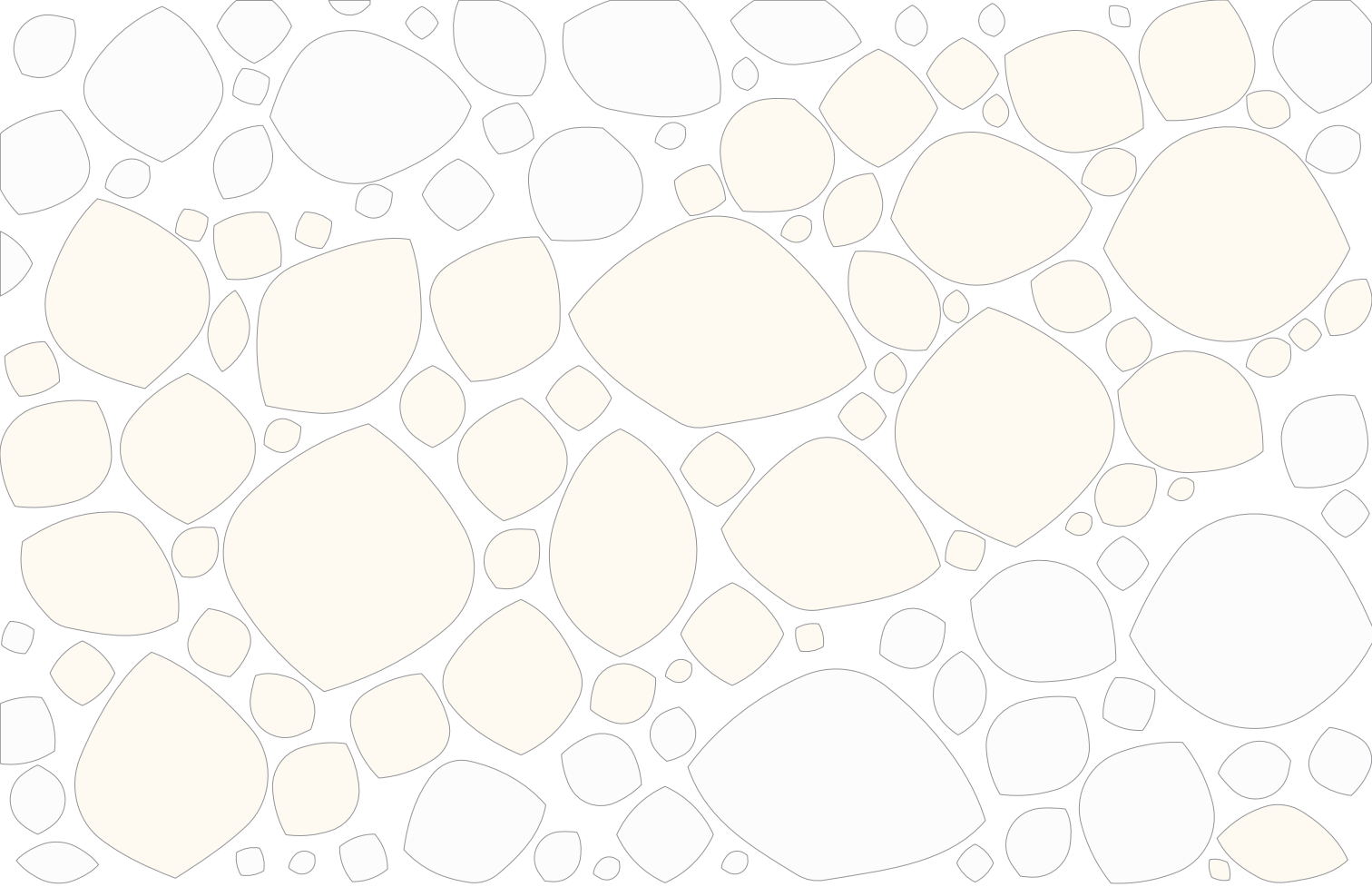


***To international organizations:***

- Implement specialized programs and support initiatives to enhance the capabilities of women, especially in the field of advocacy campaigns.
- Engage women in political processes and encourage female leaders in the governorate of Hadramawt, so that they have a role in future decision-making.
- Increase funding for training programs designed to empower women in the Yemeni community.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Mohammed al-Katheri** is president of the Yemeni Peace and Building Foundation and focuses on Hadramawt in his work as a trainer and advocacy specialist in peacebuilding.



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