



## **Joint Statement on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities: Towards a More Inclusive, Just, and Empowering Yemen**

### **Justice for Yemen Pact Coalition**

**3 December 2025**

The world observes the International Day of Persons with Disabilities each year on December 3. On this occasion, the **Justice for Yemen Pact (J4YP) Coalition** reaffirms its commitment to advocating for the rights of this vital segment of Yemeni society, particularly in the context of the ongoing conflict and its humanitarian consequences.

In Yemen, the significance of this day is heightened by the humanitarian and social challenges faced by nearly five million persons with disabilities (PWDs) — approximately 15% of the population, according to recent estimates, which are likely conservative due to limited data. Monitoring organizations worked also confirm that this number has clearly increased due to the conflict, especially from debilitating injuries caused by explosive weapons. Years of conflict has exacerbated the physical and psychological health of PWDs, increasing societal and social strains. In addition to persons with pre-existing disabilities who are struggling, there are also a number of new disabilities caused by explosive weapons, landmines, and other severe human rights violations.

Although Yemen ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) back in 2009, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) reports indicate significant barriers. Children with disabilities face difficulty accessing education due to a lack of adapted infrastructure, while weak institutional resources and limited government funding hinder the operation of schools and specialized rehabilitation centers.

The increasing number of persons with disabilities in Yemen due to the conflict should not be met with reduced services or neglect of their specific needs. On the contrary, their needs must be recognized as a humanitarian priority — not only in basic services but also in psychosocial support, reintegration, education, employment, and in ensuring inclusive and non-discriminatory access to all humanitarian, development, and peace initiatives. National capacities to support PWDs – both governmental and civil society – must be strengthened. Local and international accountability should also be leveraged by implementing UN Security Council Resolution 2475 within Yemen’s policies and monitoring compliance of all actors.

Despite efforts at the national and international levels, gaps remain significant, especially in conflict-affected areas. In camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs), PWDs face major



barriers to water and sanitation access, as reported internationally. Women and girls with disabilities are disproportionately exposed to violence and discrimination, compounded by inadequate adaptation of services to their specific needs. Humanitarian distributions often fail to consider accessibility, mobility, or psychosocial support requirements, according to rights organizations such as Amnesty International.

This day serves as a renewed call to raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities and highlight the ongoing challenges they face in education, health, protection, and community participation. It is also an opportunity to emphasize the responsibility of all conflict parties and decision-makers to ensure an environment where persons with disabilities can live with dignity and fully participate in public life without barriers.

## Recommendations

In line with Yemen's international commitments and the responsibilities of the state and society toward persons with disabilities, the **Justice for Yemen Pact (J4YP) Coalition** calls for:

1. Aligning national legislation with the CRPD and reviewing laws to remove discriminatory provisions, particularly in labor law.
2. Integrating disability perspectives into public policies, including peacebuilding, state-building, and economic recovery plans.
3. Rehabilitating and operating schools and specialized centers; and providing resources to improve education and rehabilitation services.
4. Promoting inclusive education and ensuring access of children and youth with disabilities to higher education, scholarships, and vocational training.
5. Improving health, rehabilitation, and physiotherapy services, especially in conflict-affected areas.
6. Ensuring PWDs have access to humanitarian aid through inclusion in all relief programs and facilitating access to camps and public facilities.
7. Enhancing protection for women and girls with disabilities through effective referral mechanisms and comprehensive psychosocial support.
8. Establishing an independent accountability mechanism to prevent impunity for violations against persons with disabilities.
9. Promoting economic empowerment through support for rehabilitation and care funds, expanding employment, entrepreneurship, and access to economic programs.
10. Raising community awareness, activating the role of media, educational and religious institutions, and supporting civil society organizations to promote rights-based and equality-focused discourse.

## Signatory Organizations:



1. Abductees' Mothers Association (AMA)
2. Al-Amal Cultural and Social Women's Foundation (AWSF)
3. Center for Strategic Studies to Support Women and Children (CSWC)
4. Free Media Center for Investigative Journalism
5. Marib Dam Foundation for Social Development (MDF)
6. Musaala Organization for Human Rights
7. SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties
8. Studies and Economic Media Center (SEMC)
9. Yemeni Coalition for Monitoring Human Rights Violations (YCMHRV)
10. Watch for human rights organization