



World Education

Constitution Workshop for the Yemeni Women's Union

Taiz and Ibb

**Support for the Women's Associations of Yemen
SWAY**

**Funded by the United States Agency for International Development
Contract No. 279-0080-C-00-0003-00**

February 5 - 9, 1994

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SWAY, in coordination with the Yemeni Women's Union Executive Committee, conducted a workshop on the Constitution of the Yemeni Women's Union. Thirty-four Branch and Center leaders from Taiz and Ibb participated in the workshop held February 5 - 9, 1994 at the SWAY office.

PREPARATION FOR THE WORKSHOP

- A. A number of planning meetings were held with Aisha Abdul Aziz, Executive Committee Member; Magda Ali Mohammed, SWAY Director; and Anisa Hadi, SWAY Coordinator. The meetings addressed the following:
- Workshop objectives
 - Time and period
 - Workshop location
 - Workshop topics areas (sectors)
 - The role of the SWAY and the role of the Union
- B. A meeting was also held with Anisa Hadi on January 29, 1994 to discuss the final workshop content. The following was agreed upon:
- The SWAY Coordinator would contact the Taiz and Ibb Branch leaders to agree on the workshop date since it was very close to Ramadan and some participants were busy with examinations.
 - The SWAY Coordinator would put a lot of effort into convincing the Branch leaders to attend the training. They also agreed not to postpone the workshop.
 - Workshop subjects
 - Women's Union objectives in the past and present. What changes took place and why?
 - Background about the Union formation and when the constitution was developed.
 - How to form different committees, organizations, and channels of communication.
 - Introducing the constitution and internal regulations which rule the Branches and Centers.
 - Clarify and review the regulations
 - Election process for different levels
- C. Add the recommendation to include the financial aspects and administration due to Branch and center needs.

- D. Review and redesign the workshop as needed.
- E. Identify workshop objectives
- Participants would have skills and new information in organizational and financial management and leadership
 - Report Writing
 - Election preparation and process
 - Development of plans for Women's Union's organizations
 - Ability to write financial reports
 - Budget preparation
- F. Identify the workshop topics in the following areas
1. The Yemeni Women's Union
 - a. Union objectives
 - b. Union formation
 - c. Union activities
 - d. Union conditions to elect
 2. The Union's Draft Constitution
 - a. Project of constitution
 - b. Definitions and terms
 - c. Membership types and conditions
 - d. Union structures (organograms)
 - e. Tasks
 - f. Union Status
 3. Preparations for conducting general annual meetings
 - a. Preparations for Branch meetings/conference
 - b. Preparations for governorate meetings/conference
 - c. Preparations for the general (national) conference
 4. Direction and implementation plans
 - a. Union's strategy for developing activities
 - b. General Outline
 - c. Detailed plans to implement Union activities
 - d. Timeline for implementation
 5. Finance and Auditing
 - a. Financial management

- b. Financial problems
- c. Financial organization

- 6. Financial planning
 - a. Source of funds
 - b. Choice of funds and sources
 - c. Capital

- 7. Preparation of financial statements
 - a. Collection of information and budget data
 - b. Bookkeeping
 - c. Financial reporting and preparation of budgets

- 8. Financial supervision
 - a. Filing of documents
 - b. Budget supervision and financial reports
 - c. Budget analysis

- G. Integrate the organizational aspects with financial management as both are essential to the organization of the Union's work.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE AND CONTENT

DAY 1

The workshop started at 9:30 a.m. Saturday February 5, 1994 at the SWAY Office.

Opening Remarks: SWAY Project Director, Staff (Program Officers and Coordinator), Women's Union Sana'a, Women's Union Leaders of Taiz and Ibb Branches.

After the opening remarks, discussions were held with participants concerning the workshop, training methods, topics, and schedule. The training program focussed on the following:

Participants were divided into three groups to carry out activities before starting each day's activities as an energizer.

- Reporting committee
- News committee
- Social committee

The following topics were covered on Day 1:

1. Organization
 - Introduction to the Union
 - Union objectives
 - Union formation - before the unification May 1990
 - How the Union emerged as one Union October 1990
 - Organizational structure for all Unions (north and south)
 - Women's conferences that took place in the south and in the north
 - Activities and similarities and differences between the south and north
 - Steps needed when forming a Union or to re-elect grassroots organizations

2. Financial sector
 - Management (administrative) cycle and financial cycle
 - Planning and preparation of a budget and financial reporting
 - Organization and a financial system for all levels
 - Supervision and guidance; reporting all financial events
 - Auditing and follow-up; control of financial events
 - Evaluation - study and analysis

DAY 2

3. The Constitution
 - Basics of the constitution
 - Objectives of constitution
 - Definitions and introductions
 - Memberships, conditions, types, members rights, and duties
 - Structure of the Union (organogram)
 - Role of Executive Committee and its tasks and other executive offices
 - Union budget - sources of funds
 - Relationship between higher and lower offices
 - Role of the Executive Committee in supervision of lower offices

4. Financial management
 - How to organize financial management
 - Dealing with banks, transfers, loans, and insurance
 - Financial reporting
 - Dealing with official money orders, documents, regulations, and laws
 - Auditing
 - Budget balances

DAY 3

5. The Organization

- Introduction to the Union
- Developing strategies to meet women's needs based upon the needs assessments
- Prioritizing needs
- Conducting meetings with sheiks, local officials, and important personnel to gain their support for Women's Union activities at the village level and involve them in the decision-making process.
- Review and discuss the Union's direction
- Distribute role to each executive office regarding its responsibilities
- Timeline of implementing activities

6. Propose projects and plan for their funding

- Practical steps to implement project plans
- Preparation and plan for budgeting
- Developing a financial plan for Union budget

DAY 4

7. Elections

- Group discussion about a complete election cycle
- Forming steering committees from participants
- Practice election preparation
- Choose representatives (representative key below)

# of members	# of representatives
1 to 200	30
201 to 400	40
401 to 600	60
601 to 800	80
801 to 1000	100

- Committee formation (Executive)

Village level	3 - 5 members
Branch level	5 - 7 members
Governorate	9 - 11 members

Executive Committee Sana'a
Central Consul

9 - 11 members
89 members

DAY 5

8. Finance

- Final financial reports (annual)
- Proposed budget
- Auditing
- Analysis of financial balances

During the workshop, the participants discussed all of the above subjects. They drew up findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Also, to ensure that they understood the subjects, the participants practiced and applied exercises. Pictures, graphics, photos, and drawings were used to help explain the subject matter.

9. Workshop Evaluation - a questionnaire was prepared which included the following topics:

- Information about the participants
- Workshop subjects, topics, titles
- Objectives
- Benefits
- Timeframe and limitations
- Recommendations of subjects to be added for future training
- Recommendations to develop Union activities
- Evaluation of Union activities
- Suggestions for funding
- Supervision of Union expenditures and project expenditures (belongs to the centers and Branches)
- General observations

OUTCOME OF WORKSHOP EVALUATION

1. Education level of participants

Graduate	2
Diploma	3
Secondary	14
Junior	13
Primary	2

2. Workshop program and subject

Excellent	7
Good	25
Very good	1
Below average	1

3. Met objectives stated

Yes	All
No	0

4. Benefitted from workshop

Yes	All
No	0

5. Time period of workshop

Enough	14
Not enough	19
No response	1

6. Recommendations to develop Union activities

No answer	29
Good	4
Not available	1

7. Union financial activities

Excellent	4
Good	8
Not appropriate	10
Poor	1
No response	1

8. Subjects to be added to workshop

No need to add	33
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	Need to add	1
9.	Union activities	
	Excellent	8
	Not appropriate	5
	Remedial	1
	Needs to be developed	2
	No response	18
10.	Financial supervision	
	Good	11
	Seasonally	1
	Does not exist	12
	Not organized	2
	Good	1
	No response	7
11.	Training location	
	Good	12
	Appropriate	6
	Not appropriate	6
	Excellent	5
	Very good	1
	Acceptable	2
	No response	2
12.	Workshop content	
	Good	14
	Very Good	1
	Excellent	12
	Appropriate	1
	No response	1
13.	Trainers	
	Excellent	21
	Very Good	1

Good	7
No response	5

14. Workshop purpose

Excellent	9
Good	20
No response	5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Separate politics from grassroots activities
- Regular visits from the Executive Committee in Sana'a to follow up and give support to Branches and centers
- Select qualified leaders
- Give more attention to income generating projects
- Give more attention to developing rural women
- Encourage financial supervision
- Plan and implement activities as scheduled
- Broaden the Union activities
- Promote development of big projects
- Repeat this workshop for other leaders who couldn't participate in this one, especially in rural areas
- Government, private sector, and factory owners should help to support women's programs
- Use Yemeni trainers and experts (due to language)
- Hold cultural, social, and legal studies, and exchange experiences
- Hold lectures to promote awareness of the situation of women in Yemen
- Broaden Union activities and provide facilities
- Increase number of small projects and light industries
- Build up Union members legal understanding of their rights and duties
- Encourage local skills and train women in different fields
- Conduct training at Taiz Branch conference room to reduce transportation needs
- Improve Union communications both internally and with international organizations
- Workshop subjects are very important and coordination is recommended for all Union Branches and centers also to provide all the Union documentation.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

During the short period of the workshop, we noticed a high level of participation, commitment on the part of the participants, and facility for learning. This has enabled us as trainers to

conduct the training despite the complicated and difficult nature of the subject matter. We believe that the SWAY Project has had a positive effect on the attitudes of leaders in the remote rural areas, especially those who were not exposed to training opportunities in the past.

We would like to thank USAID/Yemen and the SWAY project for their continued support of women leaders and their overall contribution toward easing the struggle of Yemeni women.

Also we thank the SWAY, Director, Coordinator, and Program Officer's for their help and support and all the facilities they provided to ease our task. Their participation during the workshop was a positive aspect.