Yemeni citizens' main concerns, perception of human rights and CSOs

A Yemen Polling Center Report

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BACKGROUND

The **Yemen Polling Center** is an independent non-governmental organization, which was established in 2004 and received its registration certificate No. 147 from the Ministry of Social Affairs & Labor in December 2005. As the first and only polling center in Yemen, YPC prides itself on providing the highest quality in social science research. Furthermore, YPC is the 2010 recipient of the Best Partner in the Middle East and North Africa award from Gallup International. YPC designs and performs opinion polls, surveys, and employs other methods in studies which serve the research needs of national and international institutions, non-profit organizations, corporations, government agencies, and professional associations.

YPC conducts public attitude surveys, focus groups, in-depth interviews, demographic studies, and market research employing both quantitative and qualitative methods for development projects, international organizations and foundations, publications, business groups, banks, and other stake-holders. YPC was founded by a group of dedicated professional journalists, academics, researchers and volunteers with strong ambitions to bring about progressive change in Yemen informed by social science of the highest international standards. As a member of both the World Association for Public Opinion Research and the American Association for Public Opinion Research, YPC remains committed to excellence in all aspects of social science.

YPC has a dedicated, well-experienced and qualified team. In addition, the Center cooperates with dozens of experts, consultants and university professors within Yemen and abroad when need be. Out of the more than 1,000 field researchers the Center has examined and trained, YPC has selected about 320 enumerators throughout the country for its field research, fifty per cent of whom are female.

Our experience, as well as our personnel and technical resources allow us to conduct surveys of any size throughout all of Yemen's governorates, while adhering to the most stringent international standards in data quality and insuring cost effective, timely studies. Furthermore, Yemen is a religious and conservative society in which male-female interactions are quite limited. As such, it is necessary to have female enumerators to conduct interviews with women respondents. Despite these challenges, YPC has successfully implemented dozens of surveys for prominent national and international partners.

Since its inception YPC has conducted or is currently conducting dozens of qualitative and quantitative research projects on a multitude of issues ranging from satellite television and radio consumption patterns and consumer attitudes, to human rights, women's rights, and political reform issues, to corruption, public health, and other governance related studies, among others.

In addition to numerous successfully completed public opinion surveys and research projects, YPC has implemented several economic surveys and qualitative studies since its inception in 2004, covering all governorates in Yemen. YPC has surveyed nearly 100,000 Yemeni citizens by face-to-face interviews.

YPC has wide experience in implementing internationally-funded projects. It has cooperated and thus far conducted dozens of projects with numerous international institutions including the Center for International and Private Enterprises (CIPE), Danicom (Media Consultancy Company), the European Union, the World Bank, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Gallup International, Charney Research, International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the Pan-Arab Research Center (PARC), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Research Institute (London), the University of Michigan, and the Ministry of Local Administration, among others.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This informative report has been completed with the assistance of a grant provided by the EU through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. The report, produced by the Yemen Polling Center (YPC) within the framework of the EU-funded project *Civil Society Forum*, aims at offering an overall picture of the interests and priorities of Yemen's citizens, as well as their views and opinions on a number of topics.

The report is based on the findings of nation-wide surveys previously implemented by YPC during the three-year period 2010-2012.

The *Yemeni Citizens' Main Concerns, Perception of Human Rights and CSOs* report is divided in four sections:

- The first section of the report identifies Yemen's citizens' main sources of concerns. It analyses the evolution of such concerns throughout the 2010-2012 period as well changes in the perception of these concerns in the mind of Yemen's population. The following sources of information were used in this section: *Survey on Yemeni Political and Economic Issues* (US Department, 2010), *Public Opinion on Development Survey* ("Youth Survey", 2011) about political issues and a *Post-Presidential Elections Survey* on electoral and political issues (IFES, 2012).

- The second section of the report assesses the Yemeni population's awareness of human rights issues. It analyses the degree of knowledge Yemeni citizens have about human rights, the most valued human rights in Yemen, how human right violations are perceived, as well as how Yemeni citizens see the Ministry of Human Rights and its role. The information used in this section comes from the *Human Rights Awareness Survey* (2010) carried out at the request of UNDP, UNFPA and Yemen's Ministry of Human Rights.

- The third section focuses on opinion trends towards civil society organizations. It analyses Yemeni citizens' knowledge and understanding of CSOs, how these organizations are perceived in terms of importance for the country, as well as Yemeni citizens' willingness to participate in activities and events organized by CSOs or to volunteer with them. For this section, data from the MEPI-funded *Public Opinion Survey on the Presence of Human Rights Organizations in the Society* (2009) was used.

- Finally, the fourth section identifies the general media trends in Yemen. To know the main sources of information used in the country is essential if one wants to reach Yemen's citizens. The information obtained in the Open Society Institute funded project *Strengthening Independent Media in Yemen* (2012) was used in this section.

1. YEMEN'S CITIZENS' MAJOR CONCERNS [1]

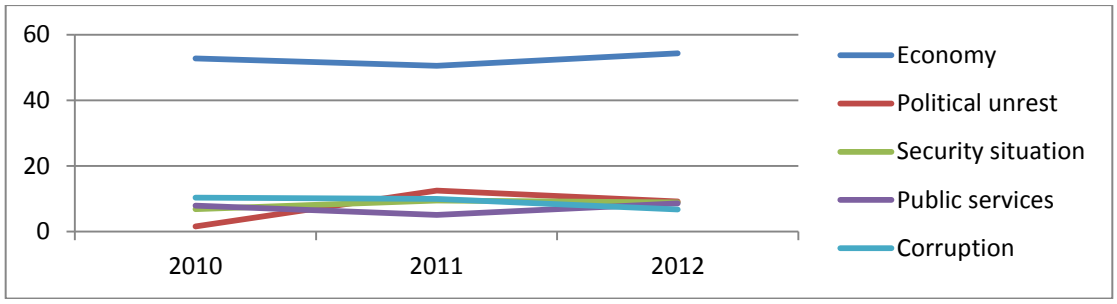
- The main sources of concern for Yemenis are, in the following order: the economic situation, the political crisis, the security situation, the provision of public services and corruption.
- The economic situation is by far the greatest concern of Yemeni citizens, in a recurrent pattern since 2010. Moreover, the perception of the country's economic situation continues to deteriorate.
- The political unrest is the second main source of concern in Yemen. The political unrest became a significant source of concern in 2011 but has started to decrease in 2012. This decrease is reinforced by the respondents' high degree of confidence in the caretaker government.
- The security situation was the third source of concern in Yemen in 2012. A similar percentage of respondents selected security as the main source of concern in 2010 and 2011. Thus, there is no direct link between the concern for security situation and the political unrest. Security concerns are higher in the southeastern coast of Yemen.
- The provision of public services (water, electricity, roads) is the fourth source of concern among Yemenis. Importantly, approximately 3/4ths of the respondents selecting the provision of public services as a main source of concern were women.
- Corruption was the fifth source of concern in Yemen in 2012 and is the only main source of concern in Yemen which has steadily decreased since 2010. 2/3rds of respondents selecting corruption as a main source of concern were men.

The current economic situation is by far Yemeni citizens' greatest concern. The weak economic environment, including high rates of poverty, unemployment, and high prices, was selected by the majority of Yemenis interviewed in 2012 (54.3% of respondents) as the main source of concern in Yemen and has been consistently so since 2010.

Following the economic situation, the political crisis was identified as second source of concern (9.2% of respondents), closely followed by the current security situation (8.9%) and the provision of public services (8.6%) in 2012. Preoccupation with corruption has steadily been decreasing since 2010.

[1] The data presented in this section, the data was based on the following surveys: The 2010 *Yemeni Political and Economic Issues Survey*; the 2012 *Post-Presidential Elections Survey*, which targeted a sample of 2,000 households in 19 selected governorates; and the 2011 *Public Opinion on Development Survey*, which included 1,100 interviews (800 from households and 300 from youth squares) in 13 selected governorates.

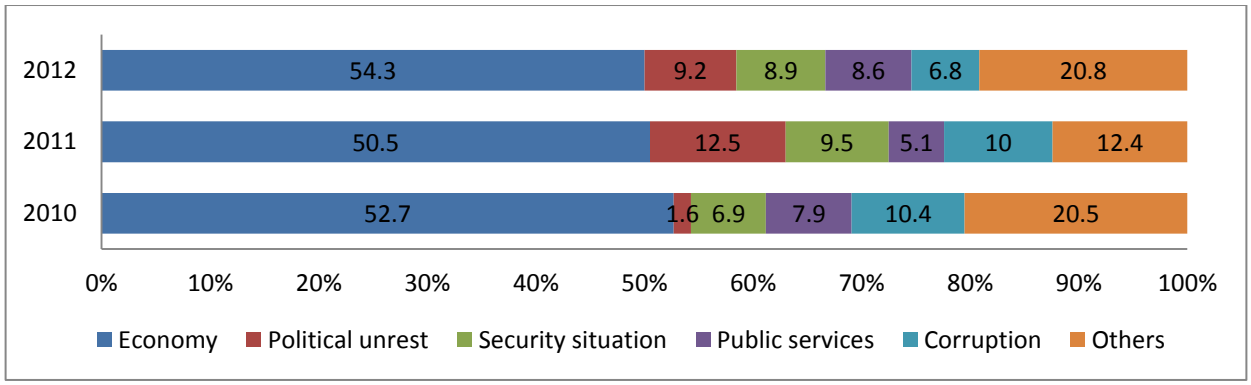
Figure 1: Yemeni citizens' main concerns I (2010-2012)



Economic Situation

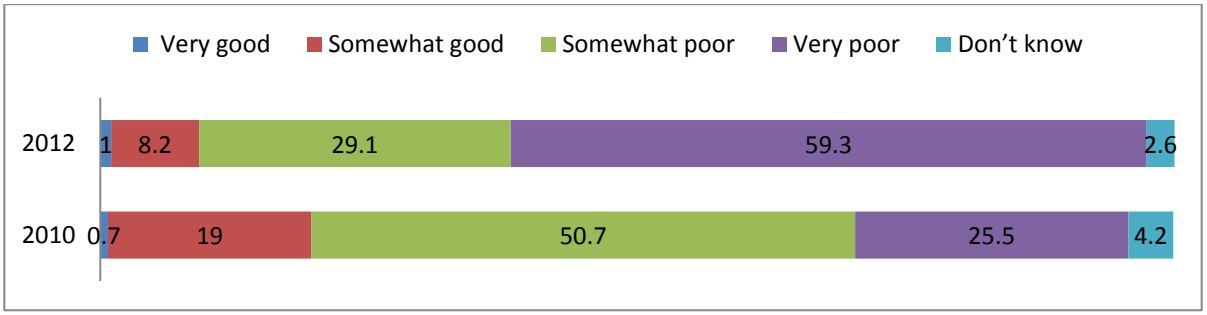
The economy has been and continues to be the main priority for Yemenis since the last two years. In 2012, 54.3% of respondents selected economic problems, including poverty, unemployment, and high prices, as the greatest problem faced by Yemen. The economy had also ranked first in the previous years, with very similar percentages (50.5% in 2011 and 52.7% in 2010). The economy was ranked highly above the other given options, all of which were below 10% in 1012.

Figure 2: Yemeni citizens' main concerns II (2010-2012)



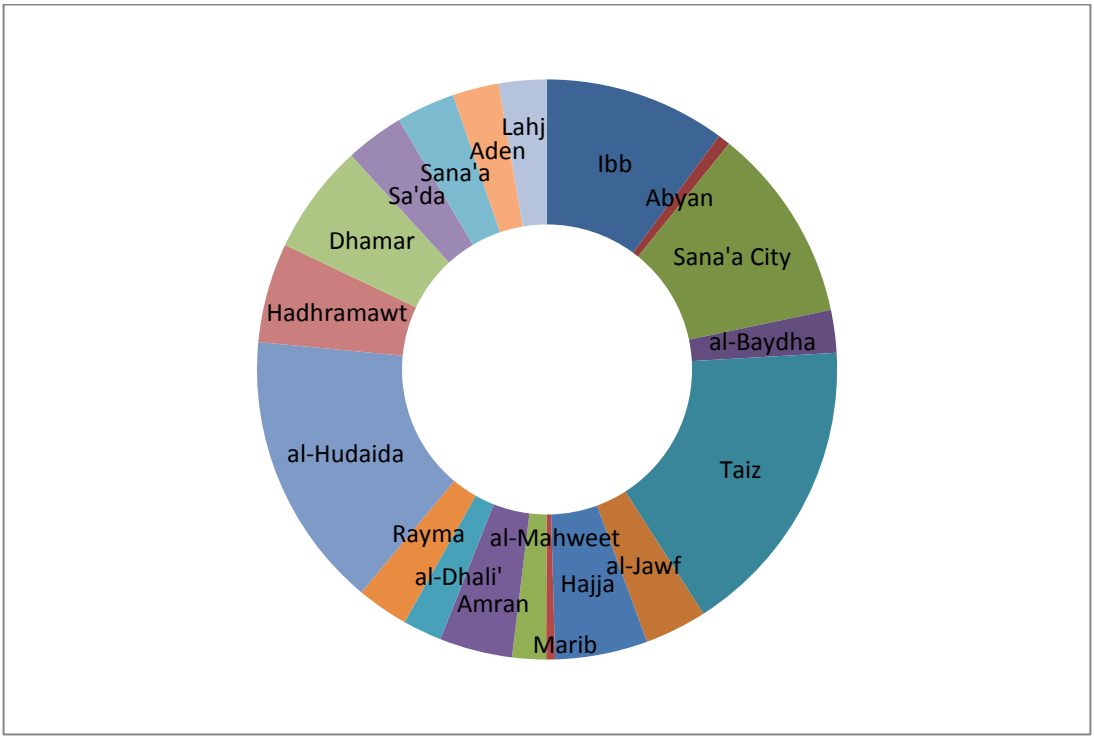
Additionally, the perception of the country's economic situation among Yemeni citizens is deteriorating. In 2010, a majority of respondents (50.7%) described it as "somewhat poor" and only a quarter of respondents (25.5%) stated it was "very poor". In 2012, this percentage has not only increased but inverted, with 29.1% of the interviewees qualifying the economic situation as "somewhat poor", and an outstanding majority of interviewees (59.3%) as "very poor".

Figure 3: Perception of Yemen's economic situation (2010 / 2012)



Rayma (78% of respondents), Ta'iz (74.9%), al-Hudeyda (74.4%), and Sana'a City (62.5%) were the governorates where people were most concerned about the economic situation.

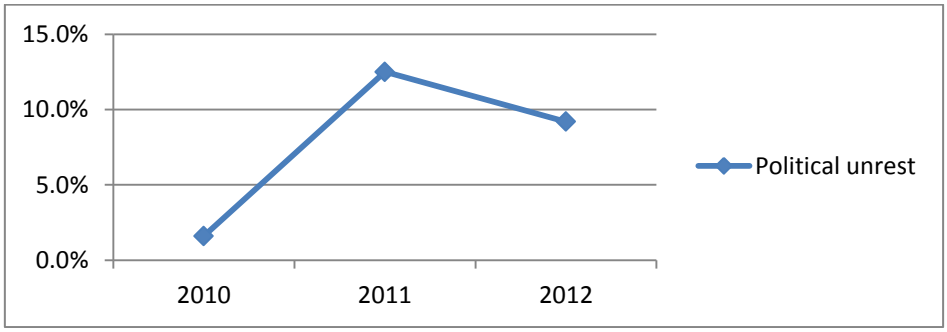
Figure 4: The economy as a main problem by governorate



Political Unrest

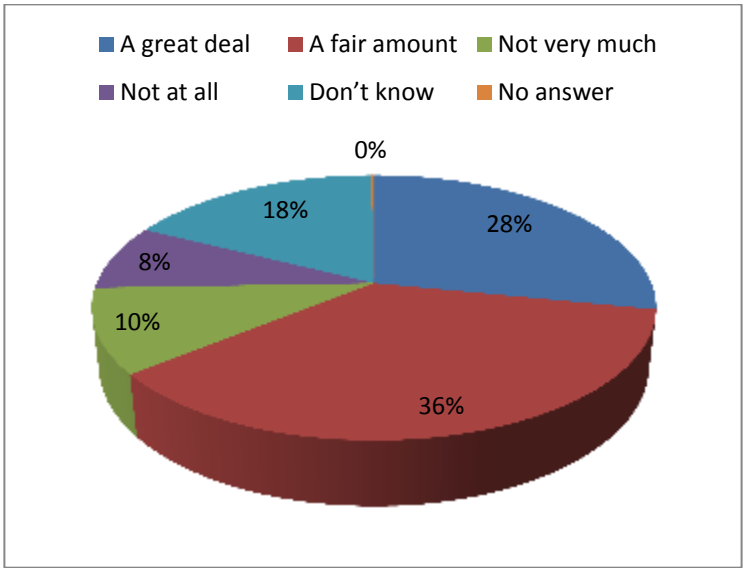
In 2010, the government was seen as a topic of concern by only 1.6% of respondents. In 2011, as a result of the uprising experienced in the country, political unrest became the second greatest concern among Yemeni citizens (12.5%). The political crisis continued to be the second main concern in 2012 (9.2%), although the percentage has started to decrease.

Figure 5: Evolution of political unrest as a source of concern (2010 - 2012)



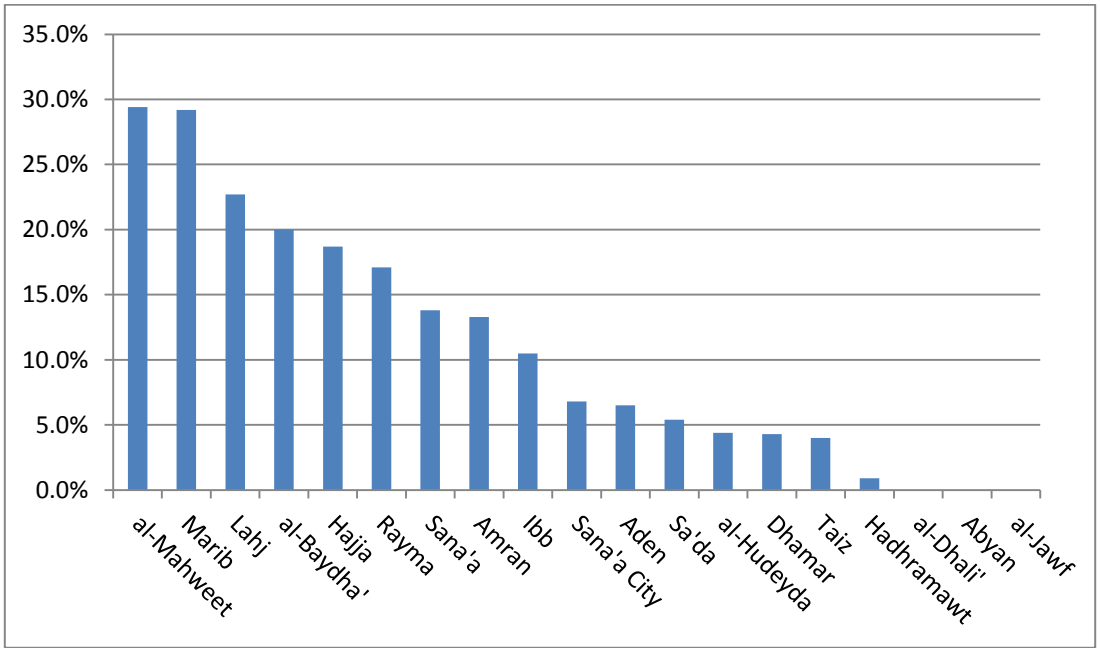
Reinforcing this decreasing trend, 28% of respondents stated having a great deal of confidence in the caretaker government to manage the transition and 36% had a fair amount of confidence. Only 18% of the interviewees said they did not have very much confidence in it or none at all.

Figure 6: Confidence in caretaker government to manage the transition to a democratic leadership (2012)



Al-Mahweet (29.4%), Marib (29.2%), Lahj (22.7%), and al-Baydha' (20%) were the governorates the most concerned by the political unrest.

Figure 7: Percentage of respondents selecting political unrest as main concern by governorate (2012)

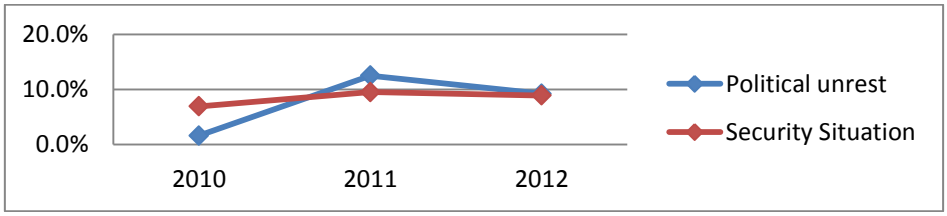


Security Situation

Security ranked as the third main source of concern in 2012. 8.9% of respondents considered the security situation the main problem currently faced by Yemen.

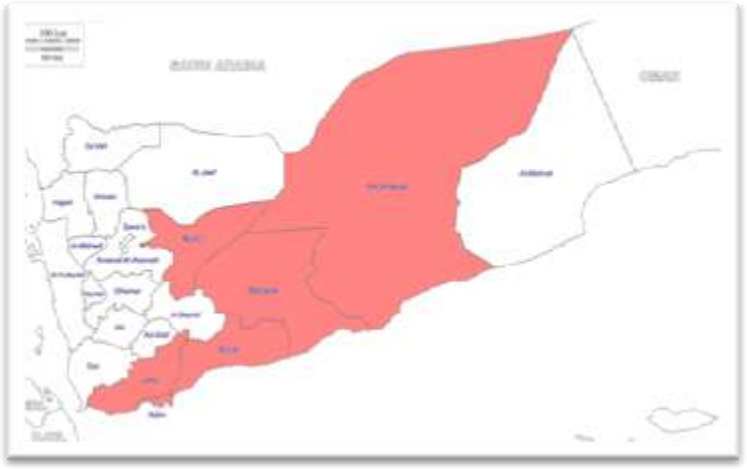
9.5% of respondents chose this answer in 2010. Thus, there is no direct link between the concern for the security situation and that for political unrest. As shown above, concern in regard to the political unrest soared in 2011 whereas the percentage of security as source of concern has been steady before and after the political unrest of 2011.

Figure 8: Concern about political unrest and security situation evolution (2010 - 2012)



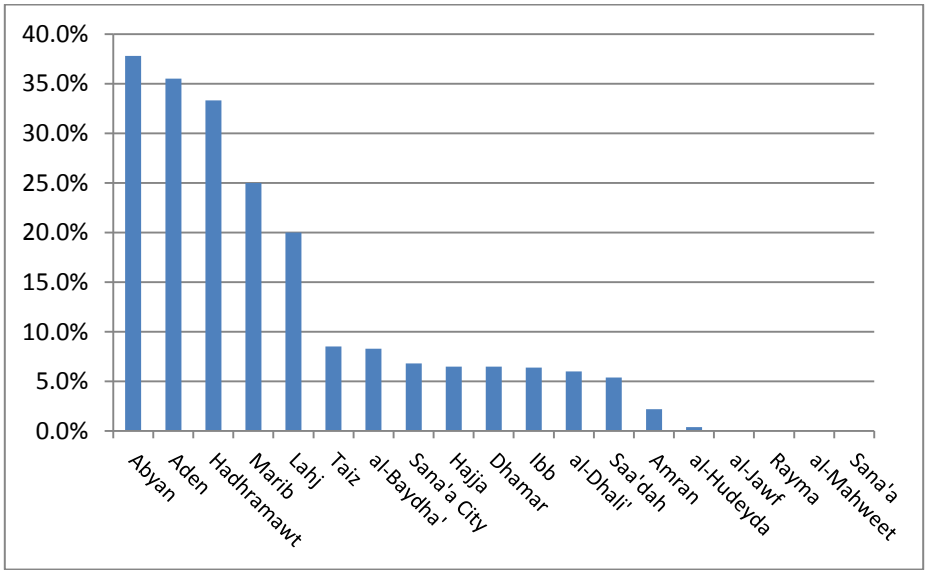
However, governorates with a higher concern for security are noteworthy. The percentage of respondents selecting security as a main source of concern is significantly higher in the governorates on the southeastern coast of Yemen (i.e. Aden, Abyan, Lahj, Shabwa[2], and Hadhramawt), as well as in Marib.

Figure 9: Governorates with 20% of respondents considering security the main source of concern (2012)[3]



37.8% of respondents in Abyan, 35.5% in Aden, 33.3% in Hadhramawt, and 20% in Lahj selected security as their main concern in 2012 (41.2% in Shabwa in 2010). Thus, there is a geographic concentration in terms of security concerns on Yemeni territory along the southeastern coastline of the country.

Figure 10: Percentage of respondents selecting security as main concern by governorate (2012)

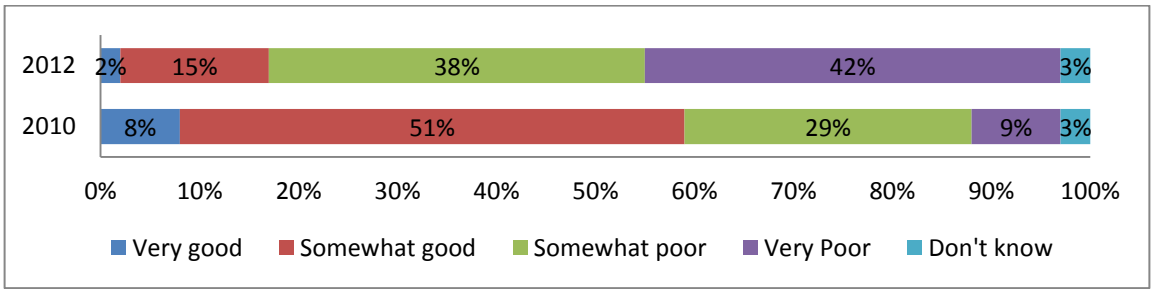


[2] Data of Shabwa governorate is from 2010.
[3] Data of Shabwa governorate is from 2010.

The worsening perception of the security situation in Yemen is also highly remarkable. As shown above, the percentage of respondents selecting security as main concern slightly decreased in 2012. However, the perception of the security situation as good has plummeted since 2010.

In 2010, a majority of respondents (51%) considered the security situation as somewhat good, 29% as somewhat poor and 9% as very poor. In 2012, the trend had completely changed, with 42% of respondents considering the security situation as very poor and 38% as somewhat poor.

Figure 11: Assessment of Yemen's current security situation (2010 / 2012)

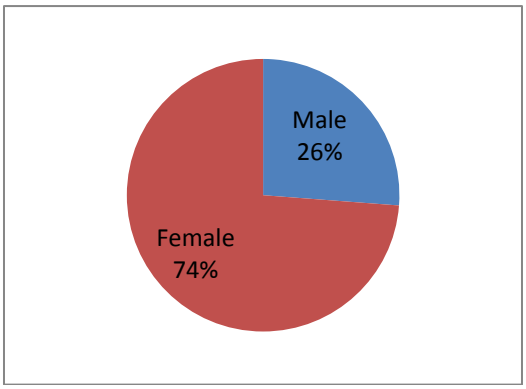


Public Services

The lack of provision of public services (i.e. electricity, water, and roads) ranked as the fourth main source of concern faced by Yemenis in 2012 (main source of concern for 8.6% of respondents). In 2012, this percentage increased in comparison with the previous two years (5.9% in 2011 and 7.9% in 2010).

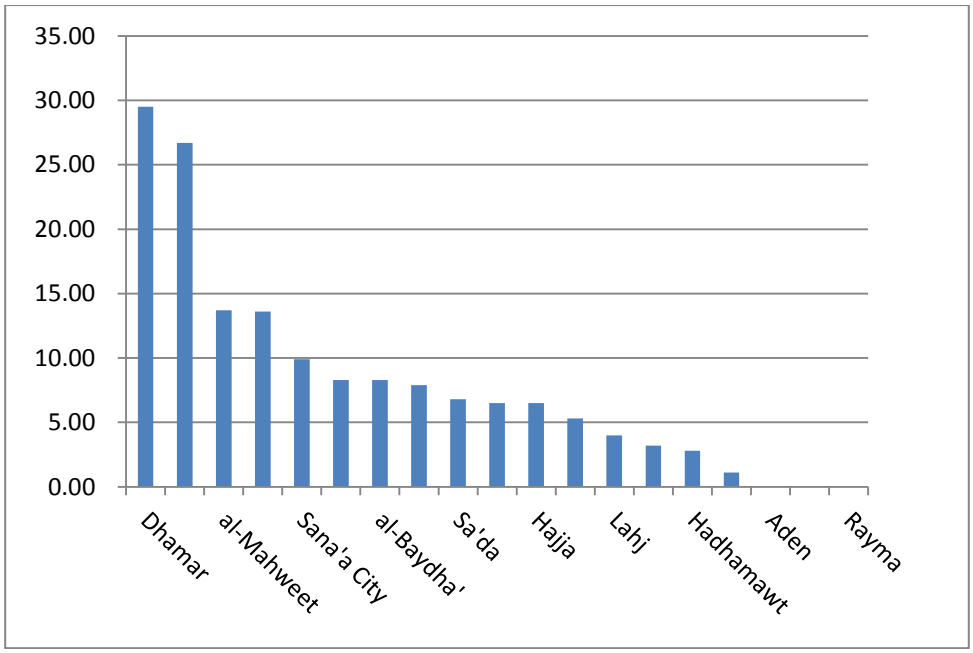
Women are significantly more concerned about the provision of public services than men. Almost three quarters of the respondents (73.8%) who selected public services as a main issue of concern were women versus 26% of male respondents.

Figure 12: Respondents selecting public services as source of main concern by gender (2012)



By governorates, the respondents of Dhamar (29.5%), Abyan (26.7%), al-Mahweet (13.7%), and Ibb (13.6%) are the most concerned about the provision of public services.

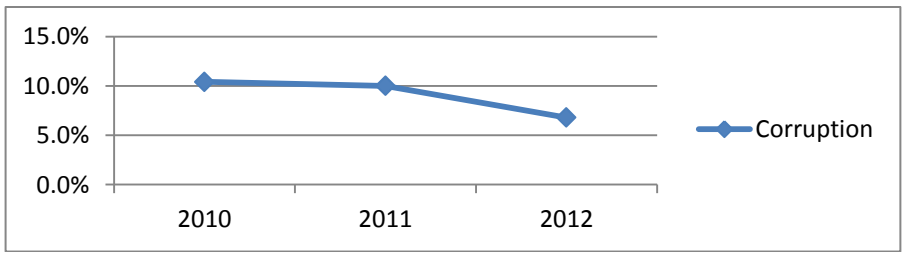
Figure 13: Percentage of respondents selecting public services as main concern by governorate (2012)



Corruption

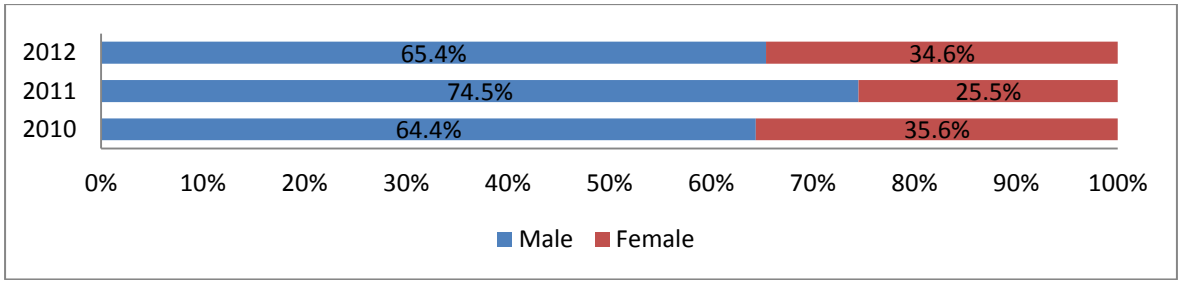
Corruption is the only main source of concern for Yemenis which has gradually been decreasing. In 2010, it ranked second, with 10.4% of respondents stating it as a main source of concern. In 2012, it ranked fifth, with a percentage of 6.8%.

Figure 14: Evolution of corruption seen as a source of concern (2010 - 2012)



As in the previous case of the provision of public services, gender is an important factor when analyzing corruption as a source of concern. Men are significantly more concerned by corruption than women, with approximately 2/3rds of male respondents selecting corruption as a main source of concern versus 1/3 of female respondents, a recurrent trend over the three-year period.

Figure 15: Corruption as a main source of concern by gender (2010-2012)



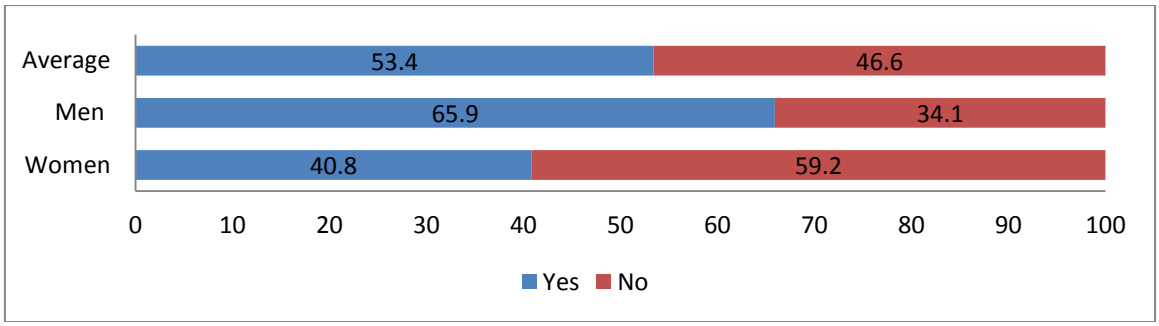
2. Human Rights Awareness among Yemeni Citizens[4]

- There is a general lack of knowledge on human rights in Yemeni society, with almost half of respondents not having heard of human rights.
- The right to education is considered by Yemeni citizens the most important human right (23.8% of those respondents having heard or read about human rights), particularly by women.
- Over 78% of the surveyed said that neither their own nor their relatives' rights had been violated despite belonging to governorates that suffer from a shortage in public services or from security problems. More than half of those who said their rights had been abused resorted to state authorities (judiciary, police, etc.) to demand justice.
- A large number of respondents have heard about the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR). However, 3 of every 10 did not know its function.

Knowledge of Human Rights

There is a general lack of knowledge on human rights in Yemeni society. Almost half of respondents had never heard about human rights (46.6%). Men are more likely than women to have heard about them (65.9% of male respondents vs. 40.8% of female ones).

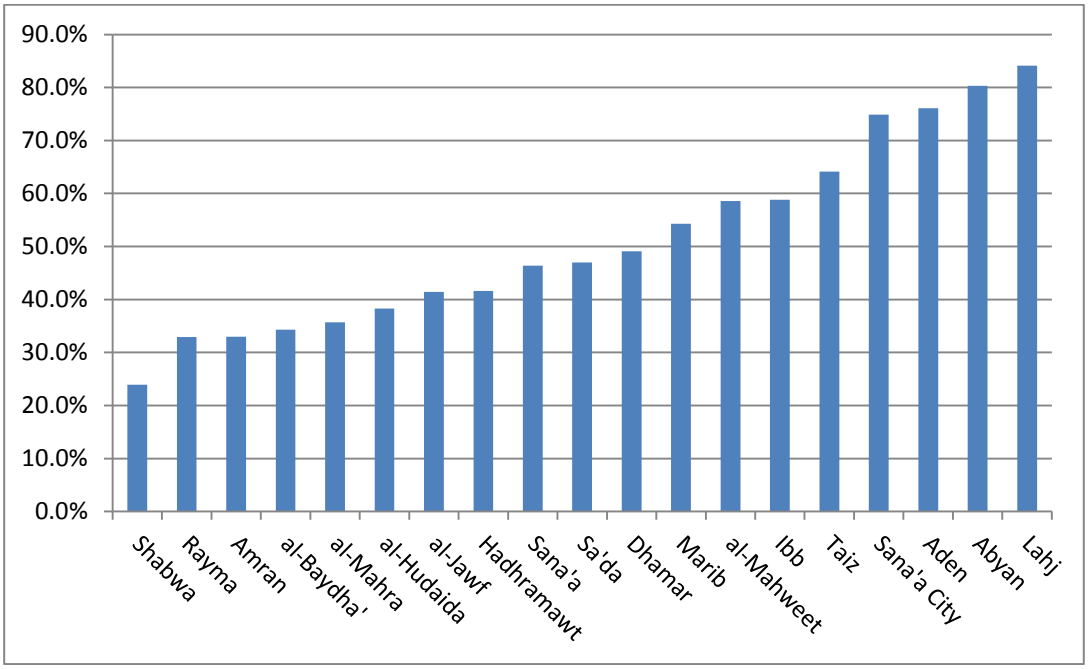
Figure 16: Have you heard or read about human rights previously? (2009)



[4] In this section, the source of the data is a UNDP-funded survey on the general perception of human rights awareness during 2009 for 2,498 households in 20 governorates, age groups 18+ (50% female, 50% male).

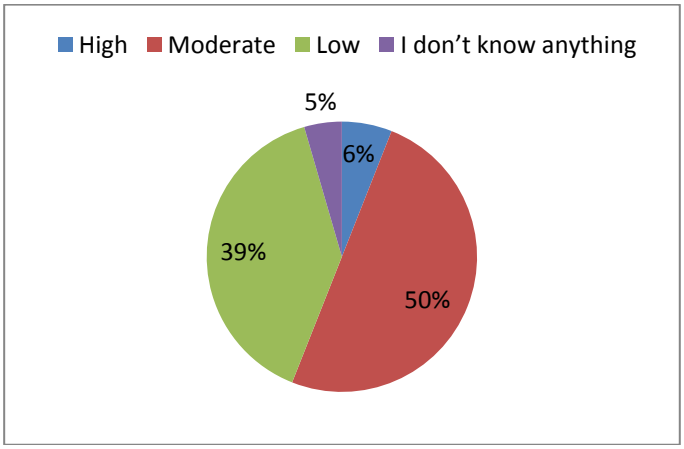
There are important geographical disparities in the number of respondents having heard or read about human rights. Shabwa (23.9% of respondents having heard or read about human rights), Rayma (32.9%), Amran (33%) and al-Baydha' are governorates with a lower degree of knowledge on human rights, with less than 35% of the population stating that they have heard or read about these before. By contrast, more than 75% of respondents had heard about human rights in Aden (76.1%), Abyan (80.3%) and Lahj (84.1%).

Figure 17: Percentage of respondents affirming to have heard or read about human rights by governorate (2009)



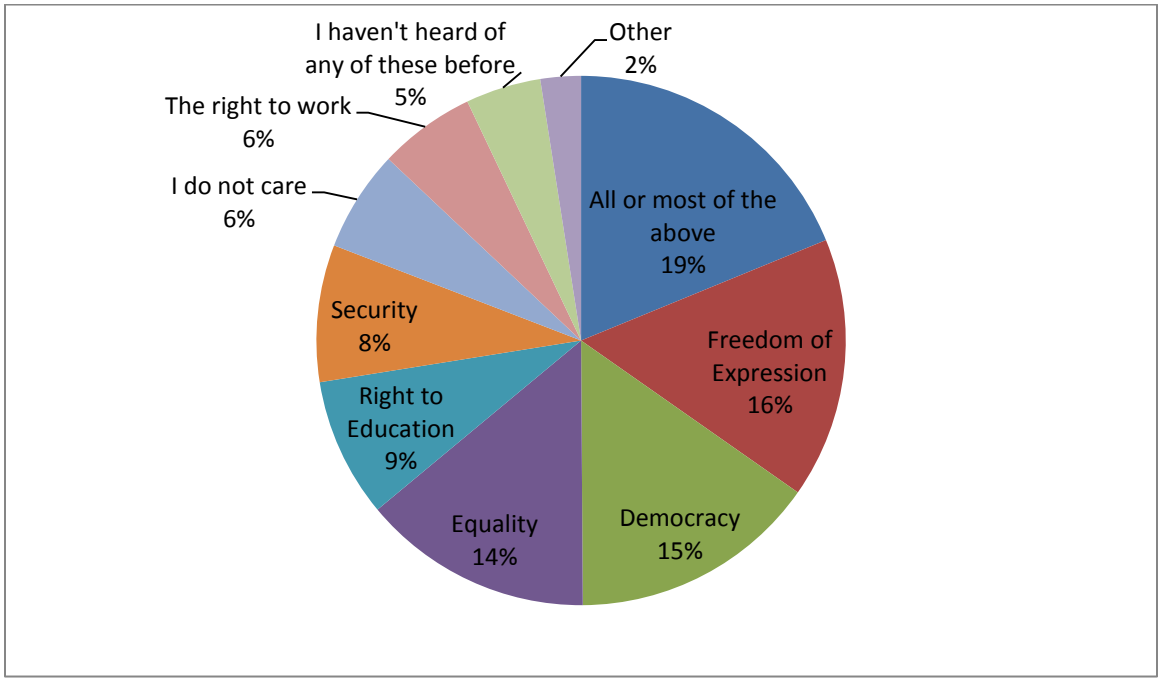
Additionally, of those respondents who had previously heard or read about human rights, only 6% considered their knowledge as high, while nearly 40% considered it as low.

Figure 18: How would you rate your knowledge of human rights? (2009)



When ask to describe what 'human rights' mean, 28.2% of respondents related human rights to justice, followed by issues related to freedom of expression (23.2%), democracy (22.1%) and equality (22.1%).

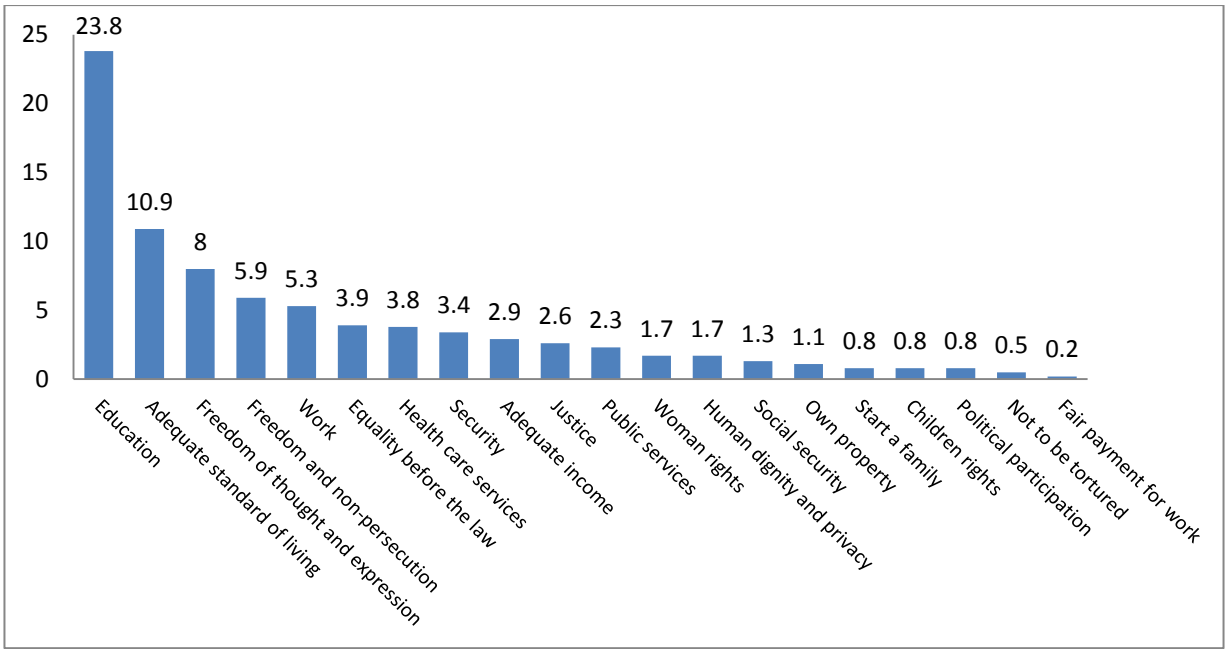
Figure 19: What comes to mind when hear the phrase human rights? (2009)



Primary Human Rights

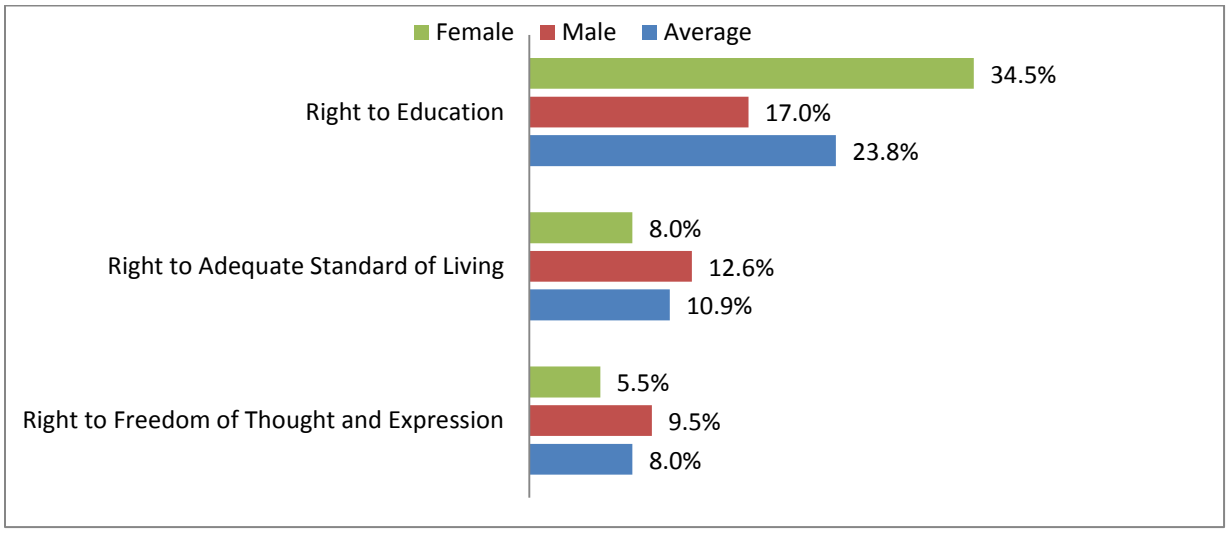
The right to education is considered the most important human right by Yemenis (23.8% of respondents having heard or read about human rights), followed by the right to an adequate standard of living (10.9%) and the right to freedom of thought and expression (8%).

Figure 20: The most important human right is the right to: (2009)



Although male and female respondents agreed on what they considered the most important human right, women were a great deal more concerned with the right to education, with 34.5% of women stating it as a primary human right.

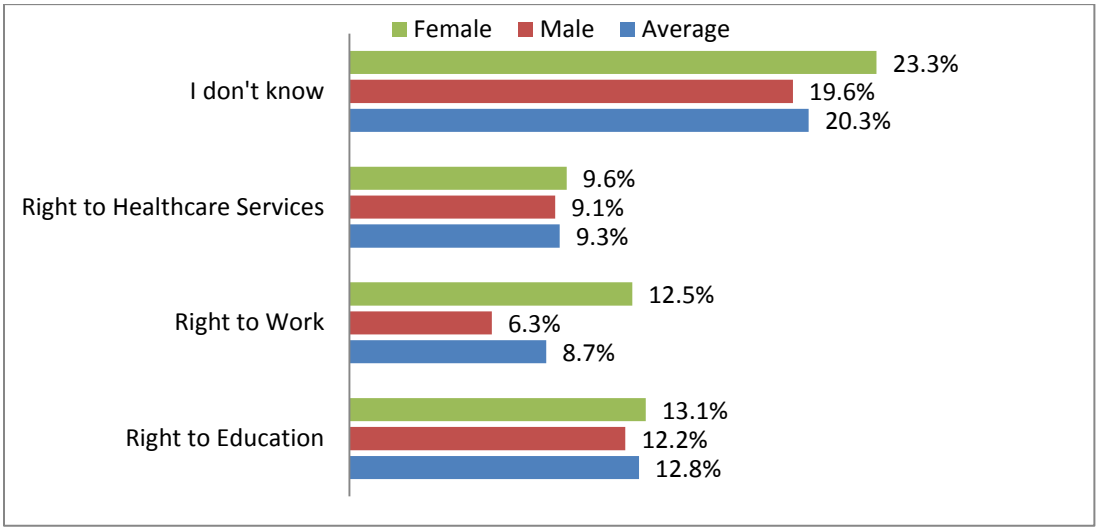
Figure 21: Most important human right by gender (2009)



This result is highly significant if taking into account the percentage of illiterate female respondents (50.4%), which is much higher than the average (32.7%). In contrast, the survey found out that women respondents did not rate women's rights in general as highly as others.

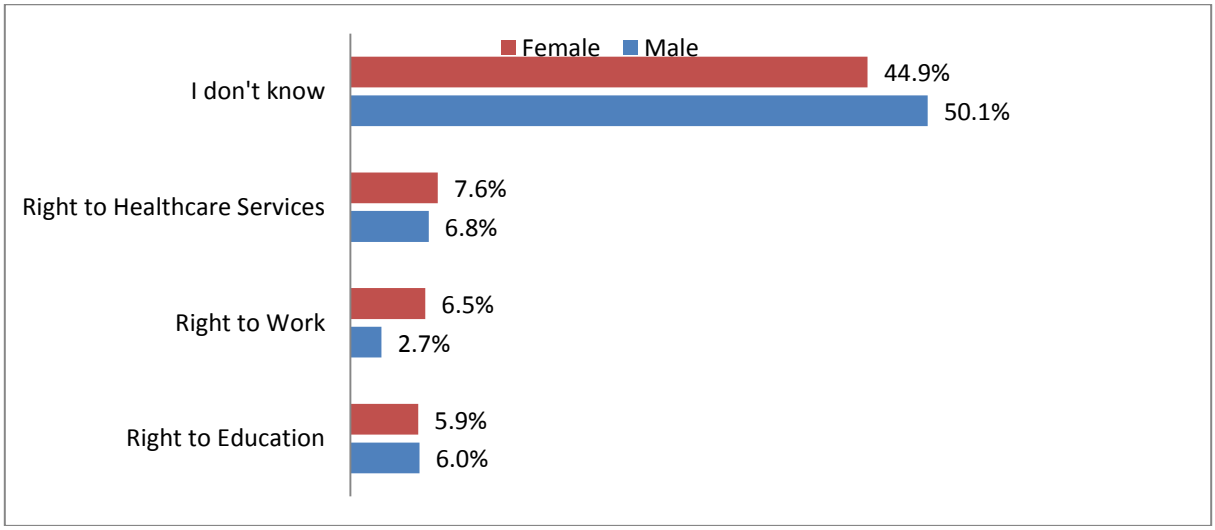
When asked to state the second most important human right, respondents selected (apart from the right to education): the right to work (8.7%) and the right to healthcare (9.3%). As in the case of the right to education, the selection of the right to work was significantly higher among female respondents, with 12.5% of female respondents choosing it as compared to 6.3% of male respondents. Right to healthcare rated similarly important for both genders.

Figure 22: Second most important human right by gender (2009)



A majority of male (50.1%) and female (44.9%) respondents were unable to name a third important human right. The respondents reiterated the rights to education, work, and healthcare as the most important human rights for them. This exemplifies the problem of public human rights awareness and a lack of understanding of the concept of human rights in Yemeni society.

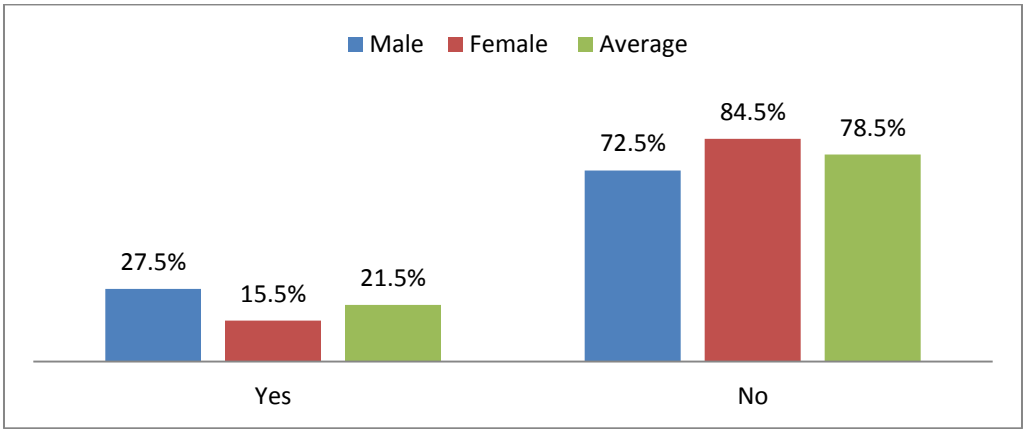
Figure 23: Third most important human right by gender (2009)



Violation of Human Rights

People's awareness of human rights is blurry and when asked whether their rights had ever been violated, over 78% of the surveyed said that neither their own nor their relatives' rights had been infringed despite the fact that most of them lived in governorates that suffer from a shortage in public services, poor infrastructure, and/or security problems. Only 21.5% stated that such a thing had occurred to them or one of their relatives.

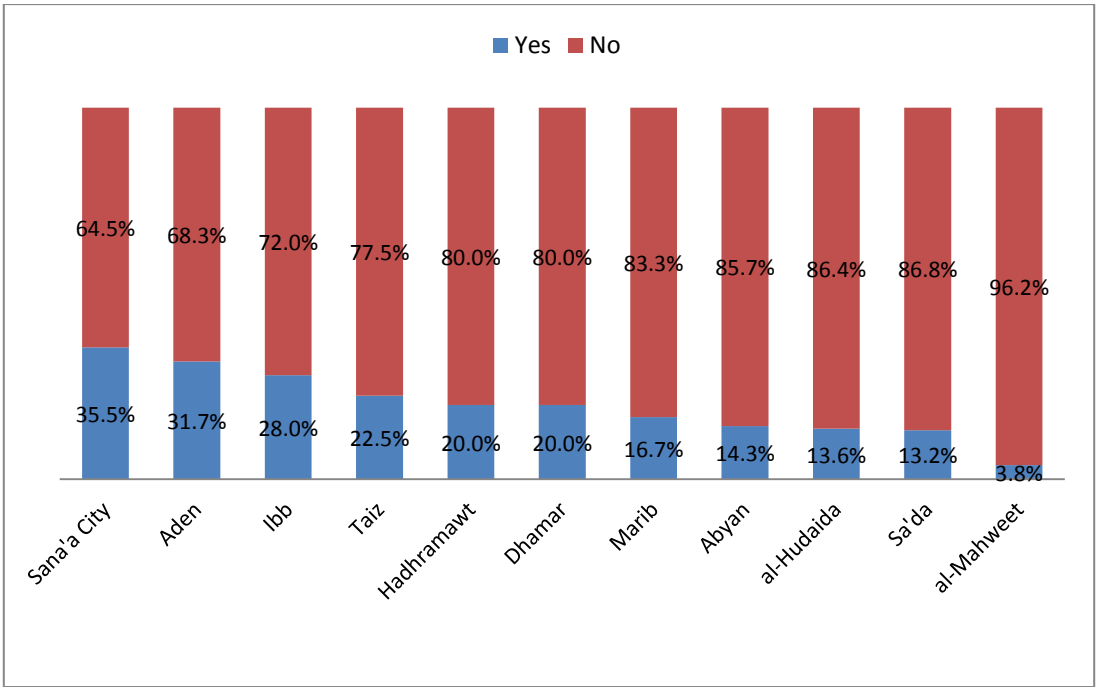
Figure 24: Have your or one of your relatives' rights ever been violated? (2009)



Results indicate a relative difference in rights awareness between urban and rural areas as a consequence of the extent of exposure to media, promotional campaigns and the higher level of education. Most of those who stated that their rights or that one of their relatives' rights had been abused (35.5%) were from Sana'a city, followed by 31.7% in the governorate of Aden and 28% in Ibb. Thus, those living in the main governorates, with more and better services, public departments, hospitals, schools, infrastructure, public services and NGOs, and saying that their own or one of their relatives' rights have been abused outnumbered those who are less privileged and live in governorates with political, security, economic, infrastructural, and educational problems, etc.

The level of awareness of human rights in rural areas is poorer than in urban areas. For example, despite the fact that the war in Sa'da was recurrent for six years, only 13.2% of this governorate's respondents stated that their own or one of their relatives' rights had been abused.

Figure 25: Have your rights or those of your relatives been abused? (by governorate, 2009)



More than half of those who said their rights had been infringed resorted to state authorities (judiciary, police, etc.) to demand justice. More women than men chose to resort to these authorities. About 33.5% of the abused people opted for traditional means of arbitration (sheikhs of the tribe, chief of the area, tribe, etc.) and only few directed their complaints to religious scholars and friends (3.3% respectively). About 6.5% (especially women) said they did not pursue the issue themselves; rather, they left the matter of demanding justice to men and elder members of the family.

Figure 26: Party people turned to in pursuit of justice (2009)

Answer	Average	Female	Male
Authorities	54.0	55.8	52.9
Sheikhs/head of area/tribe	33.5	31.2	34.7
Religious scholars	3.3	5.2	2.2
Friends	3.3	3.9	2.9
I leave it to family senior members	6.5	10.4	4.3
The party I belong to	0.9	0.0	1.4
Human rights organizations	0.9	0.0	1.4
Media	0.9	0.0	1.4
I wait until the problem solves itself	4.2	3.9	4.3
I don't know	0.5	0.0	0.7
No comment	0.5	0.0	0.7

Only 29.3% of the surveyed, whose rights had been abused, stated that they had been successful in their pursuit of justice. 33.5% of them said they had not had any of their rights restored and that they had abandoned demands for them.

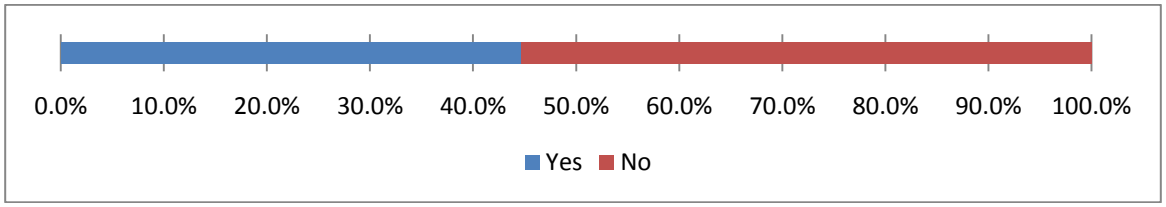
Figure 27: If your rights were violated, were you able to successfully pursue justice? (2009)

Answer	Male	Female	Total
I had them back in full	30.4	27.3	29.3
I had part of them back	26.1	27.3	26.5
I had none back	33.3	33.8	33.5
Not yet	10.1	11.7	10.7

Ministry of Human Rights

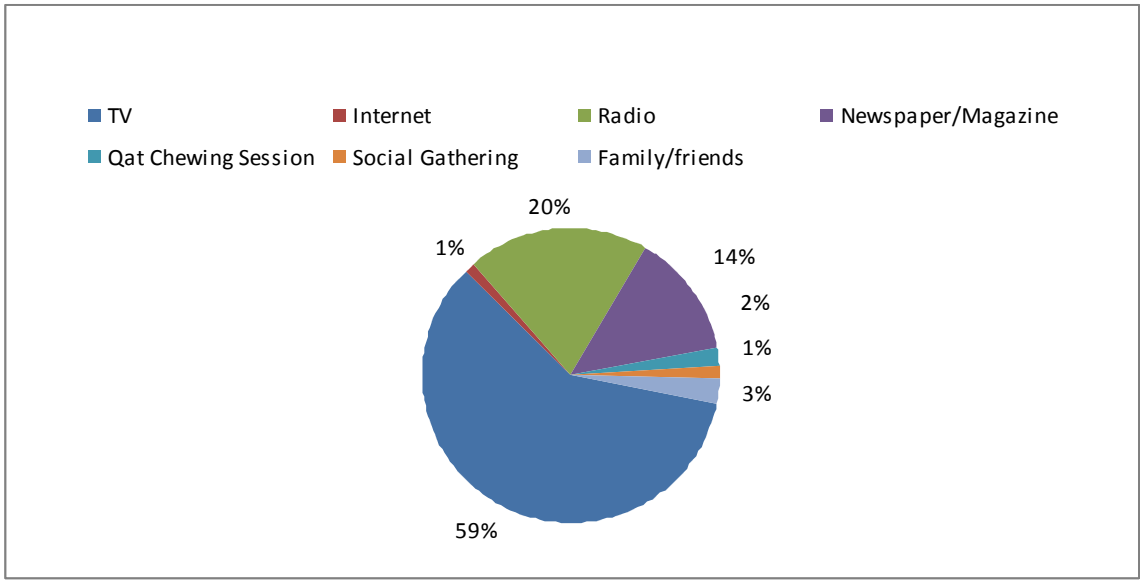
A significant amount of respondents (44.6%) have heard about the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR).

Figure 28: Have you heard about the MoHR?



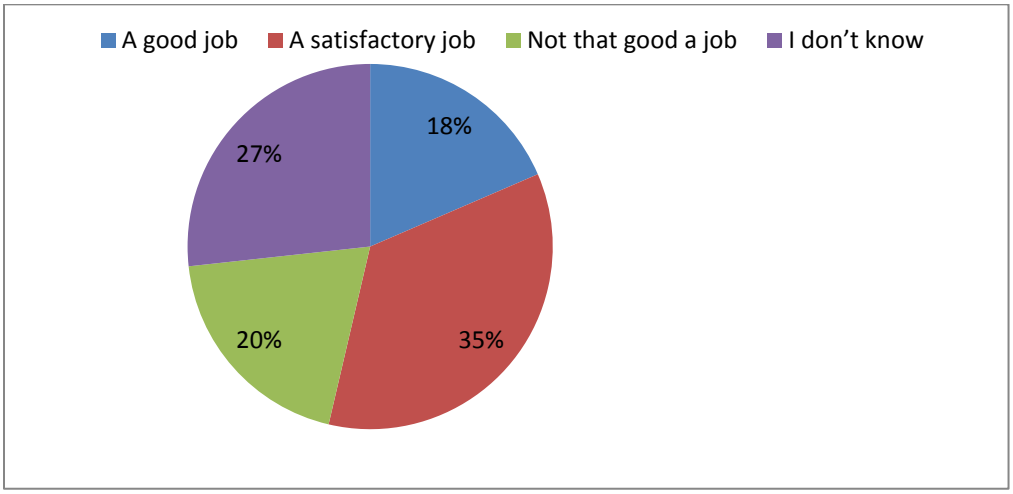
Of those respondents, who had heard about the MoHR, the majority had done so on TV (59%), followed by radio (20%), and newspapers or magazines (14%).

Figure 29: Where did you hear of the MoHR?



However, only 0.2% of respondents have ever participated in MoHR activities, while 99.8% answered that they hadn't. Regarding the level of satisfaction with the MoHR's work, 35.1% of the respondents aware of the MoHR stated they thought the MoHR was doing a satisfactory job. However, a significant 62.7% said that they not able to assess its performance.

Figure 30: Thinking of how well the MoHR is doing, do you think the Ministry is doing:



This lack of knowledge of the Ministry's job and performance could also be observed when respondents were asked about the MoHR's primary function. 37.2% stated that they did not know the function of the MoHR. 14.5% believed it to be responsible for the defense of human rights, 8.8% that it offers public services to the citizens, 8.6% that it advocates for oppressed people, and 7.1% that it aims to attract attention to the condition of prisoners.

Figure 31: What is the MoHR's primary function?

3. Yemen's Citizens' Perception of Civil Society Organizations[5]

- Generally, there is a lack of knowledge on CSOs among Yemeni citizens.
- Among those knowledgeable about CSOs, the majority consider CSOs important for Yemen. Among those who consider CSOs unimportant for Yemen, the main reasons for this perception are (1) they cannot see the CSOs services and (2) the CSOs are only a means to obtain money from foreign institutions.
- The majority of respondents knowledgeable about CSOs consider them effective organizations.
- There is the general perception that CSOs in Yemen can operate freely or rather freely.
- Approximately 50% of respondents believe CSOs funding comes from foreign donor organizations.
- Yemeni citizens are willing to involve themselves in CSOs activities. However, certain types of activities are less appealing, including activities on gender equality, sit-ins to demand amendments to laws concerning human rights and activities on political rights and elections.
- Whereas 27% of respondents would agree to volunteer in a CSO, 21% would definitely reject doing so.

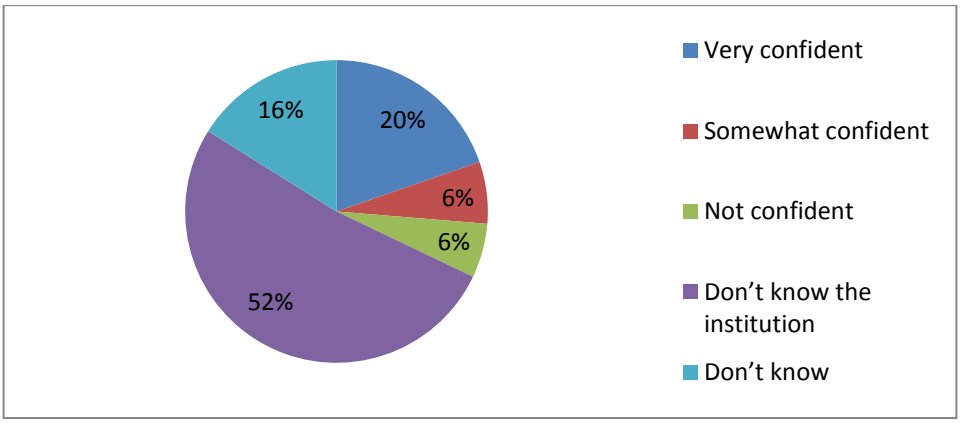
Knowledge and understanding of CSOs

The general level of knowledge of CSOs[6] among Yemeni citizens is very low, with approximately one quarter (26.5%) of respondents affirming to know CSOs or to know something about them, with similar levels of knowledge between male (31.7%) and female respondents (21.3%). However, when asked about how confident respondents were that CSOs could help to solve problems such as human rights violations, 52% answered that they wouldn't know which institution to turn to. Thus, there is a widespread lack of knowledge of CSOs.

[5] The data presented in this section is drawn from a MEPI-funded public opinion survey about the presence of human rights organizations in society in 2009 for a sample of 1,000 households in 11 governorates, age groups 18+ (50.2% male, 49.8% female).

[6] Note that the study focus was on CSOs working on human rights issues.

Figure 32: If you felt your rights were violated, how confident are you that CSOs would solve your problem?



Regarding the understanding of CSOs among citizens, almost half of respondents knowledgeable about CSOs (46%) defined CSOs working on human rights issues as "independent entities that are concerned with human rights and fundamental freedoms", followed by "organizations advocating the rights of the oppressed" (20% of responses).

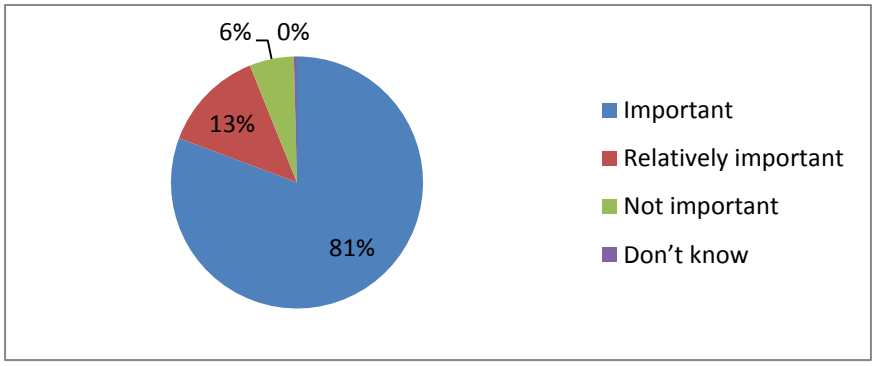
Figure 33: Definition of CSOs working on human rights issues by respondents:

Definition	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Independent entities that are concerned with human rights and fundamental freedoms	47.2	44.3	46.0
Organizations advocating the rights of the oppressed	18.2	22.6	20.0
Belong to the government	7.5	13.2	9.8
Independent institutions that are interested in politics	6.3	5.7	6.0
Institutions belonging to the West	5.0	7.5	6.0
I hear and I don't care	6.3	2.8	4.9
Belong to the opposition	6.3	0.0	3.8
Provide financial support to the people	2.5	2.8	2.6
Other	0.6	0.9	0.8

Perception of CSOs' Importance and Performance

Over 80% of the respondents knowledgeable about CSOs believe that these organizations are important in Yemen, 13.2% believe they are relatively important, and 5.7% believe they are not important.

Figure 34: Importance of CSOs



Among those who believed CSOs are not important, the main reasons given were that they did not see their services (39.2%), that such organizations are merely a means to obtain money from foreign institutions (31.4%), or that they considered CSOs as inactive and inefficient. Whereas women were the ones complaining more about not receiving their services, men deemed CSOs unimportant due to their lack of efficiency or for being considered as a way of obtaining funds from abroad.

Figure 35: Reasons for considering CSOs unimportant

Reason	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
I don't see their services	25.0	56.5	39.2
They are just means to obtaining money from abroad	39.3	21.7	31.4
Inactive and ineffective	28.6	17.4	23.5
Belong to foreign bodies	21.4	13.0	17.6
Adopt ideas that contradict Islam	21.4	4.3	13.7
Oppose customs and traditions	14.3	8.7	11.8
Belong to the government and do nothing	7.1	13.0	9.8
Adopt issues that are of no interest to the public	10.7	8.7	9.8
Belong to the opposition	10.7	0.0	5.9
I don't need them	7.1	0.0	3.9
I don't know	3.6	0.0	2.0

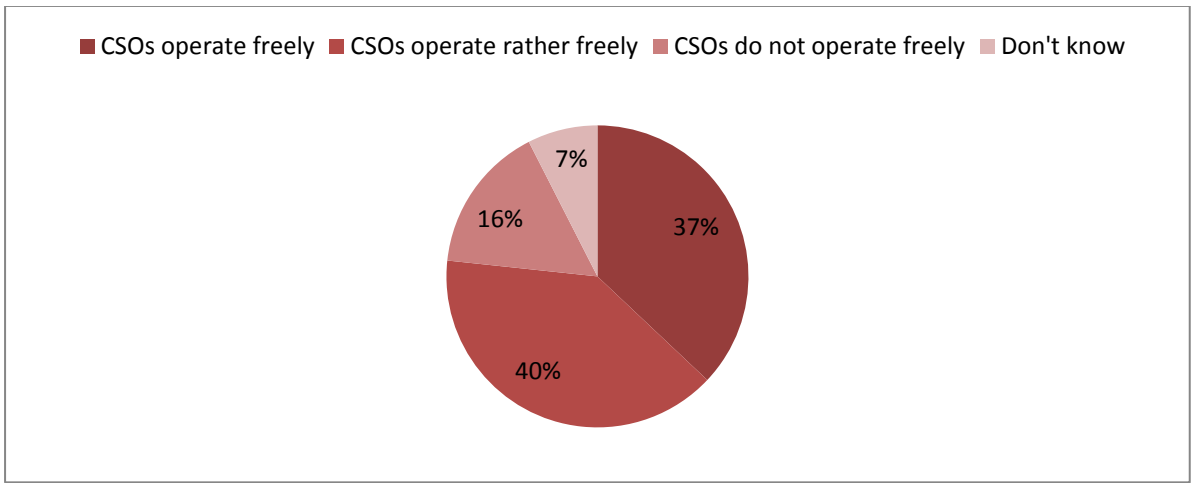
The majority of respondents considered CSOs as relatively effective (52.5%) and 26.8% of respondents stated that CSOs were effective. In line with the previous trend, more women (38.7%) than men (18.9%) considered the CSOs effective.

Figure 36: Evaluation of CSOs' effectiveness

Answer	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Effective	18.9	38.7	26.8
Relatively effective	56.0	47.2	52.5
Ineffective	23.3	12.3	18.9
I don't know	1.9	1.9	1.9

Regarding CSOs' ability to operate freely in the country, a significant 76.6% of respondents believed that CSOs can operate freely or rather freely in Yemen. Thus, there is a general belief that CSOs enjoy freedom of activity in the country. Government interference was the most often mentioned obstacle to CSOs' freedom of activity, stated by 54.4% of those respondents who believed that CSOs cannot operate freely in the country.

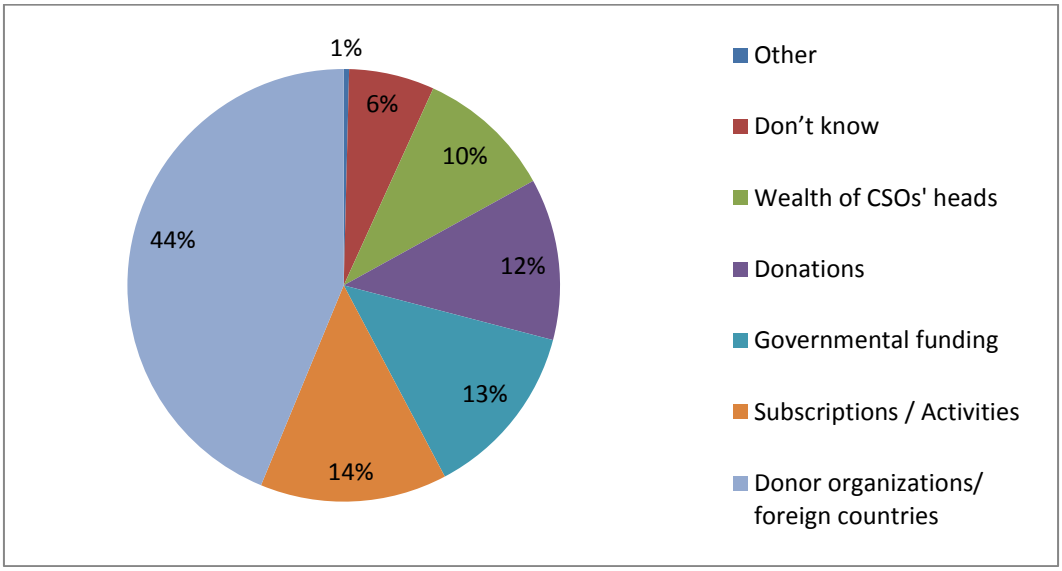
Figure 37: CSOs' freedom of activity



CSOs' sources of funding

Regarding CSOs' sources of funding, approximately 50% of respondents believed that CSOs' funding comes from foreign donor organizations. Other mentioned sources of funding were subscriptions of members or revenues from the organizations' activities (14%), governmental funding (13.2%), donations (12.1%), or the wealth of the CSOs' heads (10.2%).

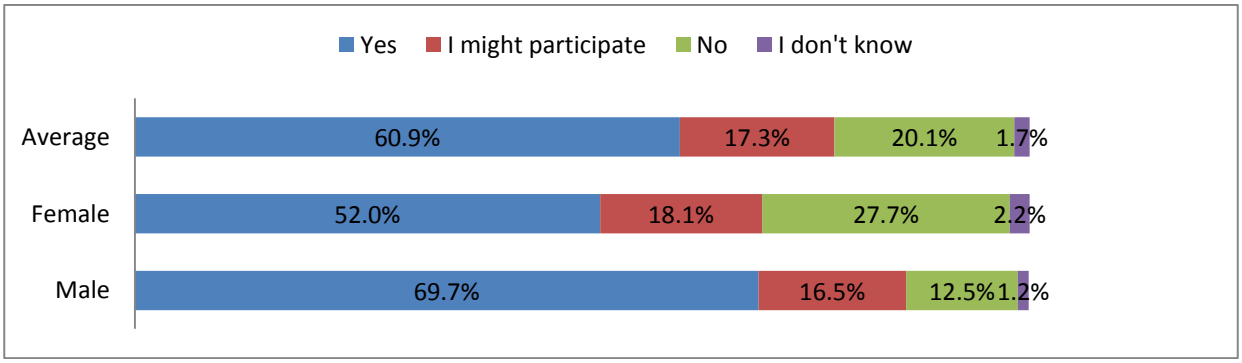
Figure 38: CSOs' sources of funding



Willingness of Involvement among Yemen's Citizens

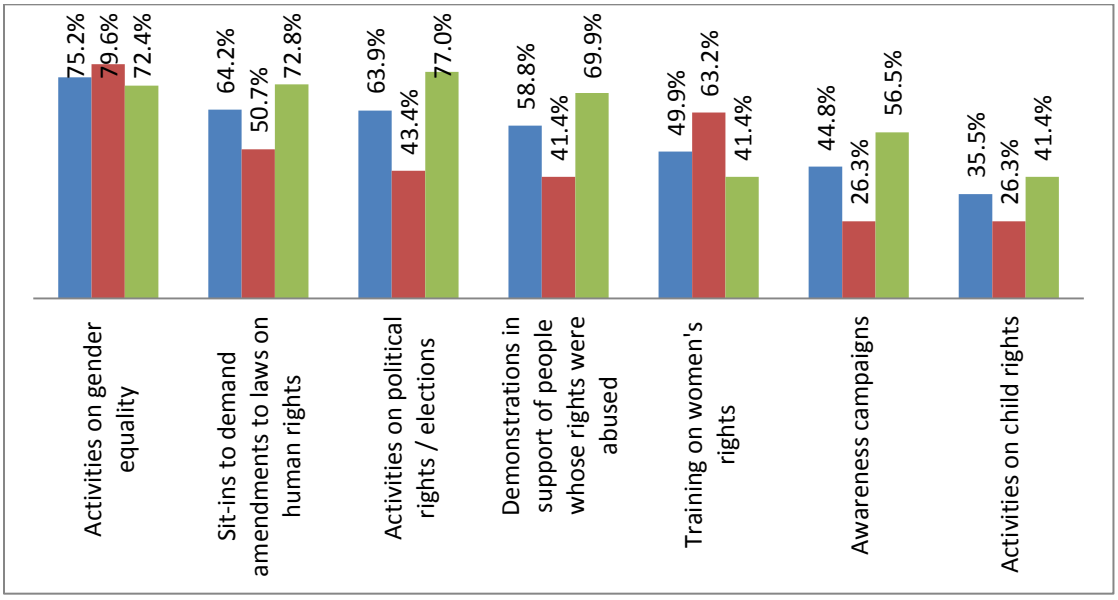
Generally, Yemeni citizens are willing to get involved in CSOs' social activities, with 60.9% of respondents stating they are ready to participate and 17.3% saying they might do it. Men are more inclined to participate in CSOs' activities than women.

Figure 39: Are you willing to participate in CSOs' activities?



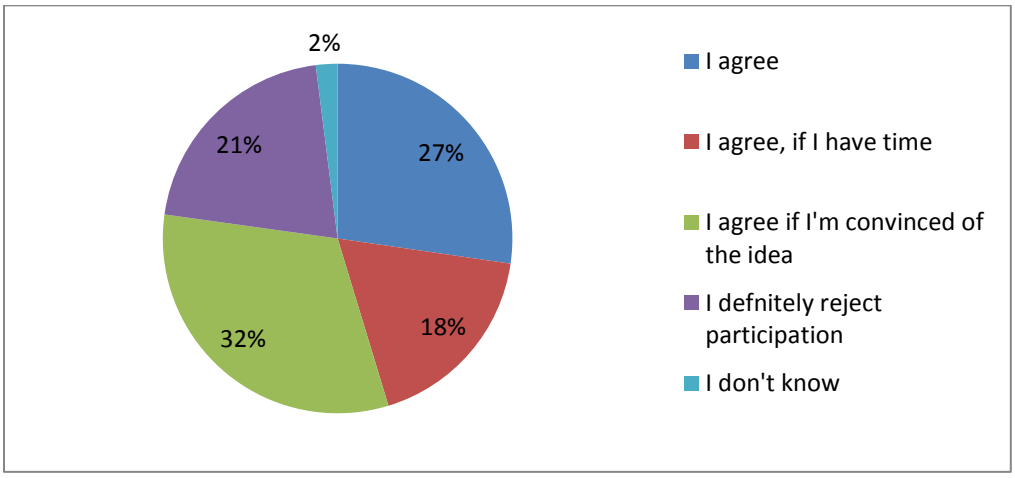
The activities which created a greater degree of reluctance to participate in were activities on gender equality (75.2% respondents who said they would not or might only participate in some activities said they would never participate in respective awareness campaigns), sit-ins to demand amendments to laws concerning human rights (64.2%) and activities on political rights and elections (63.9%)

Figure 40: Degree of refusal to participate in:



Regarding Yemeni citizens' willingness to volunteer with CSOs, answers of respondents were highly divided, with 31.9% of respondents affirming they would agree only if they were convinced by the idea; followed by 27.3% of respondents agreeing to participate and 20.8% definitely rejecting to do so.

Figure 41: Would you volunteer for a CSO?



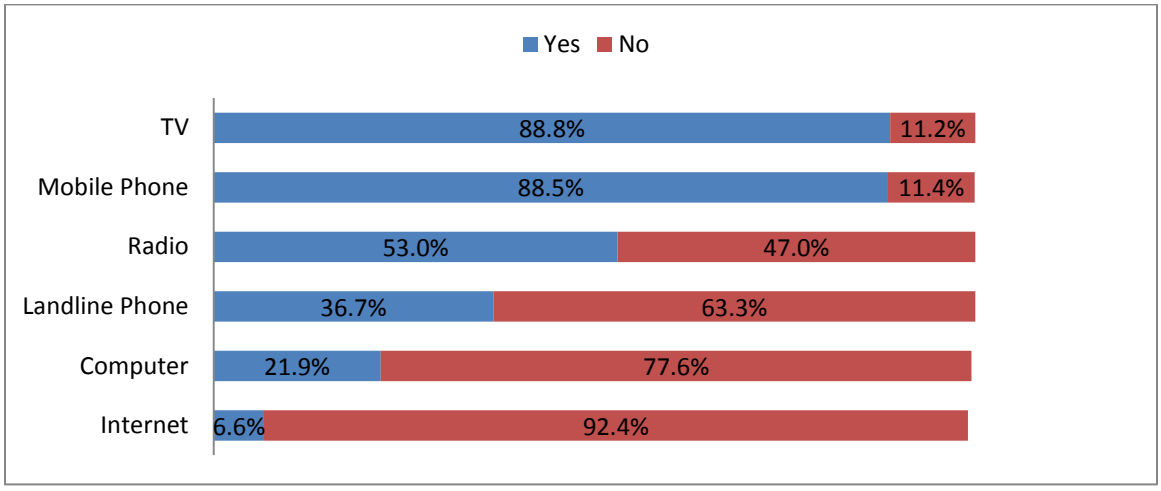
4. Reaching Yemeni Citizens: Yemen's Population Access to Media[7]

- TV sets have the largest presence in the country. Mobile phones are also widespread.
- Television is the most common source of information respondents have access to, followed by friends and family.
- Television is by far the most important source of news, followed by radio.
- Lack of access to print newspapers is the most commonly stated answer for not reading them.
- Only 6.6% of respondents have internet in their house.

General Media access

TV has the broadest presence in the country, with 88.8% of respondents stating they have a TV set at home.

Figure 42:. Does this house have a...? (n=1505)

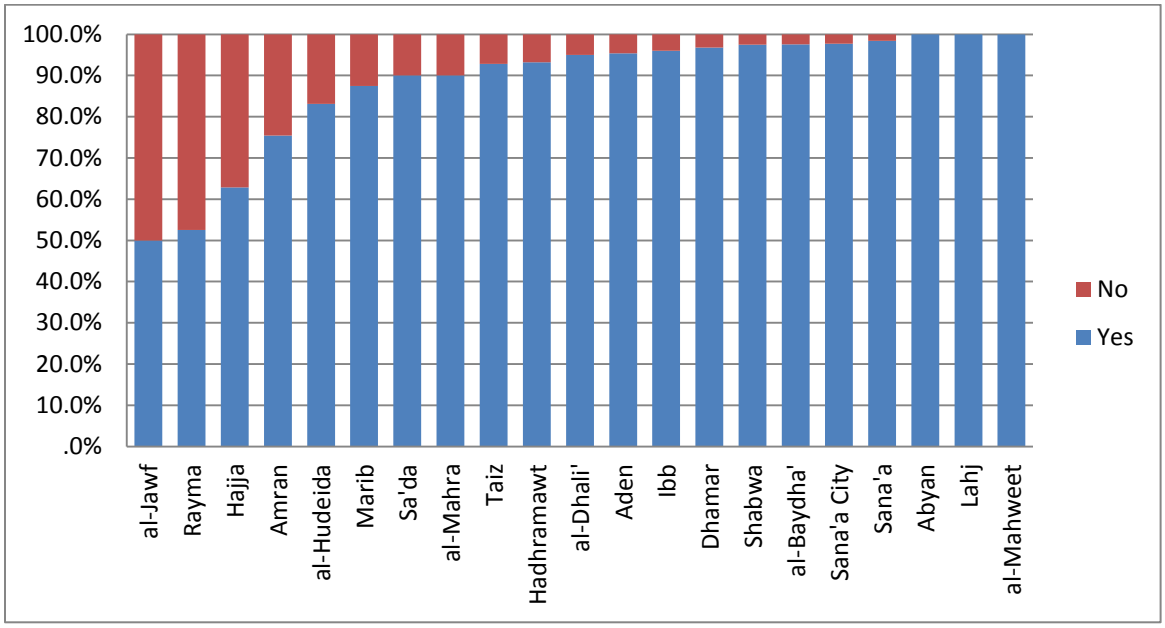


[7] The source of data presented in this section is the Open Society Institute funded project *Strengthening Independent Media in Yemen,* which included 1,505 face-to-face interviews carried out in March 2011 and covered all governorates. A multi-stage stratified sample was designed for selecting the targeted regions, households and respondents inside the targeted household, and in each stage the selection was random. However, some limitations were taken in the first two stages of designing the sample to serve the goals of the study, as follows:

- When selecting the regions, regions with less than 3,000 inhabitants were excluded.
- In the respondents' selection stage, illiterate respondents were excluded as the study focus was on print media and sought to study the consumption habits, interests and needs of the potential reader.

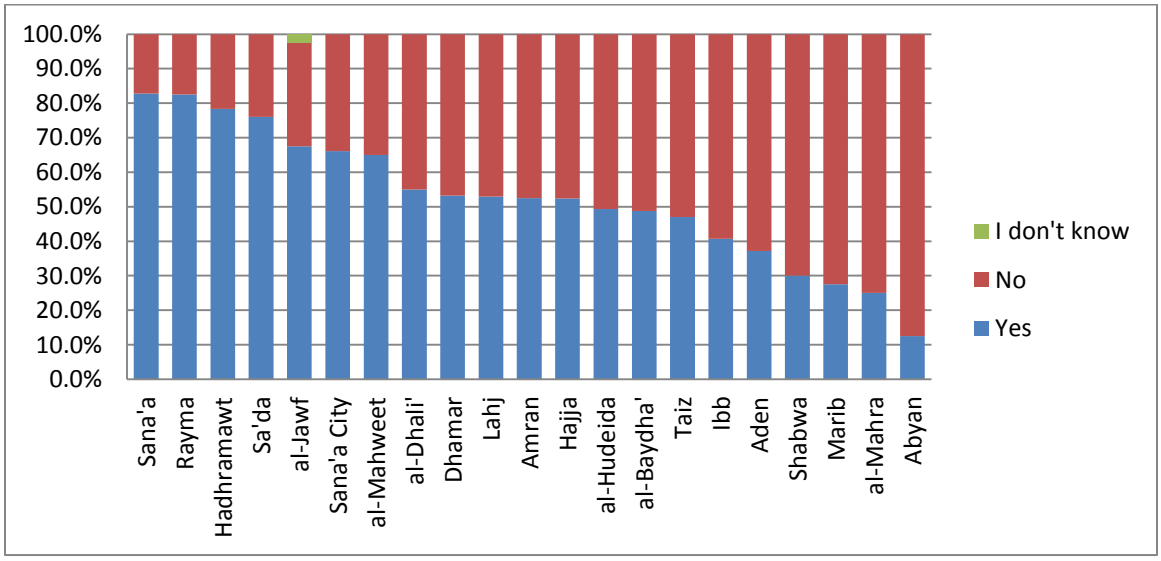
The only governorates with less than two thirds of respondents having TV at home are al-Jawf (50%), Rayma (52.2%) and Hajja (62.9%).

Figure 43: Do you have TV at home? (by governorate)



Access to radio is quite common, with more than half of respondents having a radio at home. The percentage of respondents having a radio home is particularly high in Sana'a (82.8%), Rayma (82.5%), Hadhramawt (78.4%) and Sa'da (76%). By contrast, it is significantly low in Abyan (12.5%), al-Mahra (25%) and Marib (27.5%).

Figure 44: Do you have radio at home? (by governorate)



Only one fifth of respondents have a computer at home. This average decreases when asking about internet access at home, with only 6.6% of respondents answering this question positively.

If compared to the national average, the percentage of respondents having a computer home is remarkably high in Aden (62.8%) and particularly low in Abyan and al-Jawf (5% in each governorate). The same trend applies when inquiring about internet access at home, with 23.3% of respondents in Aden answering positively in a much higher average than the national wide (6.6%).

Figure 45: Does this house have a computer? (by governorate)

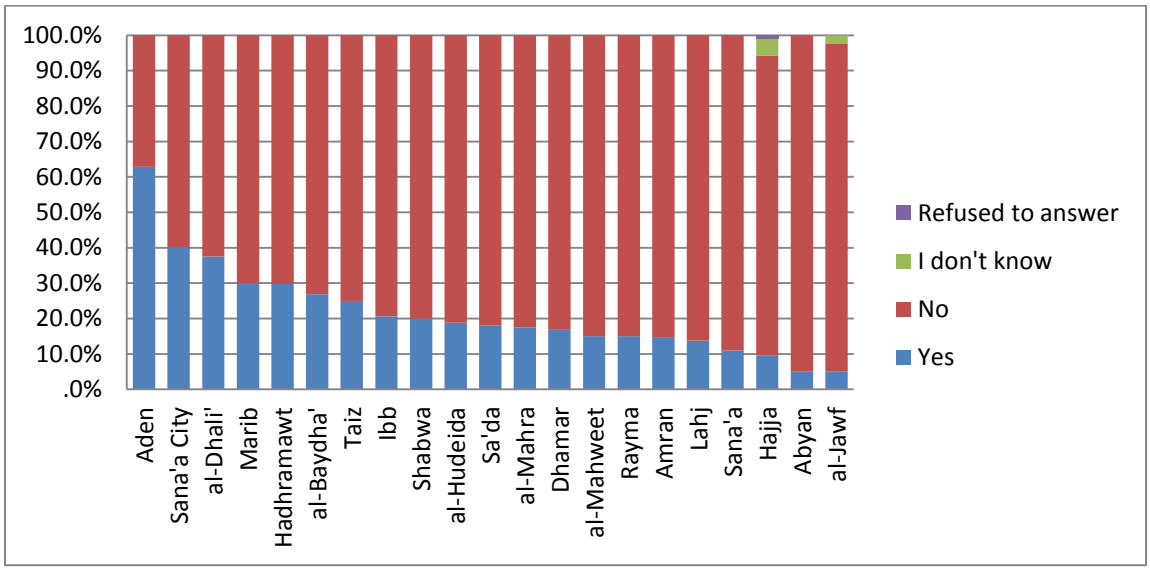
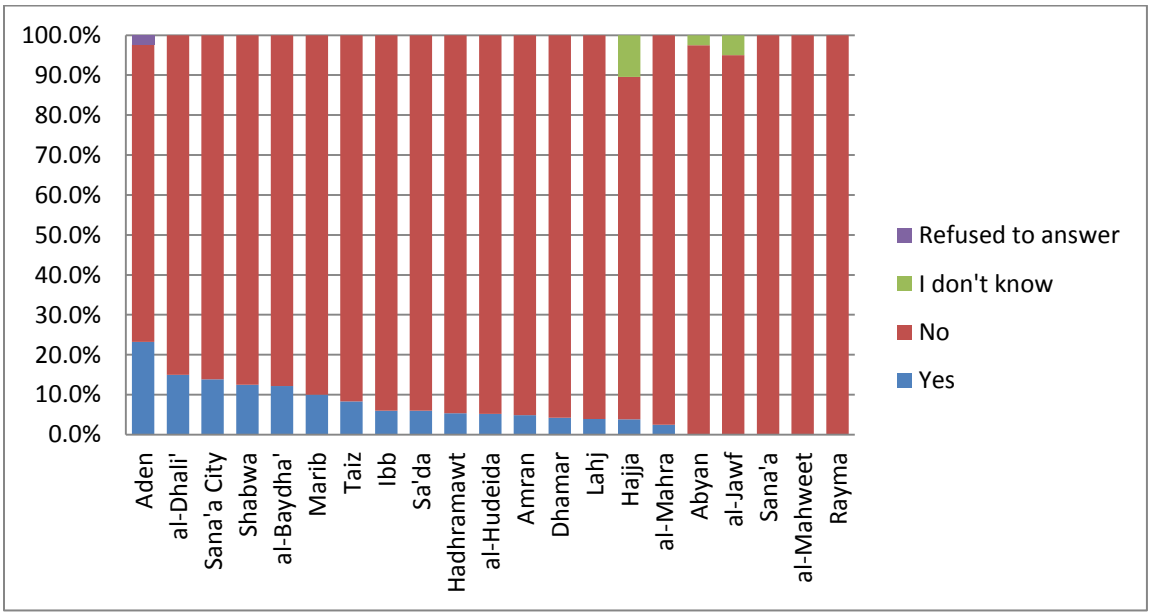
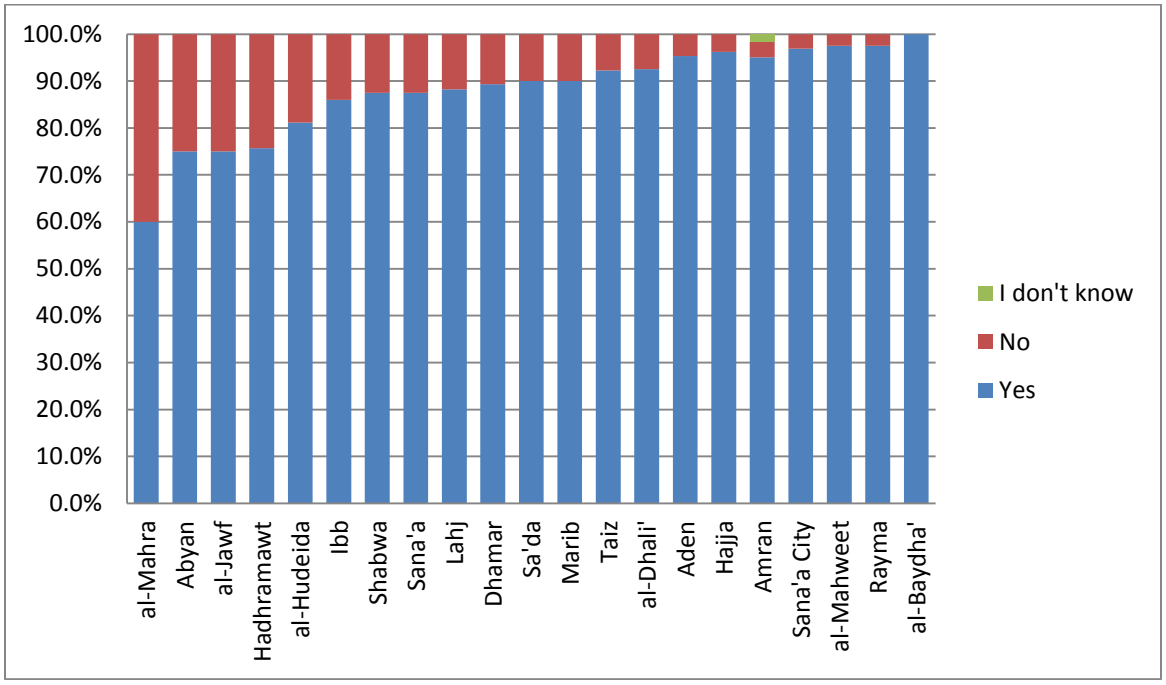


Figure 46: Does this house have internet access? (by governorate)



Mobile phones are highly widespread, with 88.5% of respondents owning a mobile phone. The only governorates where mobile phones are not broadly used are al-Mahra (40% of respondents not having mobile phone at home), Abyan (25%), al-Jawf (25%) and Hadhramawt (24.3%).

Figure 47: Does this house have a mobile phone? (by governorate)



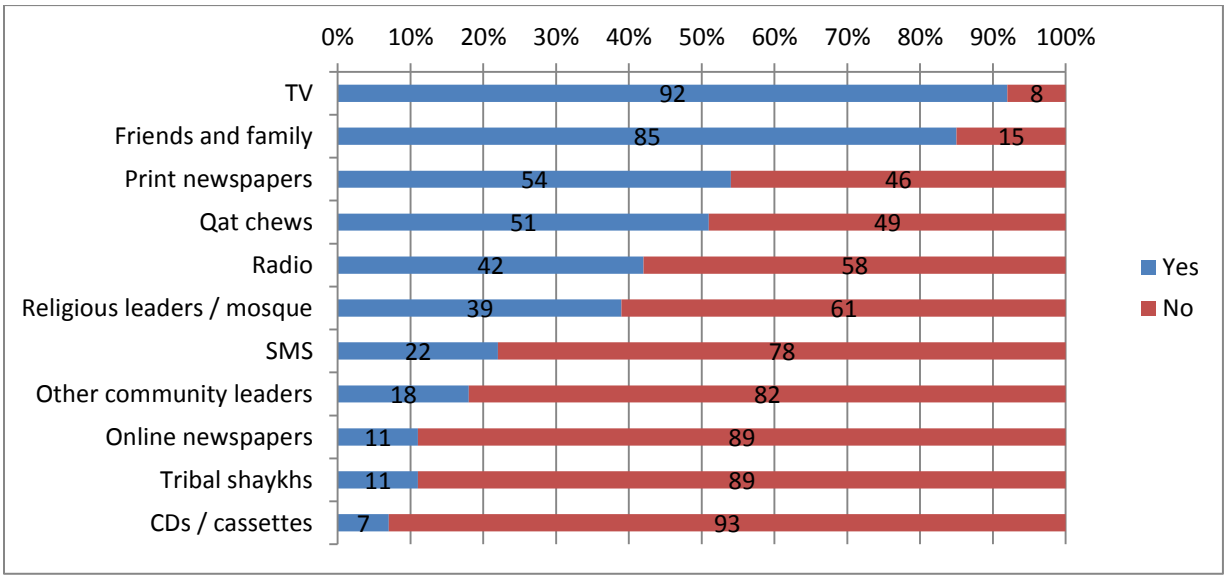
Thus, TV sets and mobile phones are the two tools which could be used in order to reach a large number of people nationwide.

Access to Sources of News

Television is the most common source of information respondents have access to (92 percent of respondents), followed by friends and family (85 percent). Only 54 percent of respondents have access to print media and 11 percent to online newspapers (11 percent).

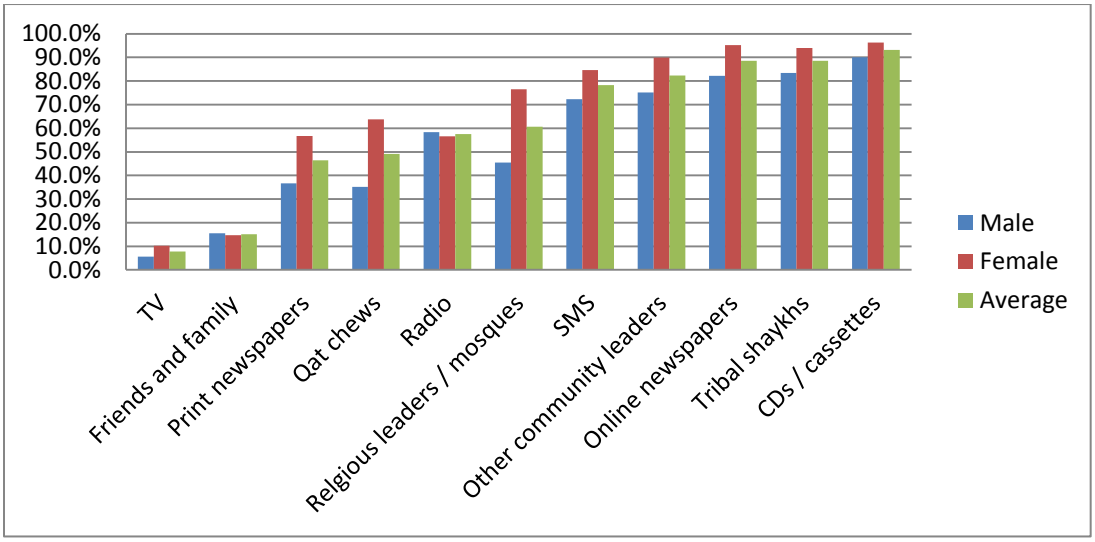
Even though the percentage of respondents reading online newspapers might be considered low, it is significant. As seen before, only 6.6 percent of respondents have internet in their houses but the number of respondents accessing online newspapers rises to 11 percent. Thus, respondents access to online newspapers from places such internet cafes outside home.

Figure 48: Do you have access to information from…? (n=1505)



In general, female respondents have a more limited access to all potential sources of information except radio. The difference in access between male and female respondents is particularly acute when inquiring about print newspapers (36.6% of male respondents with no access to print newspapers vs. 56.7% of female respondents)and religious leaders (45.5% of male respondents vs. 76.5% of female respondents).

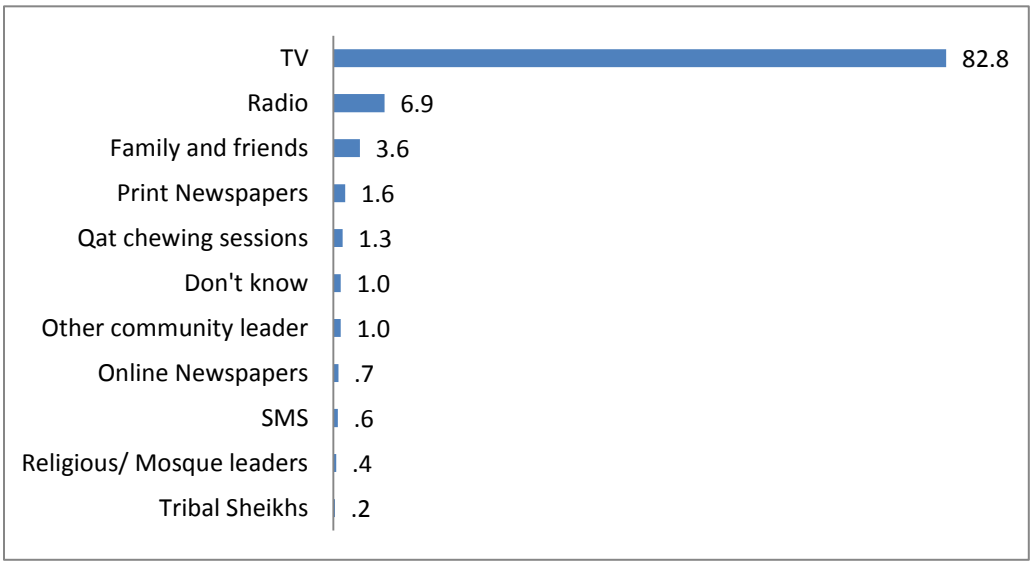
Figure 49: Percentage of respondents with no access to sources of information by gender (n=1505)[8]



[8] The percentage of female respondents not having access to information from qat chewing sessions is high. However, women do obtain information from other informal social gatherings which serve a similar function.

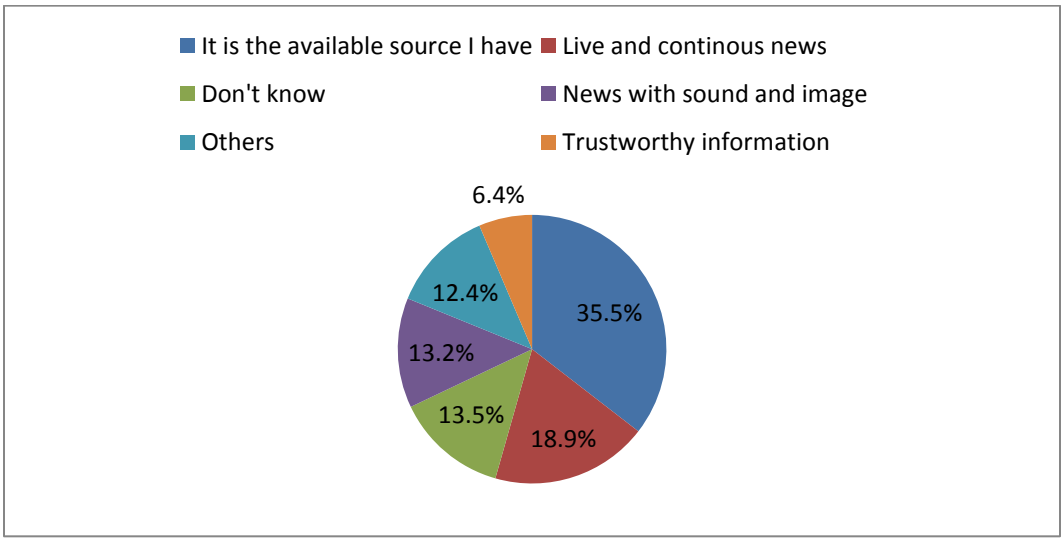
Due to the broad access to TV (present in the house of 88.8% respondents), when asked about the most important source of news TV is selected by a large majority of respondents (82.8%), followed by radio (6.9%). Less than 2 percent of interviewees state that print newspapers are the most important source of information to them.

Figure 50: What is the most important source of news for you? (n=1505)



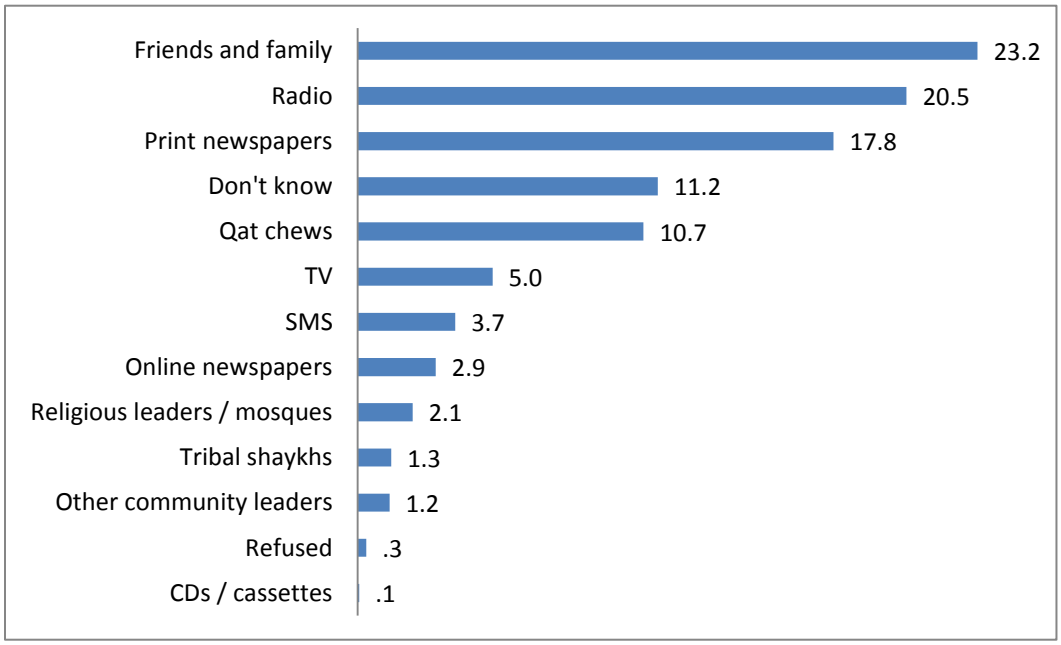
The main reason of this choice is a pragmatic one, with 35.5% of respondents stating they prefer this media outlet because it is the only one available to them. Receiving live and continuous news is the second reason given by respondents for choosing TV as their most important source of news.

Figure 51: Why is this the best source of news for you? (n=1505)



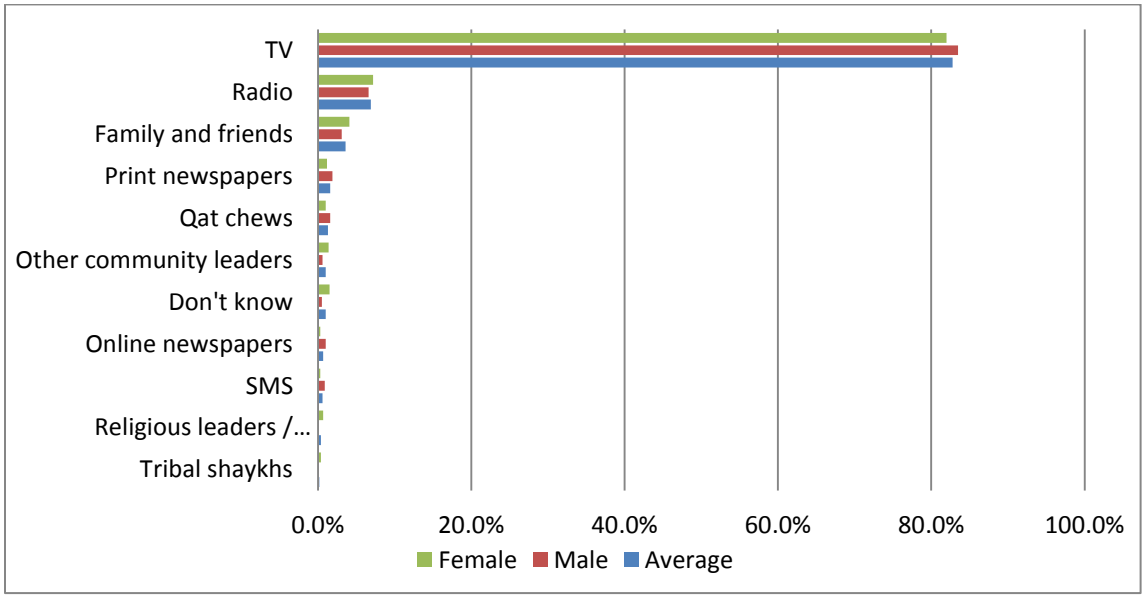
When asked about the second most important source of news, radio (20.5%) and print newspapers (17.8%) fare better, but friends and family (23.2%) is still more commonly mentioned.

Figure 52: What is the second most important source of news for you? (n=1505)



There are no significant differences by gender with regard to the most important source of information.

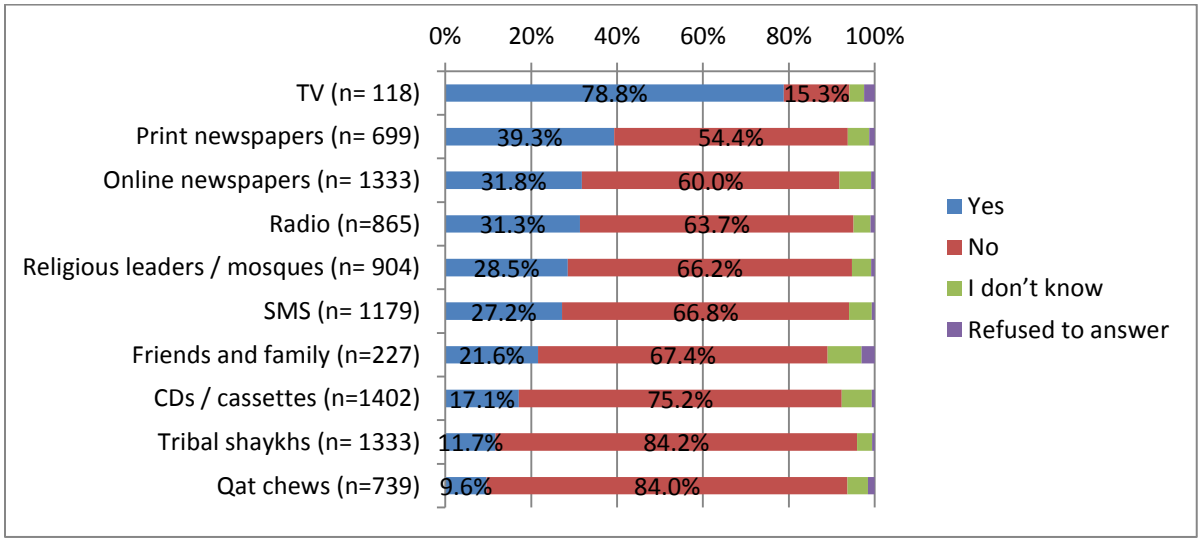
Figure 53: What is the first most important source of news for you? (by gender (n=1505))



Of the respondents stating they do not have access to a specific source of information, TV is the only source a majority of these respondents would like to have access to. Also significant is the percentage of respondents with limited access to print newspapers who would like to access them (39.3%), who would like to have access to online newspapers (31.8%) and who would like to have access to radio (31.3%).

By contrast, 84.2% of respondents not receiving information from tribal shaykhs and 84% of respondents not receiving information from qat chewing sessions do not want to receive information from these sources.

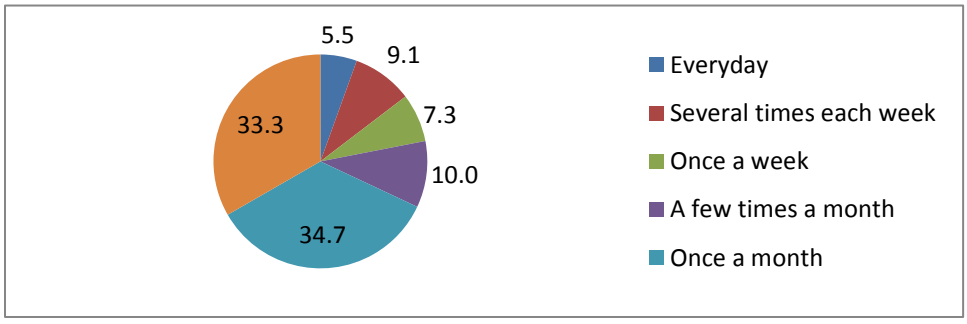
Figure 54: If no, would you like to have access to this source of information?



Print Newspapers

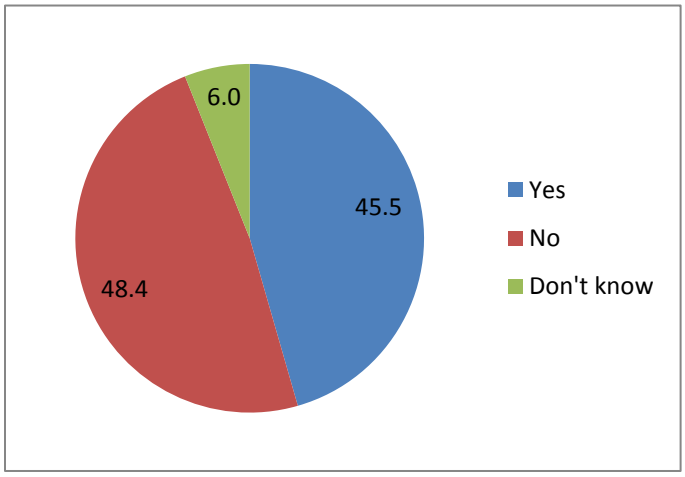
Few Yemenis read print media and even fewer do so on a regular basis. One-third of respondents have never read a newspaper or magazine and just over a third read print media about once a month (35 percent).

Figure 55: How often read newspapers and magazines? (n=1505)



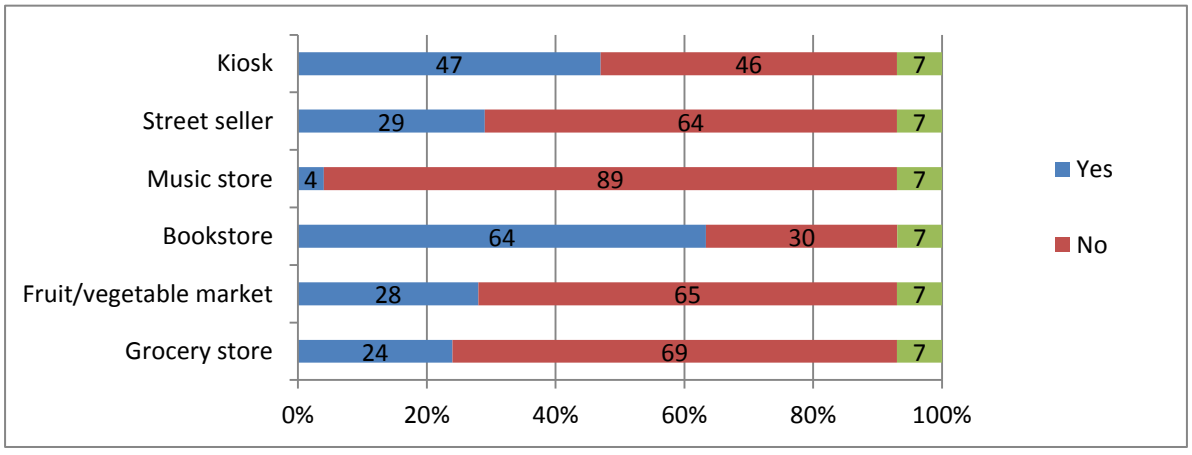
The reason for the low percentage of print media consumption in Yemen may be due to the limited access to newspapers. Nearly half of respondents state they cannot purchase a newspaper or magazine in their area or at a market near their area (48 percent).

Figure 56: Are newspapers and magazines available for purchase in your area or in a market near your area? (n=1505)



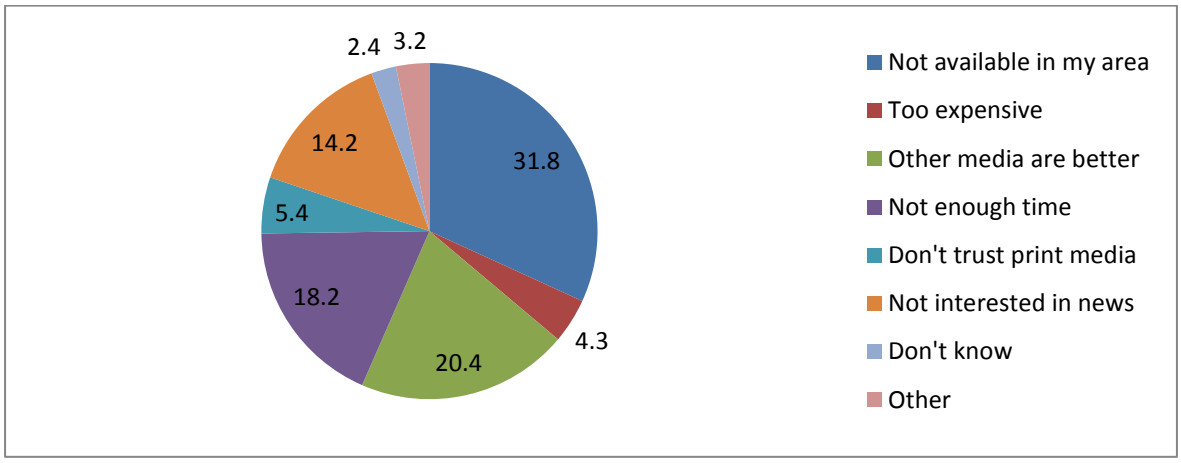
Among the respondents who read print media more than once a month (n=482), a majority cannot purchase them from street sellers, music stores, fruit/vegetable markets, or grocery stores, all of which are potential venues to sell newspapers and magazines. 46 percent say newspapers are not sold at nearby kiosks and 30 percent say they are not sold at nearby bookstores.

Figure 57: Where are newspapers available for purchase in your area? (n=482



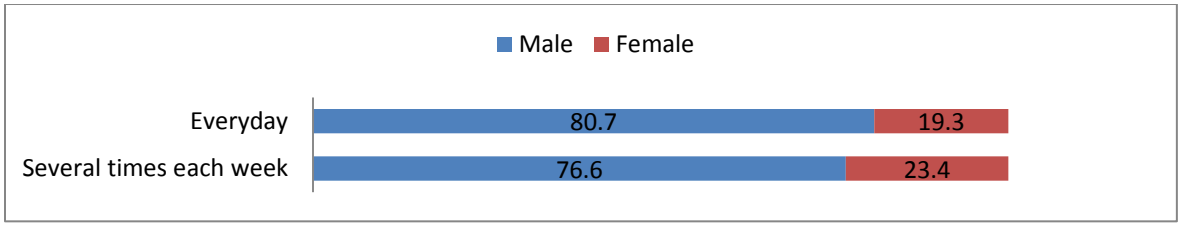
Indeed, the most common reason why people don't read newspapers or magazines is because these are not available in their areas (31.8%), followed by those who state other media are better (20 percent), and those who say they don't have enough time (18 percent).

Figure 58: Why don't you read newspapers or magazines? (n=699)



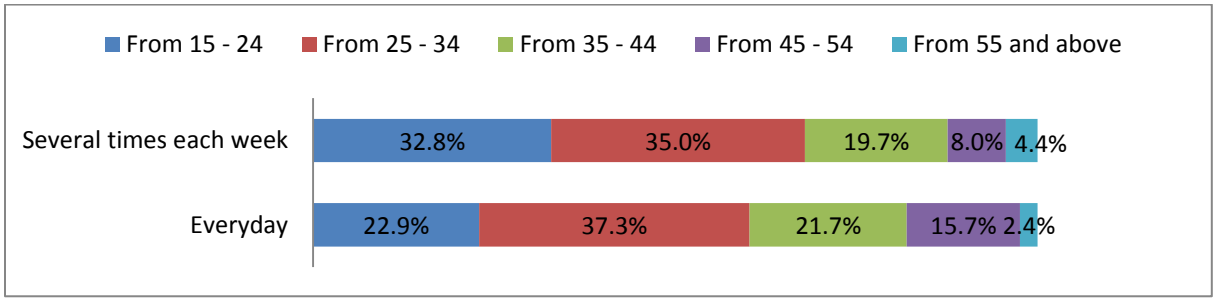
Among the respondents reading newspapers on a regular basis, men are the large majority.

Figure 59: Generally speaking, how often do you read newspapers? (by gender (n=482))



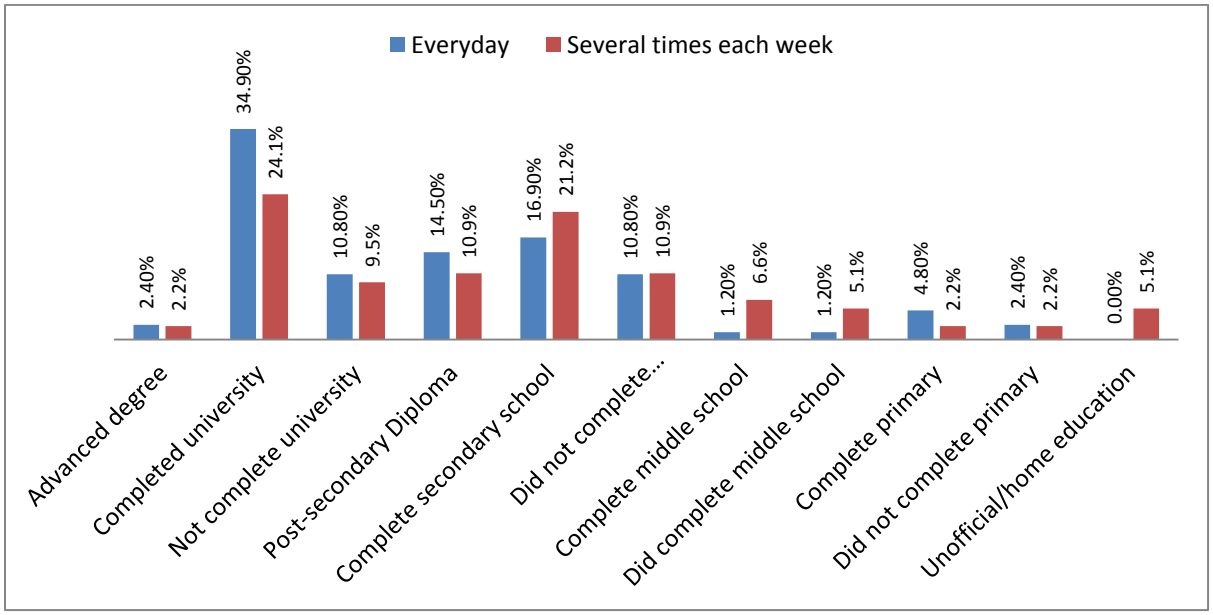
Regarding the age groups, young respondents and particularly those between 25 and 34 years of age constitute the vast majority of regular newspapers readers.

Figure 60: Generally speaking, how often do you read newspapers? (by age (n=482))



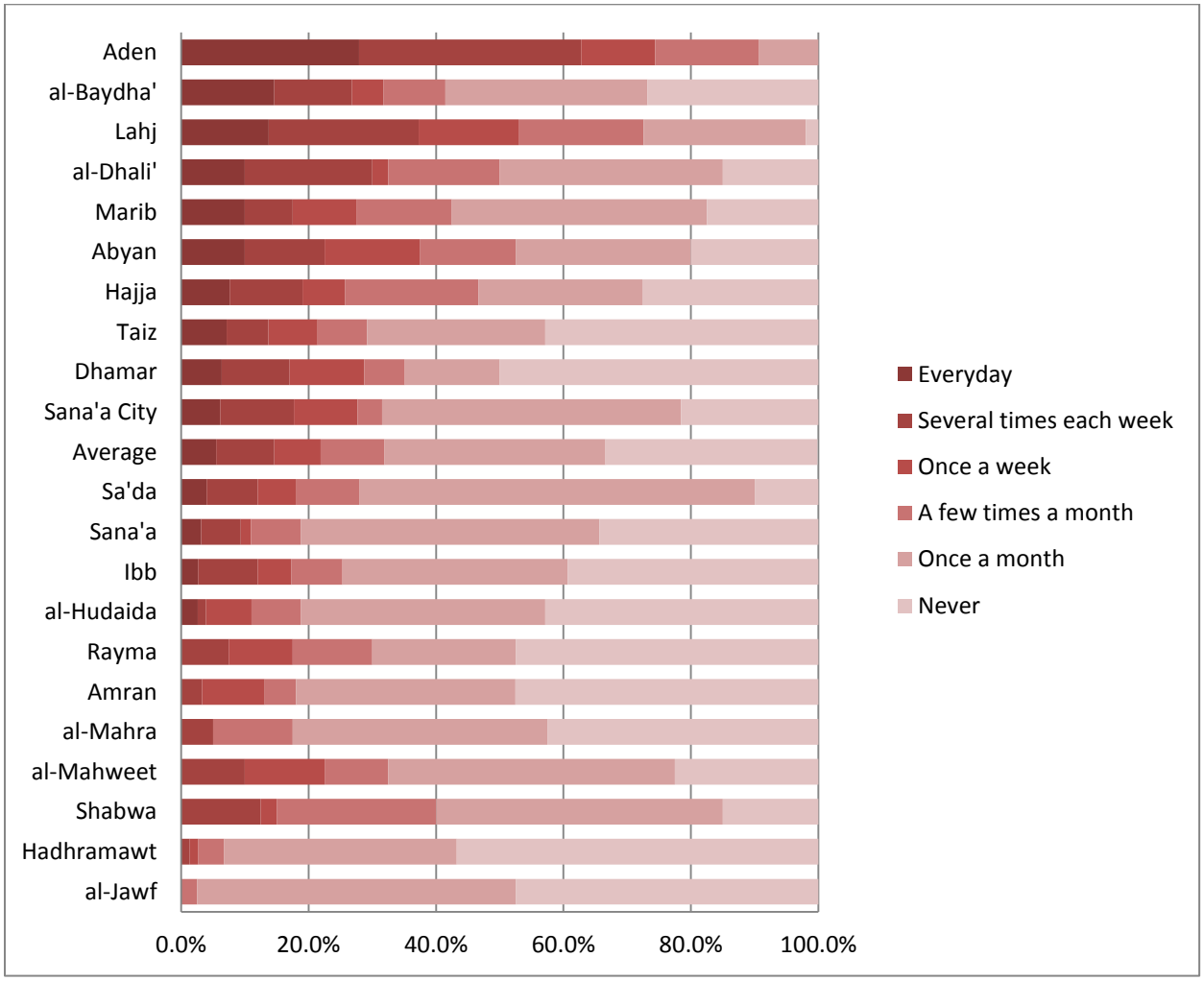
The majority of regular newspapers readers hold a university diploma.

Figure 61: Generally speaking, how often do you read newspapers? (by education level (n=482))



Aden and Lahj are by far the two governorates which more regular readers, with 62.8% of regular newspaper's readers in Aden and 37.2% in Lahj reading it daily or several times per week. These governorates are followed by al-Baydha' and Abyan, with 26.8% and 22.5% of regular readers respectively.

Figure 62: Generally speaking, how often do you read newspapers? (by governorate (n=1505))



Thus, a young man (from 25 to 34) with completed university studies from Aden or Lahj would be the most common consumer type of regular newspaper readers.

The state-run ath-Thawra daily newspaper is by far the most preferred newspaper selected by the interviewees, followed by Akhbar al-Yawm.

Figure 63: Favorite newspaper or magazine (n=482)

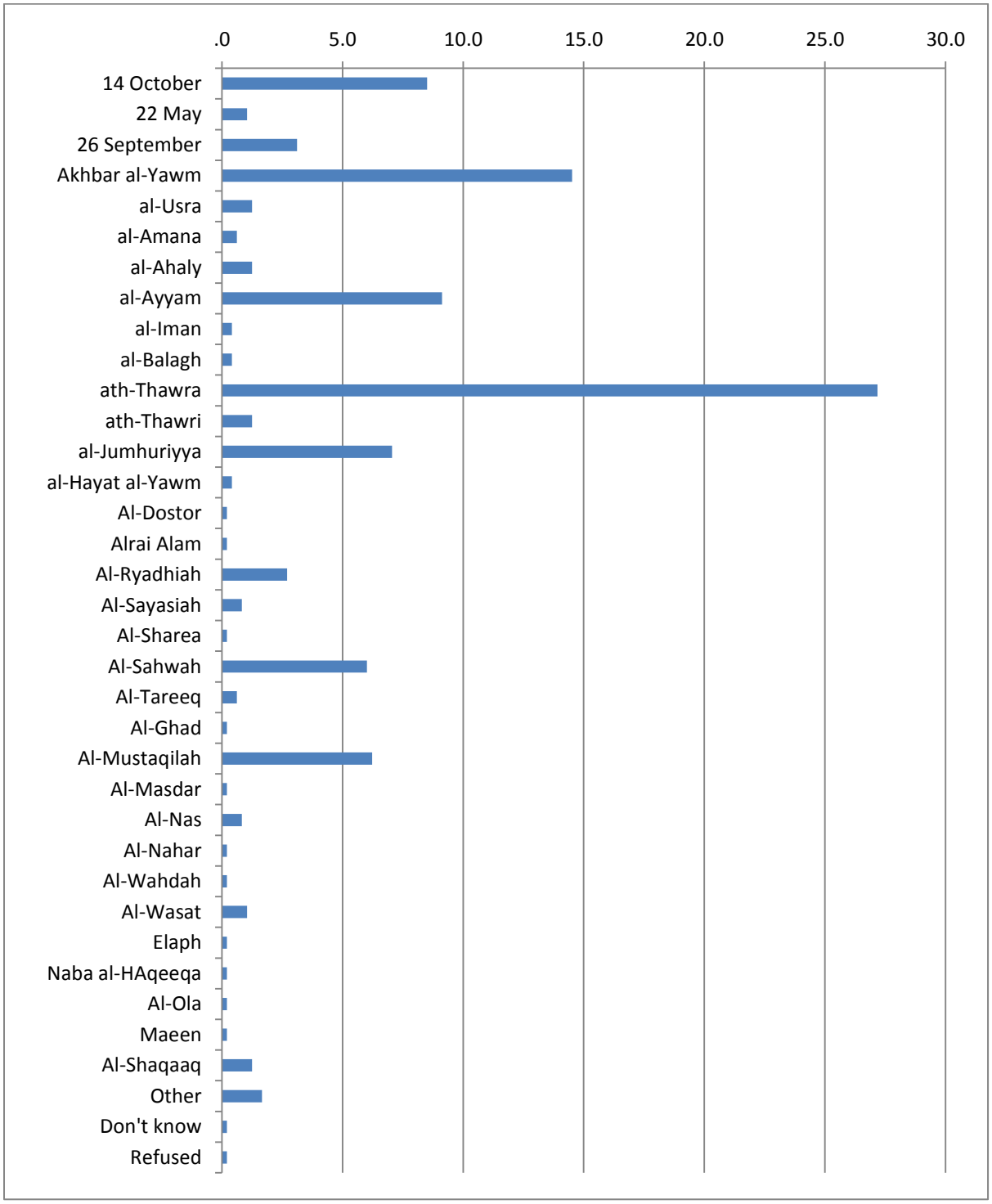
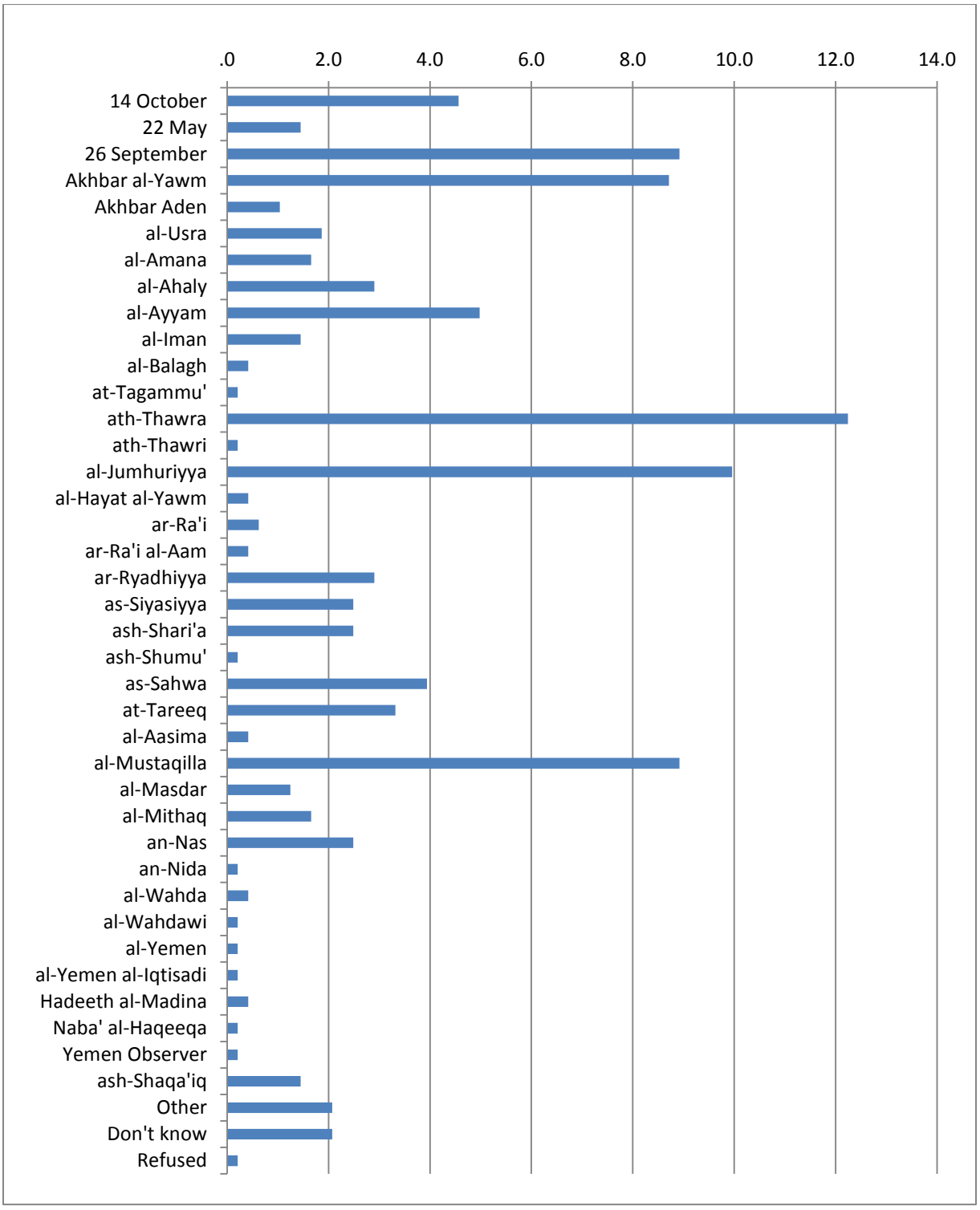
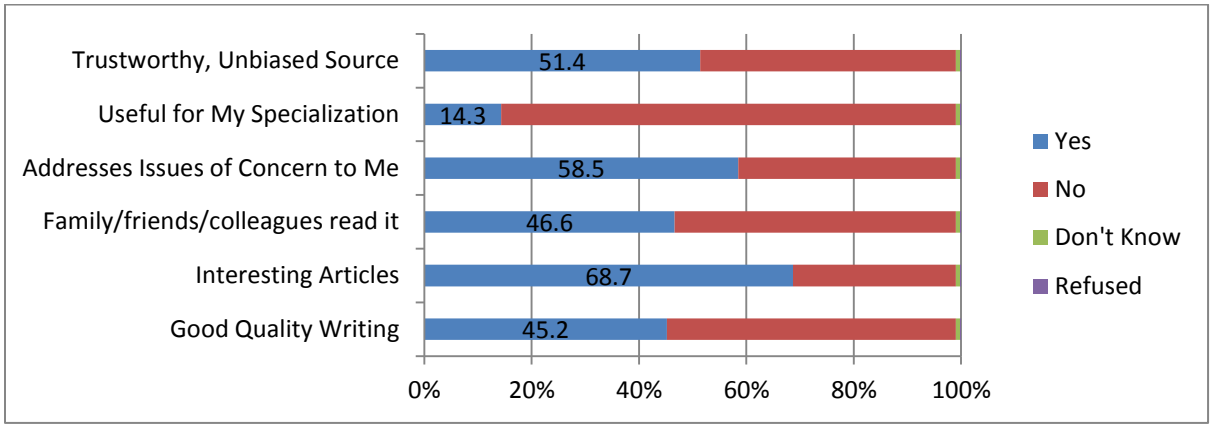


Figure 64: Second favorite newspaper or magazine (n=482)



Reasons why respondents read the newspapers they do are quite varied. Interesting articles, articles addressing the readers' issues of concern, and the publication being considered trustworthy and unbiased are the most common reasons cited.

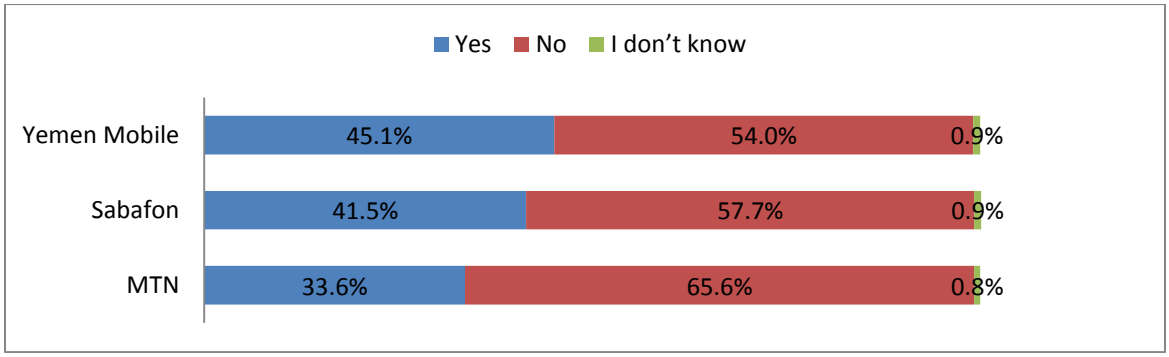
Figure 65: Reasons why you read these newspapers more than others (n=482)



Mobile Phone

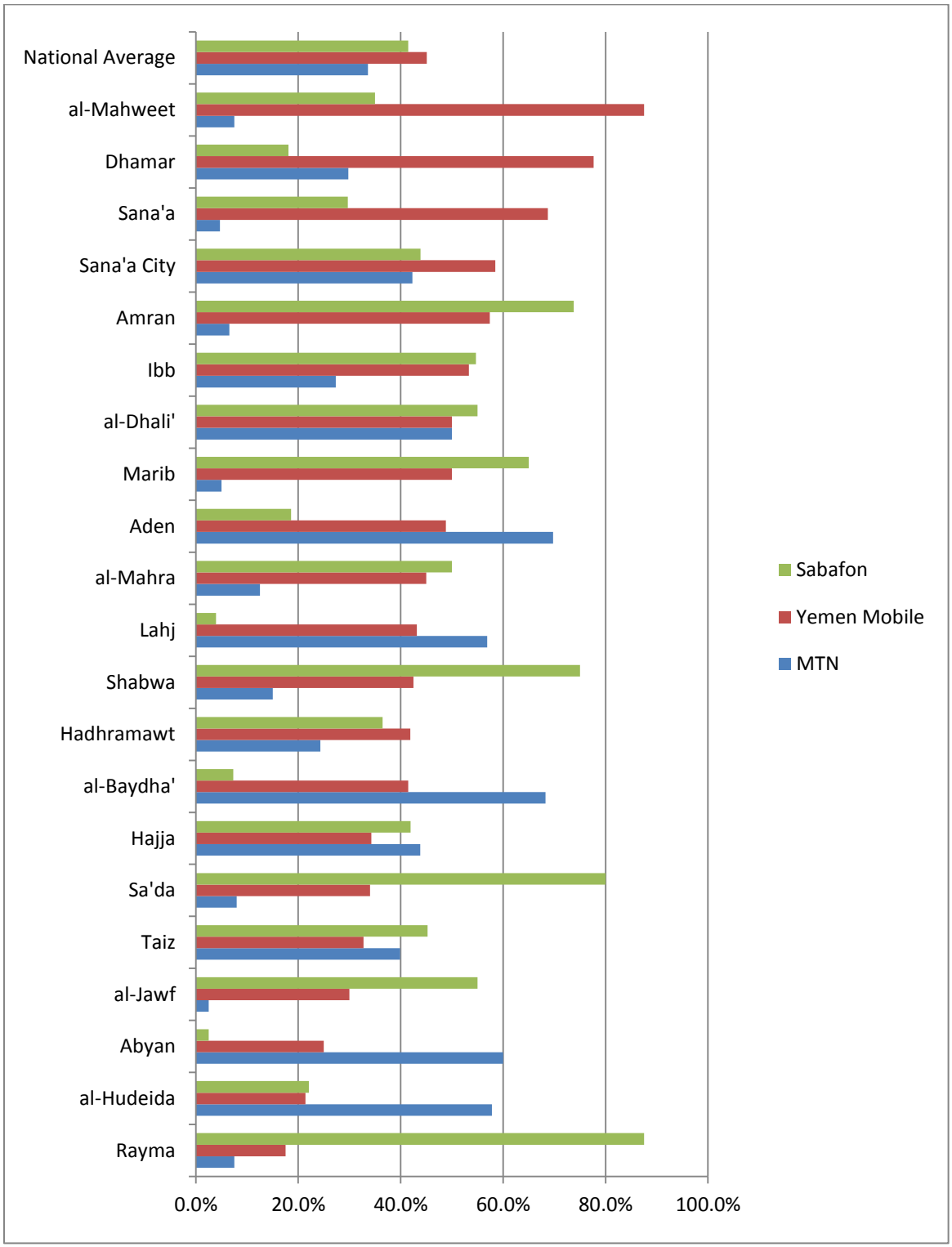
Yemen Mobile, Sabafon, and MTN are the mobile phone companies which currently lead the market with 45.1%, 41.5 and 33.6% of respondents using these providers respectively.

Figure 66: If you have a mobile phone, who is the provider? (n= 1505)



The presence of these three providers largely varies among governorates. For example, Yemen Mobile has a strong presence in al-Mahweet and Dhamar; Sabafon in Sa'da, Shabwa, and Amran; and MTN in Abyan, Aden and al-Baydah'. This is also due to the fact that all three providers do not have coverage in all areas of the country. For this reason, many Yemenis who travel frequently between different areas of Yemen often have a second or even a third SIM card by one or more of the other providers.

Figure 67: Percentage of respondents stating having a mobile phone from the providers Sabafon, Yemen Mobile, and MTN by governorate (n=1505)



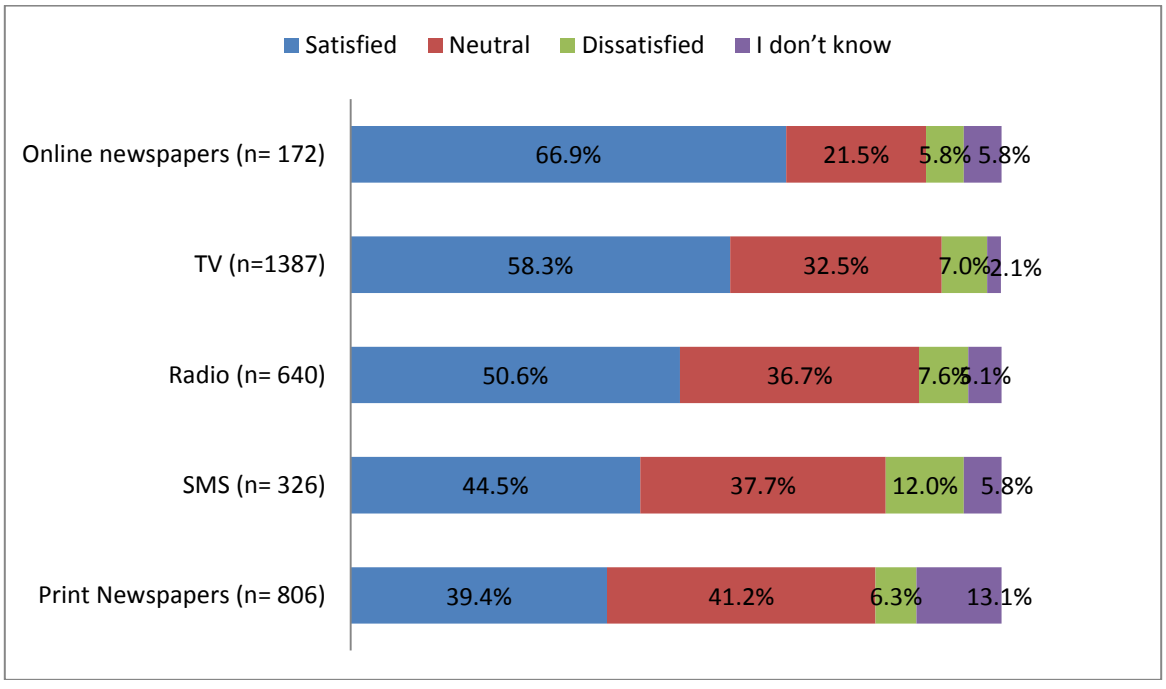
There is a large disparity between having access to mobile phones and using them to obtain news or information. Although 88.5% of respondents have a mobile phone at home, only 22% use SMS services as a source to information. Moreover, from the 78% of respondents not using SMS to access information only 27.2% would like to have access to news through this channel.

Thus, the mobile phone is not yet seen as a channel to access news and information in Yemen. However, the potential is there due to its widespread presence as well as the availability of such services.

Level of satisfaction

Despite the low percentage of respondents with access to online newspapers, online media outlets are the best rated by respondents when asking about their level of satisfaction (66.9% of respondents who have access to online newspapers being satisfied with the information they receive). More than half of respondents using TV (58.3%) and radio (50.6%) are also satisfied with the information they receive from these sources.

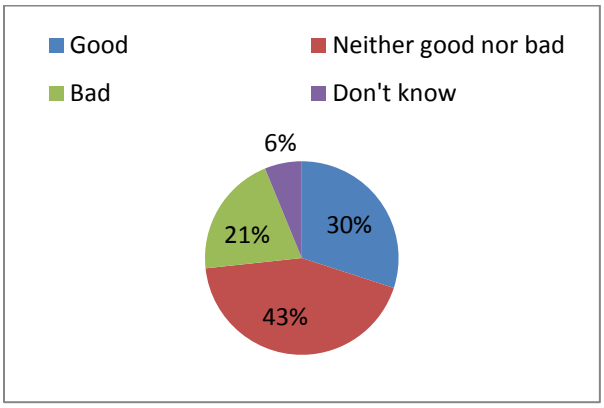
Figure 68: How satisfied are you with the information you receive from…?



Access to Local news

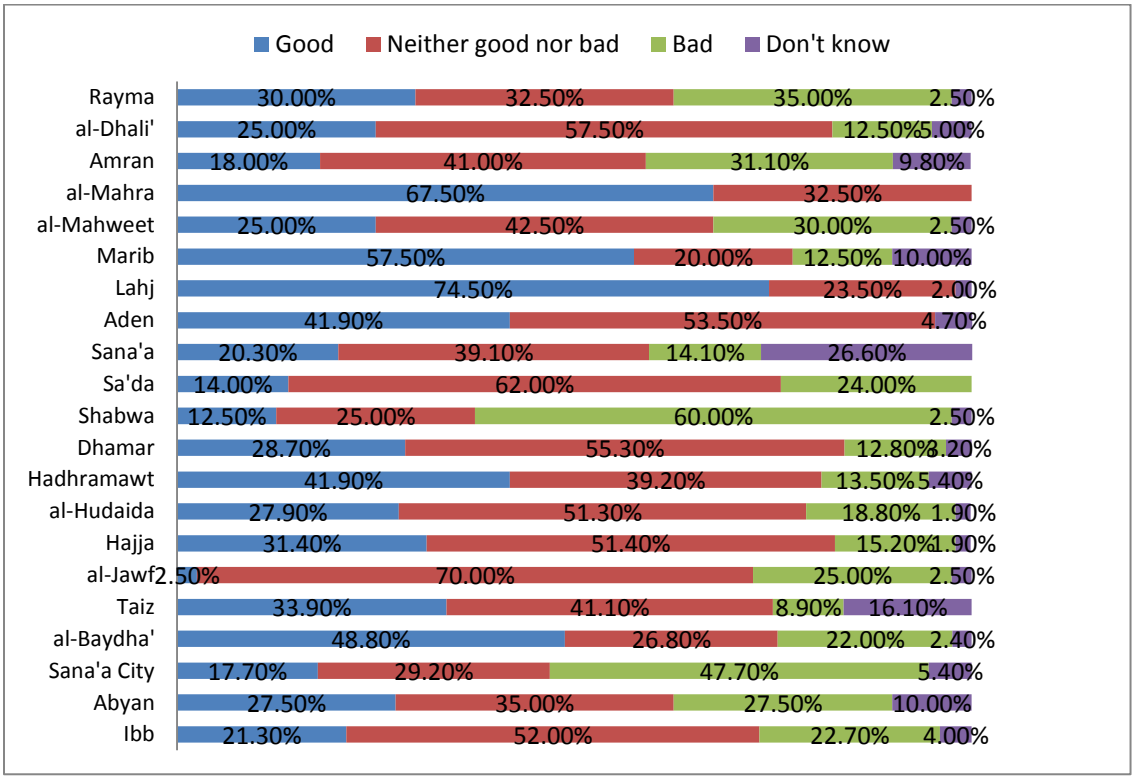
Only 30 percent of interviewees consider access to news relevant to their area as good.

Figure 69: Altogether, how would you rate your access to news relevant to your area (n=1505)



Respondents from Sana'a City, Shabwa, Rayma, Amran and al-Mahweet governorates are the most dissatisfied with their access to news relevant to their areas, whereas the ones in Lahj, al-Mahra and Marib are the most satisfied.

Figure 70: Altogether, how would you rate your access to news relevant to your area? (by governorate (n=1505))



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