



SUCCESS STORY

Empowerment of Women in Majzer through Learning



USAID Yemen, Basic Education Support and Training Project

Rifa'ah says, "Adult literacy classes not only helped us read and write, but has also helped boost our self-esteem and enabled us to express our self-confidence"

Rifa'ah Ayed, 45, wrote her name on the black board and read it aloud. She says, "Writing one's own name and reading it correctly does not seem like much of an accomplishment to most people living in the cities, but for most of the women in Majzer, it is a dream come true".

When Rifa'ah was born in the Al-Sahari village of Majzer District, there were no schools at that time. She says, "We hardly knew what a school meant. Living in a deprived district of Majzer where there is no electricity and water or any source of income, meant for us a full dependency on our cattle to earn our living. I spend 5-7 hours a day in search of grass to feed my cattle. I wake up at dawn in search of water on my donkey. In Mazjer we struggle hard to live. Living such a life I have always felt that I am missing something, I could not perform my prayer well, and I can't even read the Quran!"

I heard about the USAID literacy class to be held in Al-Sahari School through the father council and the Adult Literacy (AL) Facilitator, Nawal Mohammad, who conducted an awareness campaign through the imams of the mosque in our village. "I, along with another twenty two women registered for the class. We have been successful in completing one whole year of the AL Class -Level I and II of the REFLECT Methodology."

Rifa'ah's story is even more inspiring given that she must walk a full hour to reach the afternoon adult literacy class in Al-Sahari school. She says she is very happy to do so because "It is worth the effort, because I not only learned reading, writing and math, but also basic facts about life through the life skills and awareness raising activities which women enjoy very much".

The project helped support 227 women in six adult literacy classes in Majzer.

Note: USAID is the only donor to have supported Majzer District in Mareb with school renovation, forming of fathers' and mothers' councils, social workers, teacher and headmaster training as well as adult literacy classes.