

Childhood in Yemen Nation-Sized Case

Yemen Tops the List of Child Labor in the Arab Countries by 34.8%

12.2 Million Yemeni Children in Need for Help

A Life Header for Childhood



Manal Amin

One of the most beautiful stages of life that a person goes through is childhood, as it is the stage of innocence and spontaneity in dealing without sophistication or hypocrisy, a stage whenever a person remembers it with oneself, he feels such a beautiful feeling because of the memories he has that will remain throughout his life.

Also, childhood is the most important and influential stage on the fate of a person's life because of meanings and lessons that it involves, and which keep affecting his life until the last minute. There are those who suffer from a personality disorder due to a miserable childhood or because they were deprived of something as a result of certain circumstances that affected his childhood. While others who enjoy a stable and secure life as a result of a happy and integrated childhood that contributed to creating a great awareness of a better life and a bright future.

In this issue that "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) have allocated, we wanted to shed light on the most important stages that children go through, and determine the fate of their lives in the future, by focusing on the most important issues related to childhood in various aspects, including the impact of early marriage for children, which unfortunately has become a widespread phenomenon in all governorates of the country, the role of human rights bodies and organizations in protecting children, in addition to how the content of the media affects the awareness and perception of children in a negative and positive manner.

In fact, we have singled out special topics in this issue on the impact of the economic situation on children, the issue of "child labor" that affects their future in light of the current conditions, as well as the issue of children in foreign countries adapting to a new lifestyle that has been imposed on them. We have also presented the role of youth initiatives and organizations in targeting children in their programs.

Children's cases are many and have an impact on them and their society in the future, as they are the most affected groups by the ongoing conflict. It is tragic to find children in juvenile centers and in centers for people with various disabilities. Nevertheless, we do not forget that there are models that have faced difficulties and emerged in different areas, which we must pay attention to and highlight because of our belief in the saying "Creativity is born out from suffering."

Children's issues are multiple and different and also complex. It's an open space to those who want to address it more broadly and comprehensively. In fact, agreements, organizations and multiple bodies target this influential community group that contributes to shaping the future features of a country exhausted by conflicts.

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- 🔥 Pediatrics in Yemen ... Painful reality and Legitimate Ambition
- 🔥 Multiple Diseases and Long-Term Psychological Effects
- 🔥 7.8 Million Children Deprived of Continuing Their Education
- 🔥 Specialists: "Child labor does not contribute to the production of some economic value."
- 🔥 The Impact of the Media on Children
- 🔥 Children of Expatriates ... Difficulty in Coping and Homesickness

What Do Civil Society Organizations offer Children?!



Children's Talents Between their Development and the Current Reality

By: Manal Amin

Rajaa Mekred- Alia Muhammad
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Children have talents that may surpass the talents of adults despite the current circumstances and challenges that the country is going through in various fields, such as: writing, drawing, singing, inventing, reading, diction and participating, etc. Many skills contribute to building the personality of every child who has the capacity to create, develop his mental capacity, and shape his sentiments and behavior as well.

Alawiya: Story Writer and Broadcaster

Alawiya Zu Al- Kifl, who is 14 years old, lives in Enmaa district in Aden Governorate, enjoys the talent of writing stories since she was 6 years old. She is currently participating in radio programs for children on Radio Bandar Aden, and she has many writings and stories, despite her young age, including "Farmer's Ambition", "Jessy", and "My Colleagues".

Alawiya tells her story about her talent in writing stories, and that, since a young age, she loves to read, write and read a lot in all fields. She also enjoys spending time reading a magazine or a new novel, and she tries to write a story and then draw its images and color according to her imagination. She also loves drawing, and believes that the story is a literary method to narrate the reality of life with all its challenges with the development of appropriate solutions for it.

Alawiya also possesses the talent of recitation, as she participated in radio activities at school and with her friends on an ongoing basis, which contributed to the development of her abilities in the field of diction.

Alawiya recalled her participation with her

younger sister in presenting a special radio program for children on the Radio Bandar Aden. The program received great interaction and high admiration among the radio operators and all listeners due to her attractive style of diction despite her young age.

Regarding the recent activities that she participated in, Alawiya explains that she learned the basics of the art of diction, and last week she participated in a workshop to train the art of diction. She also participated in an event organized by Jedaria Foundation on the folk story and told a short story in front of the audience. She is currently writing a long novel, which name she did not want to be mentioned. She dreams of becoming a great novelist in the future, honoring her countrymen in international literary forums.

The Success Story of the Talented Child, Alaa Al-Sherif

"I see something and try to implement it, so my attempts succeed", answered the child Alaa Al-Sherif, who is talented in making machines and miniature engineering materials such as a microscope, a buckle, a caliper, a washing machine, a juicer, and a remote-controlled car.

Alaa, who is 13 years old, started to make machines with simple materials (from the pharmacy and building tools) since the age of ten. In this way, he obtained several certificates of appreciation at various levels, and was prominent in the scientific field in the school.

In spite of the circumstances the country is going through, he does not find interest in his tal-

ent as required, and yet he has not lost his passion to discover more applied and engineering sciences, and to develop his perceptions in various fields that contribute to raising his scientific capabilities.

Alaa demands everyone who knows him to provide him with the necessary support, work to contain his early talent, and adopt his future ambition to be an architect.

The Little Star Shines in the Sky of Talent

When talent and challenge combine, the light of creativity and success radiates to open new doors to brilliance and distinction, and this is how the young star was distinguished, and his rising star shone in the sky of talent.

The child Muhammed Omro, who is 8 years old, has a beautiful voice, and everyone calls him the "sensitive voice". He sang for the first time at the age of four, after which he began recording songs.

Muhammed says, "I started singing a number of diverse songs that captured the admiration of everyone, and participated in many activities, the most important of which were special events for cancer patients, the International Day of Orphans, and the World Children's Day. I also participated in singing alongside major and famous Yemeni artists".

He added, "I participated in "The Voice" program - the Yemeni version - and was qualified to the final stages, and appeared in many morning programs that receive children's talents".

Children and Peace



Dr. Qais Ahmed
Al-Mhamadi

Peace in any society depends on the attitudes, values and abilities of the members of that community, and they acquire these values and abilities from childhood; therefore, our children are the key to achieving our common goal of a stable and developmental society with values, capabilities and cultures that promote peace and development, unless we face the opposite.

According to the Save the Children report, Yemen is currently among the ten worst-affected countries for children and the most affected by armed conflict. International humanitarian law provides general protection for all those affected by armed conflict, and includes strict provisions related to children. Thousands of our children in our Yemeni reality are exposed to a number of risks and threats, and the more the areas subject to internal conflicts become numerous and expanded, the more the number of armed men increases. At the same time, children in those areas are increasingly exposed to missiles, wrong bullets and hidden mines, which may cause them to die, or lose part of their bodies, so the number of people with disabilities and displaced people from their regions, homes and education increases, or they are exposed to recruitment and pandemics. Children may lose the head of household or number of family members, which exposes them to family disruption, malnutrition and hunger, and then forced into cruel work or begging, while those who are spared from the above are exposed to an identity crisis, not knowing who they belong to or why they are subjected to these pains, and they fear the present and the future, just by hearing the sounds of explosions and news of killing, violence, displacement and kidnapping, or witnessing these atrocities, which will definitely leave them with long-term effects.

It is painful and regrettable that the loss of thousands of our children to internal peace has become a regular occurrence, whether in urban areas or in the Yemeni countryside. As we find that many children do not go to school, while a number of them have become professional beggars, while we find that some persistent and self-made people may practice difficult work for long periods, and some of them try to sell some tools and simple products on the roads and streets, and some of them move between alleys and villages to collect what can be used from the remains and waste, and what is even worse is the direct involvement of some of them in the current conflict.

From the behavioral and psychological side, our children's need for inner peace through affection, love and security is greater than anything else, and in periods of conflict children are the most vulnerable due to their small physical and mental structure and weakness. And since the conflict has deeply affected us, adults who have the strength to bear, most of us have publicly or silently echoed the words "I have no future here", so how can children?!

It is better to imagine the severity impact of the current conflict on our children when they repeatedly witness the manifestations of violence and touch its results. They will surely lose hope to have a safe present when they grow up during a long period of conflict. How will this affect their personalities and what will they offer to their families and their community? When children's game fairs contain in most of their shelf's games that are originally models symbolizing violence and wars, and when children play violent and programmed electronic games with all kinds of lethal weapons instead of playing games aimed at building and development, they will inevitably believe that the weapon is the one that will protect them instead of the state through its legal, security and other institutions. It is also possible that they will hate love and smiling.

Many adults may lose a sense of the depth of the suffer and pain of children affected by the current conflict, to varying degrees, perhaps because these people have enjoyed peace since their childhood, or perhaps their childhood life was not as harsh as today's children, and it was not as long as it lasted compared to the current conflict that has been going on for six years. Although the guilty in all the ongoing conflicts are, we, the adults; we did not ask why we are still involved in one way or another in destroying the future of our children. We are the decision-makers in the continuation and cessation of the conflicts.

And if we decide, collectively, to truly stop it, who will bear its disastrous consequences in the foreseeable future? Have we thought about what we have provided and prepared for the near future of children? How will the current generation describe us appropriately?!

If we remember our innocent dreams in our early childhood and our aspirations when we were young, most of which are the unbridled desire to change the future of future generations for the better, to make them positive, to spread justice and build the nation to keep up with the times and resemble ancient homelands, if we do that, we discover that what we have presented actually is just the opposite. We failed them and did not give them the peace and life they deserve, even though we are totally responsible for what has happened and is happening in the present, and we will hand over to them a destroyed infrastructure, and inherit their wounds and feelings of deep pain, grudges and hatred, and perhaps also the desire for revenge if they survive.

We have to ask ourselves where we, the guilty parties, will be in the future. Do we expect to be affected by the persistence of conflicts as a culture rooted in our society? This will inevitably happen if we do not abandon the conflicts and strive to achieve lasting peace in order to prepare our country for construction and sustainable development.

In the face of all these challenges and frustrations, there are always opportunities and alternatives full of hope, and no matter how small they seem, the impact will be great. As soon as there is a true desire and pure intentions, we are obligated before our children to give them the right to feel safe, peaceful and hopeful by realizing the dreams of young people and achieving the aspirations of ambitious boys as one of their rights that is no less than the right to live in dignity, receive education, and obtain physical and psychological health. Among the opportunities and possible solutions is to highlight the vital role of peace in our society in general, and in conflict areas in particular.

It is assumed that society and its institutions play this role, as individuals by positively influencing the parties to the conflict through various activities and events. There are individual experiences that have succeeded in influencing positively, even, the bearers of arms in some conflict areas around the world, especially those that have lived through decades of conflicts. They were educated and trained to protect children in times of conflict, and to encourage them to fulfill agreements and covenants related to children's rights, and to protect them from violence, exploitation and abuse. As for the role of parents, teachers, employees, professionals and media professionals who do not have any decision to stop the violence, their common goal is currently to achieve lasting peace and return to construction through many measures, starting by bringing points of view together and setting targets.

Our behaviors and actions must be common and similar in relation to our children, and we can also go towards fair advocacy for the basic rights of our children even in front of the military personnel involved in the conflict, as well as promoting a culture of peace and human development among our children. At the same time, we must curb the negative promotion of violent films and games, and give them hope that conflicts will stop and end at some point, while instilling patience, endurance and steadfastness in them, and training them to solve the conflicts they face in peaceful ways, spreading the ambition for positive change in them, and helping them shift their interests towards developmental matters, as well as encouraging our children, male and female, to take the initiative to become a generation that is stronger and more resilient and coexist with our intellectual differences as long as they are peaceful, provided that they do not follow our methodologies that support the persistence of conflicts for the coming years.



Muhammed dreams of participating in foreign competitions, but he finds it difficult to achieve this due to the current situation, and his mother says, "Muhammed has multiple talents, but unfortunately the reality we are going through is an obstacle to their development. Muhammed still dreams of playing the lute and needs to join institutes. Unfortunately, the fees for these institutes are fictional, which prevent him from joining them, and he always repeats that the day will come when I will fulfill my dream".

The talent of singing was not the only talent of the child, Muhammed, as he had a talent for diction and presenting programs, and he participated in a number of children's programs.

Despite the reality imposed on Muhammed and on thousands of talented Yemeni children, they still sing and praise their talents, and they have hope for a better tomorrow and future.



Child Labor between a Deteriorating Economy and a Bitter Reality

The Spread of the Poverty State forces Children into the Labor Market

By: Manal Amin
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Muhammed, who is 12 years old, is displaced from Al-Hudaydah Governorate in Aden. He works every day to wipe cars in the sunlight to support his mother and three siblings after his father's death, as a result of the conflict in 2017, defying the poverty and suffering imposed on him.

Muhammed makes his way daily from his small tent which houses him and his family in the displacement area in Al- Buraiqa district to one of the city streets, carrying in his arms a piece of cloth, a bottle of water and cleaning materials for cars accompanied by many children after being forced to leave their homes and school in order to support their families and face the challenges of life.



80% of Yemenis are Below the Poverty Line

"The blockade and the ongoing conflict have caused heavy losses to Yemen's economy, which has shrunk by more than half since the beginning of the conflict in 2015, and the socio-economic environment is expected to witness further deterioration in 2021". This is what was indicated by the Humanitarian Needs Overview document for 2021, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The document indicated that the gross domestic product losses, which were incurred in the first five years of the conflict in Yemen, could double to 181 billion US dollars if the conflict continues in 2022, and it is expected that the value of the Yemeni Riyal continues to decline, which severely affects the purchasing power of the population. The document indicated that 80% of Yemenis live below the poverty line, while 40% of Yemeni families have lost their main sources of income.

Yemen is still witnessing the largest humanitarian crisis in the world, based on the analysis of the 2021 Humanitarian Needs Outlook document. It is estimated that more than 20.7 million people are in need of humanitarian aid in 2021, while it is estimated that 12.1 million people are in urgent need of aid.

Stories and Suffering

The father of the child Ahmed Khaled says that what motivated his 15-year-old son to work in a restaurant was his inability to understand school curriculum in addition to the deteriorating economic situation, which prompted him to leave school two years ago and join the labor market in order to earn a living, and his belief that life is the greatest school.

The child, H.A., who is about 10 years old, sells pens in one of the streets of Aden, wears a dirty hat to protect her from the scorching rays of the sun, and tries to sell those pens to pedestrians, drivers and passengers by displaying them with a shying voice while risking her life. From time to time, she sits exhausted from standing for long hours, wishing everyone to buy her pens so that she can return home with the day's expenses.

Ministry of Social Affairs

Mona Salem Alban, Director of the Child Labor Unit at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, in Aden, mentions the reasons behind the spread of child labor, which are: the economic conditions, the most important of which is poverty, school dropout resulting from a lack of un-



derstanding of the school curriculum, violence, absence of extra-curricular activities, a lack of community awareness concerning the danger of the child labor at an early age, and so on.

Regarding the efforts of the official authorities to combat child labor, Mona Alban says, "Since the year 2000, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor began with the International Labor Organization through the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC) to implement a number of activities and take a set of measures, which are: The issuance of a decision about a list of works that children are forbidden to practice, and distribute it to business owners and the concerned authorities, and prepare a lot of field studies and research in all Yemeni governorates in various sectors (professional, agricultural and economic) based on the activity of each governorate".

As for the unit's role in protecting children from violations, she says, "After our country ratified the two most important agreements with the International Labor Organization, Convention No (138) for determining the minimum working age, and Convention No (182) concerning the ban on the worst forms of work for children, a unit to combat child labor in the ministry was established, which carried out a series of activities as an umbrella that takes care of all the concerned authorities related to the issue of childhood, such as the ministries of information, health, education, and endowments".

The Reasons of the Phenomenon Spread

According to the director of the Child La-

bor Unit at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor in Aden, the most important cause of the spread of the phenomenon of child labor in recent times is the ongoing conflict in various Yemeni governorates, the resulting displacement of many families, and the demolition of schools, which prompted many children to leave their schools and search for a job.

The Humanitarian Situation Report (January 1 - December 31, 2020) issued by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) shows that the intensification of the ongoing conflict in the country affected 4.4 million IDPs, including 7.1 million children, and during the first half of 2020, more than 100 thousand displaced people left their homes in search of a safer destination.

Here, Alban indicates that the Corona pandemic has also contributed to the spread of child labor in Yemen because many parents remain without work, especially in the last year that was called the "Global Recession Year", as a result of the closure of many facilities and schools, and this was negatively reflected on the economic situation in the country.

Another report issued by UNICEF in June 2020 suggested that millions of children in Yemen are on the verge of famine due to the huge shortfall in humanitarian aid funding amid the Covid-19 pandemic, and that more than 7.8 million children are being deprived of continuing their education because of the lockdown measures, which could put children at greater risk of employment and recruitment.

Difficulties

Regarding the difficulties facing the work of the ministry, Mona Alban clarifies that the lack of access to some Yemeni governorates that fall under the "line of fire" represents the most important challenges facing work. Therefore, the Ministry resorted to a process of communication and coordination with local organizations operating in those areas to ensure continued protection for children, and to raise community awareness of the danger of their involvement in the conflict and dangerous work.

It also stresses the importance of strengthening partnership with community-based organizations in the awareness-raising process in the various areas that limit the phenomenon of child labor, and improve the academic process.

Increasing Levels of Child Labor

The report "Child Labour in the Arab Region: A Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis", which was commissioned by the League of Arab States and the Arab Council for Childhood and Development, and supervised by the International Labour Organization (ILO) for its publication in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in March 2019, explains that the effects of the recent economic shocks and continuation of the conflict have exacerbated the levels of child labor in comparison to what they were in the past, and it also caused a reversal of the progress previously made by Arab countries in combating child labor through policies and practical measures that they have developed.

The report also showed that there is a wide variation in the degree of child participation in work across the Arab region where Sudan and Yemen showed the highest rates of child labor, between 19.2% and 34.8%, respectively.

The report pointed to the high rate of child recruitment, especially in Yemen, Syria and Iraq, and that the majority of children recruited were males in general. However, there is an emerging tendency to recruit more girls and children under the age of 15.

In a third UNICEF report in June 2020, the United Nations documented the recruitment of 3,467 children, some of them as young as ten years old, over the past five years.

Mona Alban reports that the issue of "child recruitment" is one of the topics that the ministry is interested in, through joint work with UNICEF and the Ministry of Human Rights to prevent the involvement of children in the conflict because this is a gross violation of the child's rights, according to what is stated in

Convention No (182).

Labor Absorbs Children's Energy

Dr. Radhia Yaslam Basamad, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Vice Dean of the Faculty of Letters for Community Services and Practical Application, suggests to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) the reason for the spread of the child labor phenomenon at this stage to the difficult economic conditions that the country is going through, and to the social conditions of the families disintegration exacerbated by the economic situation, which contributed to creating psychological problems for the child, finding himself forced to leave school and head towards the labor market that absorbs his energy and capabilities, and does not contribute to the production of any economic value.

According to Basamad's opinion, the social and economic harms include depriving the child of his right to education and enjoying his natural childhood, in being exposed to difficult working conditions that are not commensurate with his physical and mental condition, in becoming more vulnerable to serious diseases and injuries, in acquiring some bad habits and phenomena such as smoking and drugs, and in being exposed to violations from employers which affects his character into becoming aggressive. The spread of this phenomenon leads to the reinforcement of the state of societal poverty, which in turn impedes the community development plans in the country.

Solutions

Basamad offers a number of solutions to confront the phenomenon of child labor, including:

- Paying attention to the child's behaviors on an ongoing basis, by trying to improve his environment to which he belongs through the relevant authorities (local and international).
- Establishing private offices that take on the responsibility to educate the family about the need to give priority attention to their children.
- Establishing statistics for the number of families with limited income in order to help them and try to reduce their burdens in order to avoid taking their children out to the labor market.
- Providing health care in poor areas.
- Imposing general laws prohibiting all forms of work carried out by children in various dangerous sectors under the legal age, and enhancing their capabilities by activating school activities.



Yemen's Children with Disabilities... Difficulties and Challenges



According to Amnesty International, the number of persons with disabilities in Yemen has reached more than (4.5) million, according to a report published by the organization on December 3rd, 2019, on the occasion of the International Day of People with Disabilities.

Yemen is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and Presidential Decree No (5) of 1991 came to establish the National Committee for the Care of People with Disabilities, its formation, and defining its functions and competencies in response.

By: Alia Muhammad
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Aisha Thawaba, Director of the Abs Development Foundation, says: "The percentage of disabilities from 2015 to present has increased by (25%) as a result of the ongoing conflict, and with the increase in the number of children with disabilities, the pressure has increased on a number of centers that are no longer able to accommodate their large number."

And she added: "Children with motor disabilities in displacement camps do not receive any form of care, and live in tragic conditions."

People with Disabilities in Laws

According to the National Strategy for the Disabled (2004-2018) issued by the Rehabilitation of the Disabled Fund, children with disabilities need access to early intervention ser-

vices, including early detection and diagnosis. It also clarified that children with disabilities have the right to receive free education, as defined in the General Education Law No (45) of 1992. In addition, private Law No (23) of the year 2006 AD has provided for the provision of education services to persons with disabilities. And it has been strengthened by Resolution No (299) of 2006 AD which supports persons with disabilities.

Rehabilitation Center for People with Disabilities

Ahlam Al-Surouri, Executive Director of the Association for People with Special Needs in Sana'a, said: "There is a large number of specialized centers and associations for people with disabilities that carry out their duties and provide services according to the type of disability on which they focus, ranging from mental, motor and other disabilities. As an

association and special center for people with disabilities, we provide rehabilitation, treatment and functional services according to our target groups."

Adding: "The services provided to children with disabilities vary between financial and food aid according to the support provided to the association by philanthropists, merchants and organizations, foremost among which is Save The Children organization, which implemented a project to open a physical and functional treatment center and was equipped in 2019 AD."

Hanan Al-Ariqi - Women and Children's Officer at the Association for People with Motor Disabilities in (Al-Salam Center) - stated that children with motor disabilities receive services and support in a number of areas such as education, health care and psychological support, adding: "We have undertaken a number of projects, the most important of which were the provision of the necessary supplies, and recreational trips with the support of a number of international organizations."

Unqualified cadres

Abu Ibrahim - the father of a child with a disability - faces the problem of the lack of specialized centers depending on the disability of his son, in addition to the lack of experience of the staff working in some centers. And he says: "Most of those working in the care of children with disabilities are high school grad-

uates with no background on how to deal with children with disabilities who need a special way to deal with them."

Stereotype

This is how Umm Ibrahim described her suffering with some members of the society who disrespect the feelings of people with disabilities, underestimate them, and view them as whimsical. In addition, there are no recreational parks and special corridors for people with motor disabilities and the blind, which prevents them from enjoying their childhood like other children.

Rehabilitation ... But

In this context, Hoda Al-Maqdi, who works in the field of rehabilitation and care for people with disabilities - Hadramout - affirms that the centers for rehabilitation and care of people with disabilities are rehabilitating but do not provide services as required, because there is a large number of people who are not good at dealing with children, which negatively affects the child. There must therefore be awareness of how to deal with this category, and a number of training courses must be conducted to qualify and train each.

On the importance of rehabilitation and care for teachers and workers in centers for the rehabilitation of people with disabilities, Ahlam Al-Surouri emphasized that they are keen on conducting training courses for female

teachers to learn how to deal with people with disabilities, and developing an curriculum for their adaptation, programs to modify their behavior, and other trainings, noting that the Social Fund for Development has funded these trainings established by the center.

Difficulties and Challenges

The current situation posed a great challenge for children with disabilities, as a number of special centers stopped rehabilitating and providing them with support as a result of the ongoing conflict in the country.

Abu Ali Muhammad says: "Before the conflict intensified, there was a center to rehabilitate my child, who suffers from a mental and motor disability, but now the center has ceased to function, and some of those centers no longer receive cases coming to it, which has negatively affected the cases of a number of children who stopped taking a natural remedy."

While Samir Al-Hajj Al-Hassani - Head of the Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of People with Motor Disabilities in Aden - lists the difficulties faced by the centers for the rehabilitation and care of the disabled people, the most important of which are: the material needs and the availability of basic services that hinder the access to the rights that people with disabilities should receive, in addition to the difficulty of deficiency, funding provided by some organizations and not being able to obtain it at times.

Forensic Medicine and Criminal Offenses against Children

By: Mona Al-Assadi
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

The Social Guidance House, Boys division, in Amanat Al-Asimah in Sana'a, organized a workshop on April 5th entitled "Forensic Medicine and Criminal Offenses against Children".

The friendly justice system that directly works in the field with juvenile children and is represented by Juvenile Court, Juvenile Prosecution, Social Guidance House, Amal Center for Girls Care, Department of Family Protection, social experts in the court and a number of juvenile children lawyers, participated in the workshop.

In the workshop, Mohammed Al-Arifi, Head of Social Guidance House, explained to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) that this workshop aims to raise awareness among the participants in the child-friendly justice system, educate and introduce them to forensic medicine and its mechanism of action, and to methods of knowledge in the field of criminal offenses against

children, in addition to familiarizing them with the terms related to the reports of the Juvenile Court and Prosecutor Office.

Al-Arifi confirmed that this workshop will have a significant impact on the progress of juvenile children's cases, while Dr. Alaa Abdul Mughni, Head of the Forensic Medicine Unit at the Attorney General's Office, stressed the importance of the mother's role in educating her children to limit the spread of criminal offenses as she is the closest person to them, indicating the importance of implementing the special recommendations that the workshop came out with on the ground, in the form of a guide for forensic medicine. Hence, the Democracy School for Children's Defense in Yemen declared the possibility of contributing to its preparation. This guide is concerned with everything related to criminal offenses against children. The workshop also recommended the implementation of specific training programs, each in its specialization and field, including the implementation of community-awareness campaigns to reduce physical violence and torture of children.



The Media and Its Impact on Children

Our children spend long hours in front of television screens searching for something interesting and impressive, and they find themselves among a large number of specialized and non-specialized channels that attract them, regardless of the types and their age.

According to a field study carried out in 2005 by the researcher Wadee Mohammad Al-Azazi on the vulnerability of Yemeni children to television violence; 51% of the study sample, of whom 60% are males and 43% females, have been psychologically and behaviorally affected by television violence.

According to the answers of the children, 63% of them like cartoons that contain fighting and battles, and the admiration for watching horror movies percentage is between 39% and 53%, as they imitate the fighting movements performed by the heroes of the cartoon. The study also states that the overall average viewing rate among children was an hour and forty-five minutes per day.

By: Alia Muhammad
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Weak Contents

Ahmad Massoud, a media professional, says, "Children's media is disappearing day after day, and it seems that it will become extinct with time, and what remains of them to this day affects children negatively more than positively because of the scarcity of the Arab and local content that is meaningful and useful", he added, "What our Arab media provides for children is a weak and reproduced content that is not devoid of scenes of violence and terror, and does not meet the needs of our children".

In the same context, Batoul Al-Qadri, a housewife, explains why she does not allow her children to watch TV on their own, saying, "As for me, it is impossible for my child to watch TV on his own for several reasons, the most important of which is that the content is not completely appropriate, and all the contents provided by the channels are not appropriate. It does not meet the child's requirements for education and entertainment as it used to be, and there is no longer a place for values and morals in these contents". Batoul stresses the importance of family control for everything that the children watch.

Social Media Is a Haven for Children

Mounir El Hajj, Director of Children's Programs, believes that the media is no longer as dangerous as it used to be. Indeed, it has been replaced by phones through which the child lives isolated from his home and family, and creates a family atmosphere in the spaces of social networking sites instead of reality.

He added, "The programs and series that these channels produce for children no longer carry the character of real entertainment and education. Rather, it exceeded the limit and spread the superficial culture and introduced religious concepts and hidden conflicts, which made it a dangerous system for children in homes, indicating that the misconceptions and images of violence

that arise in the minds of children make them carry violent behaviors and a spirit of rebellion. Therefore, we must follow up the children constantly, so that they don't become an easy prey".

Ghassan Haidar, a bachelor in Media, agrees by saying, "The communication and information technology revolution has produced multiple media outlets that almost overwhelm traditional media. Therefore, the choice of appropriate means for children must be reconsidered by adding communication platforms, especially YouTube, which have become a haven for children and contribute in a big way to building their personalities".

The Influence of the Media on the Child

Zainab Al-Shahari, a media professional, expresses her opinion, confirming that the media has greatly affected the child's physiology in general, and most of them do not contribute to reaching all that the father and mother aspire to in raising and developing children and this is what we always see. For example, some channels present a message to the child about obscene wealth, which results in a clash with the living reality, and deludes him about being different from others, which affects his psyche.

On attending children's programs on the media scene, Salwa Kahlani says, "There is no enough space in the channels to broadcast children's programs, and everything is imitated and traditional and does not suit the conditions of children and their environment", adding, "We lack local channels for children and their education".

Al-Badr Al-Hadhari, a bachelor in Media, said, "There is a direct impact on children's behavior because of the media, as they are in their formative age, and they imitate everything they see in the absence of parental control".

Al-Hadhari stresses that the Arab media



plans must be drawn up to suit our culture and our cultural heritage, and an attempt should also be made to prevent the presentation of realistic programs that are not linked to the values and culture of the society.

For his part, Adeb Muhammed, a media professional, says, "The media can affect children very much, and contribute to implanting different and sometimes wrong ideas in the child's consciousness. This effect may be positive or negative. This is why it must be controlled as much as possible, and the opportunity for the child to take maximum advantage of the media must be given, without affecting his other abilities such as imagination, free play and social integration, especially since the child sits for long hours in front of the Internet and various media outlets, which may create a gap in dealing with his surroundings".

Absence of Local Production

Ahmed Abdo Ghaleb, a programs presenter in a local radio station, enumerates the obstacles that exist in the local media, saying, "The absence of children's programs, the lack of sufficient space to broadcast

them in the Yemeni media, and the lack of production companies interested in producing programs for children, as well as depending entirely on cliches and ready materials that has no connection with the Arab community negatively affects the child's mentality". He adds,

"The production companies depend on advertisements very much, and as we know, all those who market their products choose to advertise them in programs that do not target children, and this is what prompted a large number of production companies to run behind the production of series and entertainment programs for adults turning a blind eye to children's programs".

Double-edged Sword

Issa Ramdhani, a psychological supervisor specialized in the field of games and children's behavioral programs, says, "There are psychological and neurological effects on children due to some of the content that is presented to the media, and it changes children's behavior, makes them hostile and increases their hyperactivity, in addition to increasing language problems". Ramdhani stresses that the media is a double-edged sword, including positive and negative sides. Therefore, there must be family control over the contents presented in the media by which children are greatly affected because they are in the stage of building their personalities.

Monitoring and Reducing

There is a direct impact on children's behavior because of the media

Amal Jaber, a journalist and writer, believes that the media has a great influence on the child, as it represents a fertile environment for building ideas and cultivating future mental perceptions. It works on forming his mind and developing his imagination in a way that is consistent with its goal and vision. She adds, "At the present time, when the child spends most of his time on various media outlets more than he spends time with family and friends, it has become necessary to regulate and monitor this", noting that the child builds his perceptions, opinions and views of people through what is presented by the media that does not escape the presentation of what contradicts the societal thought and the intellectual construction of the child. So, the media can create a violent, elusive or cunning child through the characters they present that follow the trick and the violence even in defending the right. On the other hand, it can create an active child and be an important supporter in learning and openness to the world. So, the media has two sides: negative and positive, which their impact is related to the contents chosen for the child.



A Day at the Social Guidance House

Why Does the Child Adopt

Hana Ali said that "the child is greatly affected by what is shown on the media, especially the cartoon series that directly incite violence, and horror stories and fighting, not to mention electronic games that are not appropriate for the children's age."

Suhaib Badr, who believes that media content pushes children most of the time to misbehave because parents do not allocate time to their children and monitor them, as most families only open some television channels, leaving their children under the control of those channels without supervision over the content, which lead children to acquire violent methods in their lives, agrees with her.

From this standpoint, "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) newspaper went towards juvenile children (Social Guidance House for boys), and spent a day there, during which it met the child justice expert, the director of the Juvenile Care House, the trainer Muhammad Al-Arafi, who briefed the newspaper on the details of children's behavior and their lifestyles at the House.

By: Rajaa Mukred
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Social Guidance House and not Juvenile

The Social Guidance House for Boys was established in 1978 in order to protect children who are in conflict with the law, who were previously called children of juveniles or delinquents, but now they are called children who are in conflict with the law. The reason for this label is not programming the child negatively, according to what Al-Arafi explained. He added, "We instigate a lot in the House that the child does not feel imprisoned, as in the end he remains a child. The main objective here is to modify the behavior of children who are in conflict with the law."

"Investing the Child at the House"

Al-Arafi explained to "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) that the Guidance House contains children from the age of seven to fifteen years old. The House's job is to protect their behaviors and modify them so that they do not return to the wrong behaviors again.

Regarding his knowledge of the law, he confirms that there is a lack of knowledge of the laws, although the culture of the previous generation differs from the present. Previously, the stage of adolescence use to begin at the age of 17, but now it starts from the seventh year due to openness and media.

Al-Arafi adds that the House has the right to invest the child if he is polite and ethical in its favor, so that the efforts are valued and he/she does not return to the loss as it was before. There are procedures that are carried out by the court in coordination with the prosecutor in this aspect in the best interest of the child.

Wrong Behavior, Not a Crime

According to Al-Arafi, "The unlawful acts that a child commits are considered a wrong behavior and not a crime. Crimes are applied to those over the age of 18, and the cases at the House are children of

wrong behavior and not criminals, because they have not reached the legal age."

Regarding the types of behaviors, he says, "There are wrong behaviors committed by children, such as theft, murder, unethical practices and so on", affirming that most of those involved in murder cases are children of well-known families, and if the wrong behavior was murder, for example, the child would be prosecuted but without execution because the juvenile law is flexible and provides the best interest, meaning that if the killer was 11 years old, he would remain at the House until the age of 19.

Regarding the number of children at the Juvenile House, it was directed to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor to obtain the latest statistics on the number of children in juvenile centers, and to know the number of centers, but the statistics were not obtained, due to the absence of the administrative official and his representative.

Then the newspaper went to the Central Statistical Organization and met Samira Al-Jawzi, director of the Statistical Year book, who requested an official memorandum from the Ministry of Interior and the Central Statistical Organization because the juvenile records are kept in the interior with the records of the central prison. After referring to the Statistical Year Book for 2018, it became clear that there is no statistics about the number of children in juvenile centers.

Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope) obtained the last annual report for the year 2017 AD, from the Social Guidance House for Boys, where the director of the house (Al-Arafi) explained that there were between (12-13) guidance houses in Yemen previously, and only three of them were left due to the conflict, two of them in Sanaa and one in Ibb.

In addition, a source in UNICEF was contacted to inquire about the services provided by the organization to the guidance house, and the newspaper was transferred to the source concerned with the children of the house, but the request remained pending for three days without a response.

Causes of Violence

Al-Arafi explains that the openness provided by Google platform has become a costly. These negative effects educate children on violence since childhood, in addition to the practice of the media and its export of violence in children's programs, and that some families make their children go to beg and acquire habits and morals that depend on violence.

He also stressed that the surrounding environment (the family and the media) carries messages that teach children wrong behaviors, in addition to the lack of awareness among some families, as the father and mother are the ones who direct the child to the correct orientation.

Is poverty a Motive or a Cause?

The expert Muhammad Al-Arafi says, "Some people say that poverty is the cause of children's delinquency. This is the biggest mistake. Poverty is not the cause of children's delinquency, but poverty is a motive. There are poor families whose financial condition is very weak but we find in them morals, values, and a faithful identity, and their lives are straight and on the right path, thus some people are rich and commit crimes. So is poverty a measure of deviation?"

He added, "When we say that poverty is a motive, there is a reason that compels poor families to pay their children to work in the streets instead of studying, and to sell some things, and it is the same reason that brought young girls to work as cleaning in homes, so many of them were exposed to wrong behavior, and their place was at the Guidance House. Therefore, we affirm that poverty is not a cause but a motive".

According to a poll conducted by "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) newspaper, in April 2021 about the reason for children entering juvenile centers, the opinions of people who responded to the survey revealed that the reason for this was 61.2% poverty, 46.9% conflict, 34% surrounding society, 15.6% media and 34.7% family.

Underage Marriage Poll

In a poll conducted by "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of

Hope) newspaper, in April 2021 AD on the cause of child marriage, according to the opinions of those who answered the poll, it was found that 57% ignorance, 20% customs and traditions, 19% the economic situation, 4% conflict.

The Importance of the Family's Role

The trainer, Al-Arafi, confirms that the main reason for children's delinquency is the family. Many family disputes between husband and wife make the children victims, as well as the lack of awareness of families regarding their responsibilities towards their children in the required and proper manner. Some of them beat their children because they did not bring them a certain amount of money after working on the street. As a result, the child acquires a severe fear that compels him to steal or join criminal groups, and to engage in wrong behaviors in order to earn money quickly.

Why Does the Child Behave Wrongly?

The psychologist, Haider Muhammed, says that the reason for the child's erratic behavior and his entry into the juvenile house (guidance) is the violence practiced by the father. The beating and lack of good handling of the child makes him deviate and go out to the street, and charging the child with responsibility for work leads him to stay for long hours late at night outside the house, which exposes him to harm and gets involved in problems that will lead him to enter the House.

As for the Psychosocial Support Officer of the Red Crescent, Dr. Zeenat Mukred, she says, "The conflict was a cause of psychological and societal pressures within families. All family disputes affected the psyche of children, and the presence of weapons in homes, roads, neighborhoods, markets and everywhere. All of that led the child to carry weapons as well, and here the child loses all of his rights to have a suitable life".

Emphasizing that the conflict and violence present in the child's daily life made him forget about

Yemen Children in the Diaspora: Between

By: Hanin Ahmad
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Yemeni families in foreign countries face many challenges the most prominent of which is perhaps the difficulty of harmonizing and adapting to the prevailing culture in the foreign country, which is inconsistent with the customs, traditions and culture prevailing in Yemen. Those who suffer most from these challenges are the children, who are particularly affected by these situations.

The child Muhammed, who is 13 years old and residing in Egypt, finds it difficult to adapt to the new society, and grudgingly expresses his desire to return to his country, Yemen, to play in his grandfather's house, visit his relatives and live with them, and he says, "We do not have relatives here to visit and spend time with them. The life we live in Yemen cannot be lived here".

Vision of a Child

Unlike Muhammed, Yasmine Khaled, who is 14 years old and residing in Egypt since 7

years, expresses how comfortable and acclimatized she is in Egypt, and says, "I hope to return to Yemen on a visit to the family and not to live there. My friends are here, and we have relatives here too. At school, we study multiple languages and practice various activities that are not available in Yemen". Yasmine believes that life in Egypt is more positively different than in Yemen, whether in terms of school curricula and activities, or in terms of lifestyle, in general.

Different Opinions

Salma Muhammed, a resident of Turkey and a mother of two children, points out that raising children in a new society and a new culture is difficult in the beginning, but with time, the adults adapt and the children too, and learn different and other habits which are not necessarily negative. On the contrary, they may sometimes be positive and better than what they gained in their own countries.

Muhammed Salih Al-Shabani, a resident of the United States and father of one daughter, believes that there is no objection to children acquiring the culture of another country. In fact, customs and traditions change with the change



of times and places and he said, "It is natural for the child to acquire new things that are different from what we have learned, and the issue of cultural diversity is an important and inevitable matter".

As for Nawal Ahmed, a resident of Indonesia and a mother of four, she says, "It is natural for children to acquire the way of life of the country in which they reside, but I work hard to teach my children the customs, traditions, language and details of life that we have grown up with, and yet there is no objection to acquiring new



things and learning as long as it does not conflict with our habits".

Najem Abdo, a resident of Japan and father of two children, says, "It is very important to acquire new things in life, and we encourage our children to learn good Japanese habits and lifestyles, because their patterns of life are more regular, healthy and practical, and help the child discover and develop his skills and abilities. As

for customs and traditions, they are changing from one generation to another, and it is not necessary for our children to learn the same habits that we have learned and been raised upon". Najem believes that his children were positively influenced by the surrounding environment.

Psychological Effects

The specialist in psychology, Randa Al-Absi,

the Wrong Behavior?



Statement of the Juvenile Child Placement Movement 2017 AD

M	Statement	Number of Children	Remark
1	Total of the people deported from 2016 AD to January 2017 AD		
2	Deportors during the year 2017 AD		
3	Deported + Deportors		
4	Releases during the year 2017 AD		
5	Transfer to the Central Prison / Reserve		
6	Escape		
	Total of the people deported from 2017 AD to January 2018 AD		

Statement of the Juvenile Child Placement Movement 2017 AD

M	Authority of the release order	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	TOTAL	Remark
1	Central Transfer	3	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	8	14	-	-	27	
2	Juvenile Prosecution service	15	8	15	21	13	12	23	25	8	3	3	3	166	
3	Juvenile Court	2	-	2	5	1	2	-	1	3	1	1	-	31	
4	West Prosecution	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
5	North Prosecution	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
6	Basil Al-Harith Court	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	TOTAL	20	8	17	28	14	14	23	26	12	19	17	3	218	

Statement of the Juvenile Child Placement Movement of the year 2017 AD

Depository	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	TOTAL	Remark
Juvenile Prosecution service	17	10	26	11	18	10	26	28	18	19	20	5	218	
South West Prosecution service	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	
South East Prosecution service	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
West Prosecution Trust	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
TOTAL	19	10	26	11	18	12	26	28	18	19	20	5	222	



playing, studying and thinking like the surrounding environment that is filled with violence and conflict.

The Services Provided by the House

During the visit of "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) to the House, the services provided to children were identified, represented in education, which is compulsory and takes place in the guidance school, which includes a library affiliated to Education with an administrative staff, in addition to the presence

of a section for literacy, as most of the children who enter the House are streets children and their ages range between 13 years old or 14 years old. They cannot write or read, do not know ablution, and do not memorize any Quranic verses.

The director of the House also reviewed the accommodation service, housing service, sports service, psychological support, and multi-behavioral programs

that work to modify the child's behaviors and the nutrition that they are carrying out.

Difficulties

The director of the House, Al-Arafi, says, "The house's budget has been suspended since 2014, and the support provided is from good people, and this is

one of the most prominent difficulties that the House suffers from".

He calls on the community to contribute greatly to the issue of support and advocacy for the Guidance House and the children of the home by changing the wrong mental perception about this child, and the community's acceptance of him, and the organizations have an important role in raising awareness about the field of children and providing support to the children of the house.

Integration and the Bitterness of Alienation



explained about the psychological effects that alienation leaves on children, and how to adapt and prepare children for the new environment by saying, "Children are affected by the place in which they reside, and the level of vulnerability varies according to the child's surroundings, and the effort made by parents to help him adapt and harmonize with the new environment, which also varies according to the age group of

the children".

She indicated that children who are unable to build relationships and friendships in their old environment are quick to adapt and integrate into the new environment, while children who have formed relationships in their previous surroundings feel lonely in foreign countries, and they miss the intimate and familial atmosphere

and the surroundings in which they lived. It is also possible for the child to enter a state of depression accompanied by nervousness or loss of appetite, and it is noticed that he may do things that he was not used to doing before as an expression of rejection of the change in his life.

Randa stresses the importance of preparing the child psychologically before embarking on a decision to settle in a new country, through the use of methods that are appropriate for the child's age, and accompanying the child with important personal things that he is accustomed to in his life, and the double interest in him to alleviate his feeling of losing familiar elements he has and love.

From an Educational Point of View

Hoda Fadl Abu Ghanem, a consultant at the Ministry of Education in Amanat Al-Asimah and former Vice-Dean of the Modern Yemeni School in Egypt, says that the alienation has greatly affected the lives of Yemeni children, as a state of instability in living life was observed and their lack of acceptance of their new situation in the Diaspora, because the child has not

been prepared for a new life, but rather their sudden transfer, which has negatively affected them psychologically.

On the importance of rehabilitating Yemeni children in Egypt for the new life, Hoda indicated that special schools have been opened for Yemeni children in Egypt for several reasons, the most important of which is to create a suitable study atmosphere for students in the school, so that the student enters school and does not feel alienated. He learns the Yemeni curriculum with Yemeni colleagues and teachers from the same environment, so the student feels that he is in Yemen as soon as he enters school. This is due to the difficulty of enrolling Yemeni students in the Egyptian curriculum, which is different from the Yemeni one.

She added that students are classified into several types, some of whom are easy to accept the place and society, and some of them completely refuse it. This is reflected in the student behavior and in his educational level. Acceptance may depend on the age group and how much parents care and focus on their children. The expatriate child, in general, needs double attention so that he is not isolated or drawn behind

the psychological state in which he lives, as it is usually easy to deal with young students and easier to adapt to others.

Hoda explains about the difficulties facing their work, saying, "We faced many troubles in terms of the availability of Yemeni teachers for some materials, and the interaction and harmony of some students", stressing that great efforts have been made to encourage and motivate students, raise their morale and help them in the educational aspect and cover the absent role of some parents to get them out of the atmosphere of depression.

The Social Element

Kholoud Al-Ariqi, a social worker, says that the estrangement may affect children socially through the lack of harmony and inability to coexist with the new society, and the lack of acceptance of the other, which creates a sense of loneliness in the child and a lack of involvement in the alien society, especially at the beginning. In addition, the lack of parental follow-up in this aspect may turn the child into an anti-social one, unable to understand those around him, and completely isolated from the world around him.



Pediatrics in Yemen: Painful Reality and Legitimate Ambition

Multiple Diseases and Long-term Psychological Effects

By: Manal Amin
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope) - Aden

“The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has estimated the number of children who will suffer from acute malnutrition in 2021 at about 10.4 million children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Northern Nigeria, Central Sahel region, South Sudan and Yemen”, according to a report issued by the organization on 30th of December 2020.

The organization’s report indicated that more than two million children under the age of five throughout Yemen suffer from acute malnutrition, among them about 358 thousand children suffer from severe malnutrition, a number expected to rise.

Reality and Ambition

Pediatrics in Yemen is a modern medical specialty concerned with health care of children from a psychological and physical point of view. It contributes to treating many diseases that children suffer from, especially in such exceptional circumstances that the country is going through.

Pediatricians specialists in Yemen confirmed that “many diseases occurred in children during the past few years for many reasons, which are summarized in the deterioration of the current situation in which the country is going through various economic, health and security aspects, in addition to the spread of poverty among the community, and the ongoing process of displacement, which in turn



contributed to the spread of diseases and disabilities among children”.

The Indicator of Malnutrition for the Worst Professor Mazin Jawwas, Consultant Pediatrics and Neonatology and Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Hadhramaut, says to “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope): “The indicator of malnutrition in Yemen, unfortunately, has turned for more than six years to a bad situation, according to international reports, and to what we observe on the field as well, with the continuation of the conflict in the various Yemeni governorates, which negatively contributed to the high rate of famine in Yemen and deaths due to the lack of basic foodstuffs such as milk, especially for children. Most of the poor families in various Yemeni governorates have become unable to buy basic foodstuffs for their children”.

He added that the conflict has strongly af-

ected the psychological state of children of all ages, as the instability that the country is experiencing is reflected in the weak family income, and pushed some of them to move from one region to another, which exacerbated the problems that the child suffers from like malnutrition and the lack of necessary food and medicine, whether for the pregnant woman or for the child, which exacerbated their poor health and the spread of many diseases among them.

On the psychological state of children and how to prevent it, the professor pointed out that it is not easy to address the psychological effects that the general conditions in Yemen cause for children in a short period of time, but they rather need continuous psychological treatment plans that contribute to alleviating the psychological factor on the child that affected him negatively, especially on his health, by providing food, medicine and a suitable environment for a better healthy life.

Umm Adeb Ahmed, from Aden, says that she has three children, and since she gave birth to her first son who is now 11 years old, she has been taking him to a pediatrician to inspect his health anytime he suffers from any disease, and she is still going to the same doctor as she has strong confidence in her, given the suitable medicines that she prescribes to her children.

And she confirms, “Every time my son’s condition is diagnosed, and after conducting



the necessary tests, the doctor gives me a prescription that makes him recover immediately after taking the treatment”.

Recent Diseases

Dr. Iman Bawazir, a pediatrician (pediatric neurology and epilepsy), in Aden confirmed that “the most prevalent diseases among children in Yemen, especially during past periods, were: infectious diseases, cancers, behavioral disorders, epilepsy, behavioral childhood disorders, malnutrition, malaria, and dengue fever”.

She added, “There are many diseases that appeared recently, which did not exist several years ago, which greatly contributed to the spread of diseases among the children of Yemen, the most important of which is malnutrition, which weakened the immunity of

children, the displaced children in particular, due to the high cost of living and the inability of parents to buy treatments.”

Dr. Iman Bawazir said to “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope), “With regard to non-communicable diseases, such as autism, epilepsy and behavioral disorders, it has spread widely in recent times due to mothers’ lack of interest in their health at the beginning of their pregnancy, in addition to the frequent use of electronics that caused a weakening of mental focus in children at an early age, and the lack of appropriate medicines for some cases as a result of obstacles in the import process. Also types of cancers have spread among children that were not present in abundance for years due to unhealthy foods that have recently spread in the absence of health control over those products that contain unauthorized preservatives and colorings”.

Dr. Bawazir specifies the reasons for the spread of diseases among children at this stage to the lack of awareness among parents of the importance of vaccination in the early stages of the child’s life, especially during these tragic conditions in the country, which contributed to weakening their immunity and afflicting them with pandemics that did not exist for many years, such as diphtheria and cholera. She wishes from parents to pay more attention to their children by providing healthy and proper nutrition represented by a lot of vegetables and fruits, as well as maintaining permanent hygiene, vaccination, and periodic follow-up at the pediatrician in the nearest health complex, and staying away from electronics at least in the first three years of life.

Immunity Killing

Umm Walid assesses the state of pediatrics in Yemen as “failing” or almost non-existent; Because many doctors, as she said, prescribe antibiotics to a sick child without addressing the real harm, thereby weakening the child’s immunity from a young age.

Sofia Numan agrees, adding that pediatrics in Yemen did not serve the mother or the child as required where the mother of the child is required to go through tests and diagnosis that are, in most cases, unnecessary, but only for the profit at the expense of the child’s health.

Wrong Behaviors

Iman Omar Hashim, Executive Director of the Rumooz Association Developmental for the Deaf People and Those with Special Needs, says that the number of children with special needs has been increasing for more than five years, which confirms that the ongoing conflict in the country is one of the most important reasons that contributed to the rise of disability among children in the Yemeni society, in addition to the unhealthy and polluted environment as a result of toxins and car exhaust, which adversely affected the pregnant mother in particular in the first three months of pregnancy, and the lack of health awareness, especially for unconscious mothers and those coming from the countryside, about how to preserve their health in the first months of pregnancy.

She added: “There are wrong behaviors that a pregnant mother does without caring about the health of her child, such as being exposed to radiation continuously, and taking various medications during her pregnancy, and this negatively affects the formation of the fetus, and kills its immunity in the first months of his life, so the baby is exposed to fever and ear diseases that can afflict him during that period, in addition to the parents’ lack of interest in the child, and their lack of awareness of the seriousness of the fever that children may be exposed to at an early age”.

She emphasized that, recently, “meningitis”, which may affect the elderly in Yemen, has emerged again.

On the role of the institution which has about 96 affiliated children who suffer from deafness, autism spectrum, cochlear implant and slow learning, Iman Hashim indicated that the association provides educational and health care, and seeks to modify the behavior of children in order to enroll them in schools for people with special needs.

During The Vacation

How Do the Yemeni Children Spend Their Time?

By: Rajaa Mukred
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

The decision to submit the tests was implemented as a precautionary measure to confront Covid-19, and from here the children entered the summer vacation phase, which will not be the same as before, as it is different because it is long and restricted within the home.

“Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope), in turn, made a field visit to the streets, some homes and sports clubs, and met some children and parents to follow up on the activity that the Yemeni child does during the summer vacation.

Routine

Um Muhammed, from Sana’a, believes that education is important for the child, and that some schools

have strong educational performance through which we know that the student will move to the next educational stage and have an excellent academic background, while some schools, unfortunately, still have poor education and do not even reach a good level. She adds that there is no specific program for children to do during the summer vacation.

Work

“What do we do? What do we work?” answered the 13-year-old child, Ahmed Munser, whose responsibility appeared to have dominated his childhood, being seated behind a medium-sized bus wheel that can accommodate 16 passengers. Ahmed explains that the reason why he drives the bus on vacation all day long is to help his family so that their income improves. With a childish smile, he says, “What is happening? We are accustomed”. Ahmed continues driving the bus after the passengers have taken their places.

Unlike Ahmed, the child Yehya Murad hopes that sports clubs will not be closed. He decided to join the gymnasium from the beginning of the school year, and his ambition was to become a professional gymnast.

Grazing Sheep

Where lands are fertile and while waiting for the agricultural harvest, the two children Osama and Badr graze the sheep, take care of them, clean their living spaces, and water them throughout the continuous period of the agricultural season and wait for the harvest.

Memorizing the Quran

As for the 14-year-old S.R., she says that during the summer vacation, she will join the Holy Quran memorization centers, and will devote part of her time to start practicing household chores, such as cooking, cleaning and other works.

Commitments Ended with Tragedies

Reasons and Solutions behind the Ongoing Phenomenon of “Early Marriage”

“I got married at the age of 12, and it was a life of slaughter and deterioration due to my young age. I did not understand the meaning of a married life”. This is how S.N. described her marital life, from which she is still suffering until this moment. It was her last court hearing to obtain the divorce, two days prior her meeting with “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope).

By: **Rajaa Mukred**
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

S.M., a 25-year-old mother of a boy and a girl, believes that early marriage was a reason for her exposure to violence, especially when the family is going through difficult periods, or the husband is in a state of anger and nervousness. With a regretful look, she gives advice to all girls by saying: “I advise every girl not to marry when she is young. She must be mature and aware of the new life that she will live, and assume responsibilities. It is necessary to choose the right man who will be her partner forever, not only for several years”.

She stresses that knowing the husband before getting pregnant with the first child is very important, adding that most husbands humiliate their wives because of the presence of their children and torture them because the mother cannot leave her child.

Statistics

“Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) headed towards Yemeni Women’s Union to find out the latest developments regarding underage marriage, but the president of the union, Prof. Fathiye Abdullah, refused to talk about this problem and go into any details.

There are no specific and certain numbers, and statistics differ on the number of early marriages in Yemen. Rather, a report of the United Nations Coordination Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Yemen (OCHA), issued in May 2019 AD, states that the marriage of girls under the age of 18 has increased nearly three times between 2017 and 2018.

Specialists believe that the problem of underage marriage is not new in developing countries, including Yemen, but recent events, which have been produced by the conflict, such as displacement and the deterioration of

the economic situation have contributed to an increase in the cases of child marriage, which will double the suffering of women, such as their exposure to violence and health risks, and may also cause the occurrence of diseases for newborns on the other hand.

Solutions

Dr. Radhia Basamad, assistant professor of sociology at the University of Aden, says that the solution to the phenomenon of the persistence of underage marriage lies in the need to work on putting in place legislation that limits underage marriage, and to help families of underage girls who rush to marry their girls because of poverty. Emphasizing that the poorest families must be helped and alleviate their suffering, such as granting them loans or other financial aid in any way.

Basamad adds that it is necessary to also focus on educating the girl, and allowing her to continue her education according to her capabilities so that she can build her knowledge, and thus be fully aware of her rights and duties. She also indicates on the need to work on enacting legal legislation that equates male and female marriage, in addition to the need to spread health awareness of the phenomenon of underage marriage through civil, health, medical and even religious bodies such as mosques and others.

As for Khawla Muthar, a psychologist, she is certain that early marriage causes an imbalance in the marital relationship. A girl who gets married at an early age is not psychologically and physically qualified, and it often happens that young girls marry older men, which causes them physical, psychological and mental danger, and exposes them to domestic violence.

And Muthar adds that early marriage causes early pregnancy. Most girls cannot use contraception and are not aware of health care, and early pregnancy often leads to health risks that

may lead to death.

It’s Continuing and increasing

Mona Al-Saqqaf, an official at the Ministry of Human Rights, believes that the phenomenon of child marriage is not “continuing” and is only on the dire increase, and the reason for this is due to the customs and traditions recognized in Yemen, and to the families’ own fear of staining honor and poverty. Many families prefer to marry off their daughters at a young age to escape the costs of education, health and other things, while they save the expenses to their male sons and teach them without the daughters, thinking that the boy will be more useful and bring money in the future, and that his presence is more beneficial.

Al-Saqqaf adds that underage marriage has increased due to the conflict and displacement. Most of the displaced families marry off their daughters in order to protect them from the dangers of displacement such as words that may offend them or from being at risk.

Regarding solutions, Al-Saqqaf says that the most appropriate solution is the law that prohibits the marriage of minors under the age of 16, and explains that a law had previously been issued and submitted to the parliament for approval, but the law stopped due to the conflict. And she confirms that early marriage phenomenon requires a long period of time, and a political and social will to solve it.

She believes that there is a basic solution called “awareness”, which is the most appropriate solution in light of the absence of a law prohibiting the marriage of minors. This solution is somewhat weak, according to her, but if the awareness is intensified, it will be a temporary solution. She adds that a circular had previously been issued by the Ministry of Justice not to

hold a marriage contract for those under 16 years old, but the circular was not enforced. She emphasized that it is necessary for decision-makers to take a solution to this phenomenon.

Four Years of Accusation and Violence

Yusra, a pseudonym, did not know that carrying that message when she was 14 years old would make her suffer from violence, torture, family separation and offensive accusations against her during a period of four years

Yusra, who is 21 years old, tells her childhood story. When she was still very young, a doctor at the age of her father used her as a messenger between him and an older girl, and she was passing messages from the girl to the doctor in his clinic, until her family discovered the matter, and saw her in the doctor’s office with the letter in her hand. She tried to hide the letter under her sleeve (the shirt she was wearing), but her family questioned her and accused her of being undignified, and they married her to that doctor who is 25 years older.

Her family did not stop at this point when she married the doctor, but they took the daughter of the doctor who became her husband, and married her to the uncle of Yusra to discipline the doctor for committing this mistake, saying, “A woman for a woman”, according to a source close to Yusra.

Yusra says, “I could not defend myself at the time, on the contrary, I felt guilty of the horror that happened to me. As for the doctor who became my husband, he quickly took his daughter after twenty days of marriage to his home and did not return her to my uncle, and she is still not divorced”.

She adds with sorrow that she began a jour-

ney of suffering that was unforeseeable, the journey of a child accused in her honor, who married a person many years older than her. She went back to visit her family but they refused to receive her so she went back to her husband on the same night but he also refused to receive her.

She says, “I sat at the bottom of the valley between my village and my husband’s village until two o’clock in the morning, so my brother-in-law received me. Throughout my marriage, my husband used to taunt me because I refused to give up. He used to taunt me constantly and accuse me of not being virgin. Six months after our marriage, he tied me with ropes, raped me and put an end to my childhood virginity”.

Yusra continued her conversation with a rattle, saying, “I’ve been sleeping in the bathroom since that tragic event and four-year marriage. I used to go to the bathroom and close the door as soon as I hear him coming. And if we met during the day, I used to be hit with electric wires. He always used to repeat: “You ... (verbal violence)”.

She continues to recount her tragedy, saying, “Throughout my marriage, I was forbidden to have a phone, and I was not allowed to communicate with my mother and sister. Finally, I met a neighbor whom I used to go to, and she used to provide me with second-hand clothes, but my husband accused me again of cheating on him with her husband. I endured a lot, but where do I go when my family are the ones who sold me cheaply?”

Finally, in order to grant me divorce, he asked me to sign papers proving that I had betrayed him with our neighbor, and he handed me over to my family with my divorce paper. And to escape the Mu’akhar (a deferred and promised amount), he published photos of the papers that I signed under duress and beatings”.

Reading Stories and Books

The father of the child Najib says, “Developed countries have been able to provide education services and several activities for the child remotely, such as sports, especially during quarantine, but developing countries such as Yemen, and the effects of the ongoing conflict that they suffer from, do not have electricity services, consequently, it is difficult to provide private lessons for a child via Internet”, indicating that it is necessary for parents to purchase stories and books that are appropriate for the child’s age, in order for him to remain attached to reading. Education is important and one should not give in to circumstances.

Playing

The child, Muhammed Saeed, expressed that he started his summer vacation by playing with his peers in the neighborhood, such as ball, running and other games, and he also spends his vacation in his friends’

houses, and plays with them.

What’s Next?

A sociologist, Ashwak Al-Tazi, says that it is necessary to pay attention to the child after the end of the school year in order to ensure the continuation of his mental activity. Parents should also not allow their children to forget education during the vacation period.

She adds that the home atmosphere and parents’ behavior affect children in general, such as if the father or mother reads books, and thus the child will imitate their actions and read books. Therefore, it is necessary for parents to pay attention to their daily behavior and activities, and an older brother can also be tasked with following up on his siblings and discussing some activities.

For her part, Mushira Abdel-Ghani, a kindergarten teacher, suggests that summer camps be set up, at least via the Internet, to renew the mental activity of chil-

dren to keep them linked to the lessons, and make them practice some hobbies such as drawing, planning and other hobbies, and to develop their talents.

As for Salwa Ahmed, a school teacher in Sana’a, she says that it is necessary to establish summer recreational, religious and sports activities that occupy the child during his day and give him many cognitive, scientific, sports and religious skills, which will benefit him in his life and serve his family and society.

Ahmed Taha, who is a guardian, believes that most of what the child does on vacation is to browse the electronic devices that many parents have provided for their children, and often downloads the games and programs that he likes. And here, it is necessary for the parent to intervene in downloading educational programs. The Internet has provided everything, including educational programs that, of course, will greatly help in developing the child’s skills and stimulating the child’s mind. And he adds that the child does not know

what will harm him or what will benefit him, while the parent knows that. Therefore, the concern of any parents will make the child successful and superior, and neglecting some parents will make the child weak in his studies and may flounder in the future because there is no solid foundation upon which to rest, which is education.

This was most of what “Sawt Al-Amal” (Voice of Hope) newspaper noticed during its field visit to check on children during the summer vacation. Some of them do not have sufficient awareness of how to benefit from time, while others have plans. The way remains open for children and parents to make vacation plans, such as specifying what the child will do, or vice versa, for example for the child to determine what he wants in the vacation. The vacation is used to ensure benefit to both parties and to invest time for the benefit of the family and society.





Youth Initiatives for Children

Many youth initiatives in various Yemeni governorates contribute to providing care and attention to children by targeting them with various activities that develop their perceptions and raise their capabilities in various psychological, sports, scientific and artistic fields. These initiatives operate out of the belief in the child's right to live his full childhood with all the rights guaranteed by international and local laws. It operates in a reality full of difficulties and obstacles despite all the challenges imposed by the current circumstances that the country is going through. In this report, we tried to review many youth initiatives that have contributed in some way to children's rights.

By: Hanin Ahmad- Taiz
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Women's Initiatives Conglomerate

Ibtihal Al-Aghbari, the founder of the Women's Initiatives Conglomerate in Taiz, explains that the foundation is implementing a special project for children entitled "The Little Star", which is an ethical, educational and entertaining project aimed at instilling moral values and principles in the depths of children, and includes several programs under the supervision of a group of empowered trainers.

Al-Aghbari reviewed the programs presented to children, including the program "My Talent", which targeted a number of children with the aim of developing their perceptions, their talents and abilities through many activities and games, in addition to stories and educational lessons.

In addition, the "Summer Vacation Program" that was devoted to orphans has also been implemented through intellectual and recreational activities that cultivate the principles of giving in a smooth manner and a pleasant atmosphere, as well as the "The School Bag and Duties" program that targeted needy children and orphans as well.

Regarding current or future activities, Al-Aghbari says, "Within the framework of the programs carried out by the Foundation targeting children mainly, there is a program to receive the month of Ramadan in which orphans from the age of 8 to 10 are targeted to promote the meaning of fasting through the implementation of recreational and educational activities in this context.

Ahmed Nasser, a father of four children, all of whom are students, from Taiz, confirms that despite the difficult living conditions and the country in general, the initiatives have helped covering the needs of his children in schools, by providing them with bags, school supplies, and food, as well as encouraging them to continue their education.

As for Lamia Khaled, Vice President of the General Federation of Yemeni Children (G.F.Y.C.), she explains that the Federation aims to convey the voices of children and their needs to all concerned parties, in the country and abroad, and to all organizations and diplomatic missions in our country.

She adds, "The Federation has implemented many service and development projects, training and advocacy programs, and other projects in several governorates (Sana'a, Aden, Taiz, Ibb, and Hudaydah), where the number of members exceeds 500 from all segments of society represented in: minorities, the blind, Muhamasheen (marginalized), and those with special needs.

The Center of International Humanitarian Law (CIHL)

Najib Al-Maqrabi, Head of the Youth Unit at the Center of International Law and Human Rights (CIHL & HR) in Taiz, says that the center provided a special program for children at the districts level in the governorate, with the support of the Safer world organization, targeting school students by establishing student groups that contribute to spreading peace and coexistence among students.

Also, these student groups carry out other tasks, including activating various scientific and recreational competitions between them

in order to develop their mental and physical skills, refine their abilities, highlight their various talents, and display them on radio stations and theaters at the governorate level.

Recreational Events and Festivals

Ghaith Youth Initiative, operating in Sana'a, is a voluntary initiative founded by a group of young people with common aspirations. This initiative contributed to embodying the values of volunteering and strengthening them, raising community awareness, and helping children in the first place.

Ahmed Amin Al-Ariqi, Marketing Officer and General Coordinator of the Initiative, says: "We have provided many activities targeting children in different places. Festivals and events were held for orphans, children of cancer patients and kidney failure with the aim of recreation and providing them with financial or moral assistance, as well as providing treatment for some of them".

Al-Ariqi continued by saying, "We have tended to help children because they are the weakest segment and the most affected by the current situation that the country is going through. And it is a segment that is unable to express and help itself. However, we notice shortcomings in extending a

helping hand and delivering real aid to deserving children. Therefore, we, along with many initiatives, seek to their assistance as required".

Regarding the difficulties facing youth work, especially those working in the field of childhood, he says: "There are many obstacles that stop us most of the time, and nevertheless, we continue our volunteering and youth work with enthusiasm. Perhaps the permits that are extracted for the establishment of such events and activities are among the most important obstacles facing our work, as well as the weakness of the support we receive from donors, so most of the activities take place with personal effort from those in charge of the initiatives, and this consumes a lot of time and effort".

Educational Projects and Aid for Children

The "Hope Youth Initiative" is located in Taiz and implements many projects for children in a number of fields.

Ruqaya Al-Sufi, Executive Director of Hope Youth Initiative, says: "We have presented several projects related to children, such as the Summer Center project supported by: The Women's Initiatives Conglomerate, Arqa Foundation, Takaful Foundation and Alfajre Al Gaded National Schools. The project aims to provide educational lessons for children in summer vacation, teaching them different skills and activities, such as religious lessons, the Holy Quran, methods of reading, spelling and mathematics, and developing their skills in various sports.

Within the framework of the projects presented by Hope Youth Initiative, the project of Psychological Support for Children was presented, which was supported by the Women's Initiatives Conglomerate Group through presenting an integrated program on children's psychology and impression, and giving them lessons about the future in how to face challenges and enhance their

creativity in various fields.

Ruqaya Al-Sufi continued, "The project of distributing school bags, and the Eid clothing targeting the children of poor families, after needy families were restricted to a specific range and then the distribution was completed. There are also many activities that are implemented, such as the distribution of gifts for children, and gathering the children to hold sports matches between them, and crown the winners with medals and gifts aimed at improving their psyche, teaching them to accept winning and losing in a sporting spirit, and respecting each other while playing.

As for the difficulties facing youth initiatives working in the field of childhood, she says, "The difficulties facing any project are the lack of sufficient support for the proposed project and its failure to present it in its complete and planned form, thus reducing the number of beneficiaries from those in need to the most needy ones. Despite that children need a lot of projects, thus due to the lack of support, many projects have been postponed or stopped, or are being implemented but were not at the required level".

Projects for Children with Cancer

Sumou Initiative, located in Taiz, is a youth initiative that provided several humanitarian aids, including a special project for children with cancer.

Afnan Qaid, a member of Sumou Initiative, says: "The project is an entertainment for children with cancer, carried out through the work of recreational events, festivals to make them happy, gifts and clothes offered to them, and bazaars and small projects implemented, the proceeds of which are for the families of needy children, and sewing machines provided for mothers to cooperate with them".

As for the difficulties, she notes that the lack of financial support is the biggest obstacle for them, and she adds, "We depend on the financial support that we provide as members of the initiative and from some benefactors", stressing that the initiative will continue to work with all its energies to draw a smile on the faces of children and their parents, challenging all obstacles to charitable work.

Sofia, a 45-year-old woman from Taiz governorate, says, "My daughter Abeer suffers from Leukemia, and our financial conditions are difficult and the costs of illness are high.

And she affirms that the initiatives cannot cover the medical costs we need, but they are working hard to provide us with a source of income, and to bring joy to the hearts of our children".



12.2 Million Yemeni Children in Need of Humanitarian Assistance

Special reports revealed that 1.71 million children have been displaced due to the current situation, and they are in urgent need of health, food and education, according to the report issued by UNICEF in the year 2020 AD. The report, of which "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) obtained a copy, indicated that 12.2 million Yemeni children are in urgent need of humanitarian aid in a country that is classified as among the worst countries for children in the world, which required a quick response and interfering of many organizations to offer assistance and save Yemeni children from hunger, poverty, ignorance and death, and implementing a number of projects targeting children despite the difficulties that these organizations are facing.



By: Alia Muhammed
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

Ahmed Al-Qurashi, head of the Seyaj Organization for Childhood Protection, says, "The Seyaj organization has taken care of a large number of children's issues in Yemen, and has worked to confront violations and crimes that affect the rights of the child". He affirms on "the continuity of work despite the current circumstances, which will not be an obstacle to providing support and protection for children".

Response to the Yemeni Children

UNICEF kept providing support for the continuation of primary health care services for children, and according to its report issued in January 2021 AD, vaccination campaigns were implemented in 14 governorates, and a total of 3.8 million doses of polio vaccine were provided to the country in January 2021 AD.

UNICEF continued to ensure the provision of routine immunization vaccines throughout the country, and provide the third dose of the pentavalent vaccine, and the first dose of the measles vaccine. In fact, a total of 33,785 and 30,612 children received these vaccines, respectively.

UNICEF also supported 208 centers out of a total of 321 dehydration centers, and 35 centers out of a total of 234 diarrhea treatment centers in 68 districts of 11 governorates.

Education Sector

Within the framework of the educational support project for girls and boys affected by the conflict, UNICEF continued to implement its multi-track strategy to ensure the continuity of education, which was among its most prominent projects for children in Yemen. (30) classrooms were rebuilt, and (48) classrooms were rehabili-

tated in each of the directorates of Abs and Mustaba in Hajjah governorate, and the Abs Foundation for Women and Child Development project was implemented.

Aisha Thawab, the chairperson of the Abs foundation, says, "The association, which was founded in 1996, aims to improve the lives of women and children, and works directly on child issues by providing health, educational and psychological support by providing advice and guidance on how to feed, raise and deal with the child".

She asserts: "The child is the future of this nation, so we are keen on establishing it in a sound manner, as we have opened the Child Club to take care of his behavior and rehabilitate him in various fields, in addition to working with the "Reflect" approach (the phonetic method for teaching curricula) that facilitates the education of students in primary grades".

She indicated the importance of child-friendly spaces that were among the projects targeted for them. In fact, there are more than 45 friendly spaces, funded by UNICEF, the Norwegian Refugee Council and other financiers.

Developing Children's Skills

In 2019, the Wujoooh Foundation for Media and Development trained 20 children, boys and girls, in writing humanitarian stories in four governorates: Sana'a, Aden, Al-Hudaydah, and Lahj, through a funding from UNICEF.

On the goals of training for children, Mansour Al-Jaradi, the chairperson of the Wujoooh Foundation, says that the aim of the training is to familiarize children with the importance of caring for childhood issues, such as early marriage, displacement and violence. Training began on how to write the humanitarian story, and then the stories that had been worked on were selected and taken to the field to be photographed,

thus 20 childhood stories written by children were produced, the purpose of which was to shed light on childhood suffering in Yemen.

Al-Jaradi indicated that the idea was inspiring to many, and the suffering of children was presented in events outside Yemen for a large number of international organizations.

Yasmine Al-Basir, one of the participants in the humanitarian story writing project implemented by Wujoooh Foundation, reviews her experience in participating in the project, saying, "The starting point was to hone my skills in the art of writing, which made me more aware of children's stories and their issues, and how important it is to highlight and present these issues for everyone", she added, "I began to be interested in writing stories about children with needs and marginalized ones. I focused on success and inspiring stories".

And she confirms that a large number of the participating children have started preparing and filming a number of childhood documentaries after the completion of the project. This is a good step for advocating children's issues in Yemen.

Child Protection

In January 2020, 67,780 people affected by the conflict benefited from UNICEF programs, including 59,939 children, 49% of which were girls, and 7,841 adults, 42% of which were women.

Awareness-raising activities on mine risks were provided in schools and child-friendly spaces, in Taiz Governorate, as well as through community campaigns with the exercise of precautionary measures to prevent Coronavirus

This project aimed to support children to overcome the immediate and long-term effects of their exposure to violence and trauma. UNICEF provided psychosocial support services to 20,400 people, including 15,417 children, of whom 7,890 were girls and 7,527 boys, through a network of fixed and mobile child-friendly spaces in seven governorates.

Through its Case Management Program, UNICEF continued to support the case and provide vital services to children, including facilitating access to life-saving health services, educational services, legal services, and other protection services.

In January as well, the qualified case managers identified 755 children, of whom 276 girls and 479 boys, among them 690 children, of whom 234 girls and 456 boys, received more than one service.

Um Omro says that her son benefited from the support provided by UNICEF to complete his education in the primary stage by providing him with school meals that were given to students in schools, and a bag and school supplies. This was helpful to them, given the difficult conditions they are going through due to the current situation in the country.

She added that there is a large number of students who used to go to school without even having a daily allowance, while some of them did not have the school supplies due to the increasing poverty and the high cost of living, and that is why these projects carried out by organizations contribute, even in a small way, to the continuation of children studies naturally.

In the same context, the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) has fully

participated in the humanitarian project cycle, ensuring that child protection needs are appropriately reported in the Humanitarian Needs Overview document.

Challenges and Difficulties

By December 31st, 2020, UNICEF faced a shortfall in funding for the Humanitarian Action for Children program, which amounted to 29%, according to the reports we obtained from the organization's media center. For his part, Ahmed Al-Qurashi says, "The work of Seyaj Children's Organization has declined due to the lack of support and funding for some projects. We are now in a bad situation, and the needs have increased, which affected the work of some organizations".

While Aisha Thawab points out that one of the most important difficulties faced by the Abs Development Foundation and some humanitarian organizations in Yemen is the difficulty of accessing cases due to the conflict. There are areas in the conflict circle where cases cannot be reached, in addition to the fact that a large number of victims have died while carrying out humanitarian work.

She added, "The panic that existed between people and governmental agencies constituted an obstacle to our work, and the coordination to provide assistance needed a lot of time so that we could work after approval, which contributed to the loss of a number of projects that were not implemented on time". She explained that the pressure on local organizations is great and requires a lot of understanding and facilitation of work mechanisms so that aid is provided to the largest number of people possible.

People with Visual Impairments in Yemen between Hope and Pain

By: Mona Al-Assaadi
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

People with visual impairments, especially children, face a number of difficulties, as they are the groups that civil society organizations have little interest in. Perhaps the only advantage is that young people with blindness are not subjected to widespread bullying from society, because they were able to impose themselves and integrate into the society with their intelligence and excellence in many areas. This is what Ahmed Al-Falahi, the director of housing at Al-Noor Center for the Blind, stated in the press interview that "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) conducted with him. Here are all the details of the conversation...

At the beginning, tell us about the Al-Noor Center for the Blind.

- Al-Noor Center for the Blind is a governmental facility, established in 1978 in Sana'a, and it is

a center for the education and rehabilitation of boys with blindness. The center includes many sectors that all meet under one goal, which is to provide the best services to its blind students who flock to it from all governorates of the Republic of Yemen, whether for study, housing or study only. The center includes 200 students from the residents of the city of Sana'a. It provides them with buses that pick them up from their homes to the center for studies in the early morning, and then drop them off at their homes at noon.

The center also includes 180 students from different governorates of the Republic. It provides them with internal housing and full care, such as food, clothes and other services.

The center's students are divided into three sections: the primary and the elementary section of which students study in the same center. The secondary section, where its students study at Yasser Al-Qadimi School, formerly

Ibn Majed, while the third section includes blind students who are late in their studies, and they study in Ebsar Literacy Center which is affiliated to the Yemeni Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of the Blind.

What are the age groups that the center accommodates?

- The age groups that the center accommodates are children from the age of 7 to 18 years old, from grade 1 to grade 12.

What activities does the center offer for its blind students?

- The center takes care of various activities, including sports activities for the blind such as bell ball, tug of war, chess, running and other sports activities. The center also takes care of various cultural activities such as weekly cultural evenings to discover and develop students' talents. It takes care of other activities as well such as theater, poetry and presentation. It organizes entertainment programs (open day) in the

form of internal and external broadcasts, classroom and extracurricular activities, entertaining scientific trips and other activities that the center provides to its students with visual impairment.

What are the difficulties that face blind children?

- At the present time, we can say that the greatest difficulty facing the blind is the scarcity of resources that lead to depriving them of most of their rights, in addition to the community's lack of knowledge of how to deal with the blind people.

Are blind people exposed to social bullying?

- A little bit, but the distinction of the blind and their excellence in various fields, made them able to impose themselves, and also strengthened their self-confidence.

What are the difficulties facing the center?

- Al-Noor Center for the Blind is facing severe difficulties that lie in the

scarcity of capabilities and the lack of its resources offset by the large number of students affiliated to it, which leads to its shortage in many times and thus stop of some of the most important activities of the center, such as the buses to transport blind children to and from the center due to the recurrent oil derivatives crisis, as well as the cessation of some recreational center activities, which negatively affects their mental health. There is also a great shortage of medicines, and no integrated health unit for the blind.

What message would you like to send through "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope)?

- The message that we would like to send through "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) is to the organizations and benefactors to support such bodies and pay more attention to them, and to make them one of the most important future projects because the blind people are the most in need of support and rehabilitation.





Dr. Fathia Muhammed

Childhood and Conflict

The age stage, from birth to 18, is one of the most important stages affecting the personalities of individuals, so it is necessary for the surroundings to support a normal upbringing free from psychological, social and economic disturbances that negatively affect the personalities of children in the future, as they are the nucleus of sustainable development for the future of the country. How can we promote sustainable development without the intellectually and psychologically human resources?

Global statistics indicate that about 142 million children in the world live in conflict areas, where the percentage of physical violations such as murder, maiming, recruitment and sexual violence reached 74%, and in 2019 the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that 17% of children in conflict areas suffer from various mental disorders.

Children in conflict areas are exposed to many violations and crises, and experience that leave negative effects on the near and far levels, as frightening and bad situations.

In addition, conflict areas such as Yemen are hotspots for the spread of infectious diseases such as malaria, cholera, dengue fever, diphtheria, chikungunya and malnutrition, with the emergence of diseases that have disappeared decades ago, such as polio, and this is a result of poor health care and lack of health and food security resulting from the continuation of the armed conflict, as many families are forced to leave their homes located in conflict areas to other areas and live in tents or in the open, which are unsuitable areas for housing. This in turn affects the lives of children as they lose many opportunities for a decent life and their necessary rights. There are no opportunities for basic services, as there are no schools, no hospitals, no clean sources of water and no healthy nutrition, in addition to their exposure in the areas of displacement to many abnormal behaviors, including physical harassment or sexual assault, mixing with many normal and abnormal people and their acquisition of many behaviors, some of which may affect the life path of these children in a negative way and lead to their deviation.

The images of armed conflict are clearly deepening at the cultural level of children, as the remnants of cultural conflicts leave a profound impact on the psychology and behavior of children and their reflection on their personalities and their future, such as the culture of bearing arms. Even in playing, violence, aggression, conflict and vandalism appear and are being used to beat, expressing nervousness and intensity of emotions in dealing with others. This negatively affects their behavior in the future.

Conflicts lead to poverty and deprivation of the family breadwinner, or the source of the family's livelihood, which pushes many children to go out to work in workplaces that are not commensurate with their ages or their physical capabilities, such as carrying weights and working on sharp machines, and this affects their psychological health because what they do is not commensurate with the requirements of their physical and psychological development stage, and the practice of these activities sometimes leads to their disability that may accompany them for life, or health problems that will affect them in the future. They may also be physically exploited in return for providing an amount of money for their families, or to attract them as mediators in the distribution of drugs that they may use and make them suffer from chronic diseases, or disabilities for life.

The most dangerous negative forms of conflict are evident in family instability, as the family is the primary concern in caring for children, for family instability and family insecurity in its integrated sense (family - home - family breadwinner - source of livelihood) means psychological disorders. In addition, the child's life is socially affected by the loss of the family breadwinner, one of the parents or one of the relatives or friends, or by viewing pictures of the dead and exhuming the bodies, and this causes them to suffer from chronic anxiety, phobia and fear of loss.

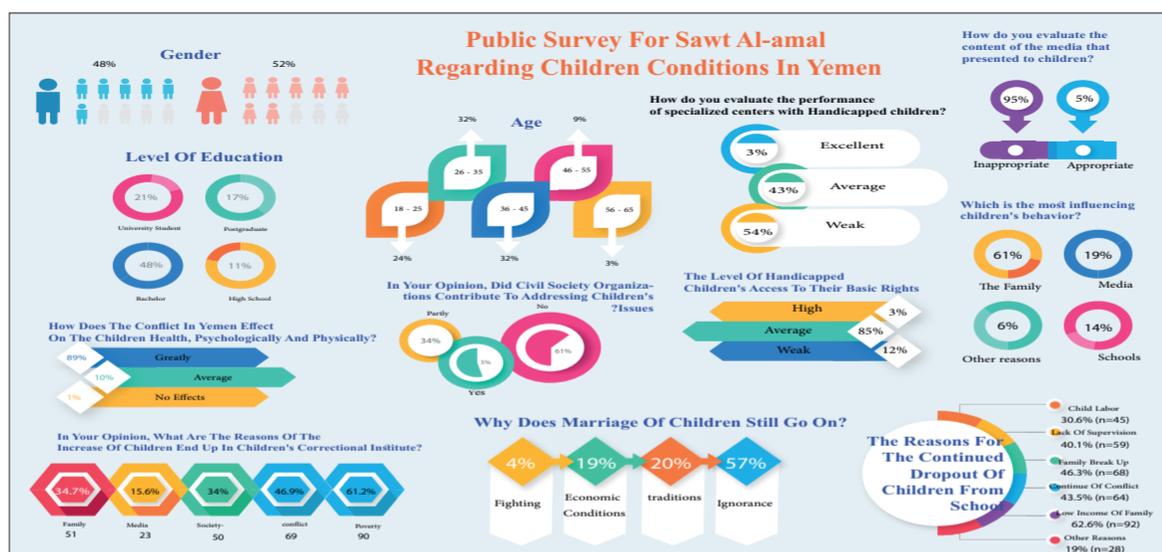


89% Affirm the Continuing Impact of the Conflict on Children's Health and Psyche

89% of the citizens in the various governorates of the Republic of Yemen confirmed that the health and psychology of children have been affected as a result of the ongoing conflict in Yemen.

This figured in the results of the public opinion poll carried out by the Information and Public Opinion Poll Unit of the Yemen Information Center for Research and Media on the situation of children in Yemen and the extent of their vulnerability to conflict.

The poll, which targeted 52% of males and 48% of females of different age groups and educational levels, indicated that the family upbringing is more influential on children's behaviors and lives by 61% compared to the media, which influence reaches 19%. And 95% of citizens believe that much of what is shown through programs and the media is not suitable for children. As for the opinions of 85% of citizens, they affirmed that the level of access of children with disabilities to their basic rights is medium rather than high, where 54% believe that the treatment level of specialized centers staff with people with disabilities is weak.



The special poll conducted by "Sawt Al-Amal" (Voice of Hope) also indicated that among the reasons for the continued dropout of children from schools is the weakness of family income, which has been affected by the deteriorating economic situation in

Yemen by 62.6%, and that poverty is one of the reasons for the increase in the percentage of children entering juvenile centers by 61.2%, followed by the ongoing conflict which represents 46.9%. In fact, 57% of the citizens believe that ignorance is the most

common cause facing the Yemeni society regarding the issue of underage marriage, while 61% of those who answered the poll questions believe that local and international organizations have not contributed to effectively addressing children's issues.

"Rooh" Inspects Children with Tumors

By: Mona Al-Assaadi
Sawt Al-Amal (Voice of Hope)

A group of youth affiliated with the Rooh initiative made a field visit to the oncology section at Al-Jamhuri Hospital in Sana'a to decorate it celebrating the advent of the Holy Month of Ramadan, and to distribute gifts to children with tumors inside the section.

Duha Al-Salhi, the head of the initiative, explained that this activity comes within the many activities that Rooh initiative has been carrying out for three years, which includes 60 volunteers among them youth who believe in the

importance and effectiveness of volunteering in society.

For his part, Amjad Al-Shami, a member of the Rooh initiative, explained that there will be weekly visits to the section throughout the month of Ramadan, in which breakfast meals and fruit baskets will be distributed targeting all 140 patients with tumors in the center, adding that there is another drop in the name of "Kasawti Campaign" (dressing me campaign) will be implemented by the initiative at the end of Ramadan for the third year in a row, and it will target all children with tumors within the department.

Al-Shami stresses that these efforts

are self-funded and voluntary. As the volunteering work team, during its recent visit that targeted the oncology section, has formed a financial committee, and collected money from the volunteers themselves, and is appealing to businessmen and organizations interested in children's rights to support youth initiatives in order to be able to continue their volunteer work.

Youssef Al-Adimi, a 20-year-old volunteer in the initiative, says that for him, volunteering is an escape from the pressures of life and a refuge from the ghost of emptiness, adding that he feels endlessly happy when he sees the smile of people, especially the children who

