



DT Institute



Children Without Protection

A Human Rights Report Documenting Violations

Against Marginalized Children in Yemen

(Investigative Report)

Within SAFE II Project

**implemented by INSAF Center for
Rights and Development with support from the DT Institute**

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Background of INSAF Center

INSAF Center for Rights and Development is a Yemeni non-governmental organization established in 2019 under license number (381) from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor in Yemen. The center has an independent legal personality and operates in the areas of human rights and sustainable development.

INSAF Center for Rights and Development conducts various programs aimed at promoting human rights and sustainable development, with a special focus on protecting minorities and marginalized groups in Yemen. Its programs include awareness campaigns that aim to educate communities about religious freedom and freedom of opinion and expression, as well as initiatives to enhance the capacity of local activists and stakeholders in human rights, peace, and civic engagement.

The center also implements specialized training programs, such as workshops for judges and media professionals on combating cyber-extortion and gender-based digital violence, in collaboration with international organizations including USAID, DT Institute, Freedom House, and, most recently, the French Embassy. Among its most prominent creative activities is the "Cinema for Peace" project, which presents traveling cinematic screenings for children in poor areas, to spread the values of coexistence and peace through effective artistic tools.

The center's work extends to participating in international forums, where it seeks to integrate women's and minority issues into global discussions on security, peace, and artificial intelligence, reflecting a strategic dimension in expanding its impact locally and internationally.

More issued reports



About DT Institute

DT Institute is a nonprofit organization committed to "doing development differently." We implement complex global development programs in conflict-affected, fragile, and closed environments. We also fund thought leadership initiatives that spur innovation and improve people's lives through evidence-based programs. The DT Institute partners with communities and leaders to help build and sustain more resilient, equitable, inclusive, and democratic societies.

DT Institute's Mission

DT Institute partners with communities and leaders to help build and sustain more resilient, just, inclusive, and democratic societies.

About the project to support awareness, facilitate and enhance the implementation of children's rights in the context of the Yemeni conflict (SAFE II)

The Supporting Awareness, Facilitating Enforcement of Children's Rights in the Yemeni Conflict (SAFE II) program, implemented by DT Institute in partnership with Yemeni human rights organizations, seeks to unify efforts to protect Yemeni children from serious human rights violations during armed conflict by increasing local and international recognition of their rights and promoting accountability for perpetrators. SAFE seeks to achieve this through civic education campaigns targeting communities and victims to enable safe reporting of grave violations; documenting and investigating these violations to shape dialogues on justice and accountability with international stakeholders using reliable evidence; and initiating dialogue among Yemeni justice stakeholders on the protection of children from grave violations during and after the conflict.

Executive Summary

This report, issued by the INSAF Center for Rights and Development, offers comprehensive documentation and detailed analysis of serious violations against marginalized and displaced children in Yemen, amid a conflict that has lasted for over a decade. Field violence overlaps with deep-rooted patterns of systematic social discrimination against this group. This discrimination shows itself in widespread denial of education, healthcare, and legal protection, increasing their vulnerability and making them easy targets for repeated violations.

The report covers the period from June 2019 to February 2025, monitoring violations in six Yemeni governorates: Aden and Lahj (controlled by the internationally recognized government) and Dhamar, Hodeida, Amran, and Sana'a (controlled by Ansar Allah/Houthi group). The documentation process relied on field visits; direct interviews with victims, their families, and witnesses; as well as follow-up on cases with the police and courts. It also involved coordination with national and international bodies, including the Ministry of Human Rights, the National Committee to Investigate Allegations of Human Rights Violations, and international organizations such as UNICEF, Save the Children, and the Geneva Call. It is natural that the collected data show a larger number of documented cases in the areas under the control of the internationally recognized legitimate government (Aden and Lahj), as a result of methodological and practical factors and not necessarily as an indicator of the actual scale of violations on the ground. The easier and safer access for international and local media and human rights organizations to these areas, compared to the strict restrictions and more restrictive environment in the areas under Houthi control, creates a significant documentation gap. Moreover, the lower perceived risk of persecution in the "legitimate" areas encourages victims and witnesses to report, while fear of retaliation imposes a culture of silence in the other areas.

Monitoring Framework

The report is based on the six grave violations against children as stipulated in Security Council Resolution (1999) 1261:¹

1. Killing and mutilation.

2. Sexual assault.

3. Abduction.

4. Recruitment and use of children.

5. Attacks on schools and hospitals.

6. Denial of humanitarian access.

The extent and nature of documented violations

During the monitoring period, 45 cases of grave violations against marginalized and displaced children were documented: 22 marginalized children.

23 displaced children.

5 of these documented cases were dual (marginalized and displaced together) and 4 involved children with special needs.

By gender:

12 females: 8 cases of sexual assault (one of whom was killed after the assault), 2 cases of kidnapping, 1 case of physical assault, and 1 case of denial of humanitarian aid.

33 males: 8 cases of sexual assault or harassment, 21 cases of, and 4 cases of kidnapping, some of which were accompanied by injury or death.

The documented violations took place in six governorates: Aden, Lahj, Hodeida, Dhamar, Amran, and Sana'a. Twenty-eight cases were recorded in areas under the control of the Yemeni government and 17 in areas under the control of the Houthi group, confirming that the targeting of children is not limited to a specific region or party.

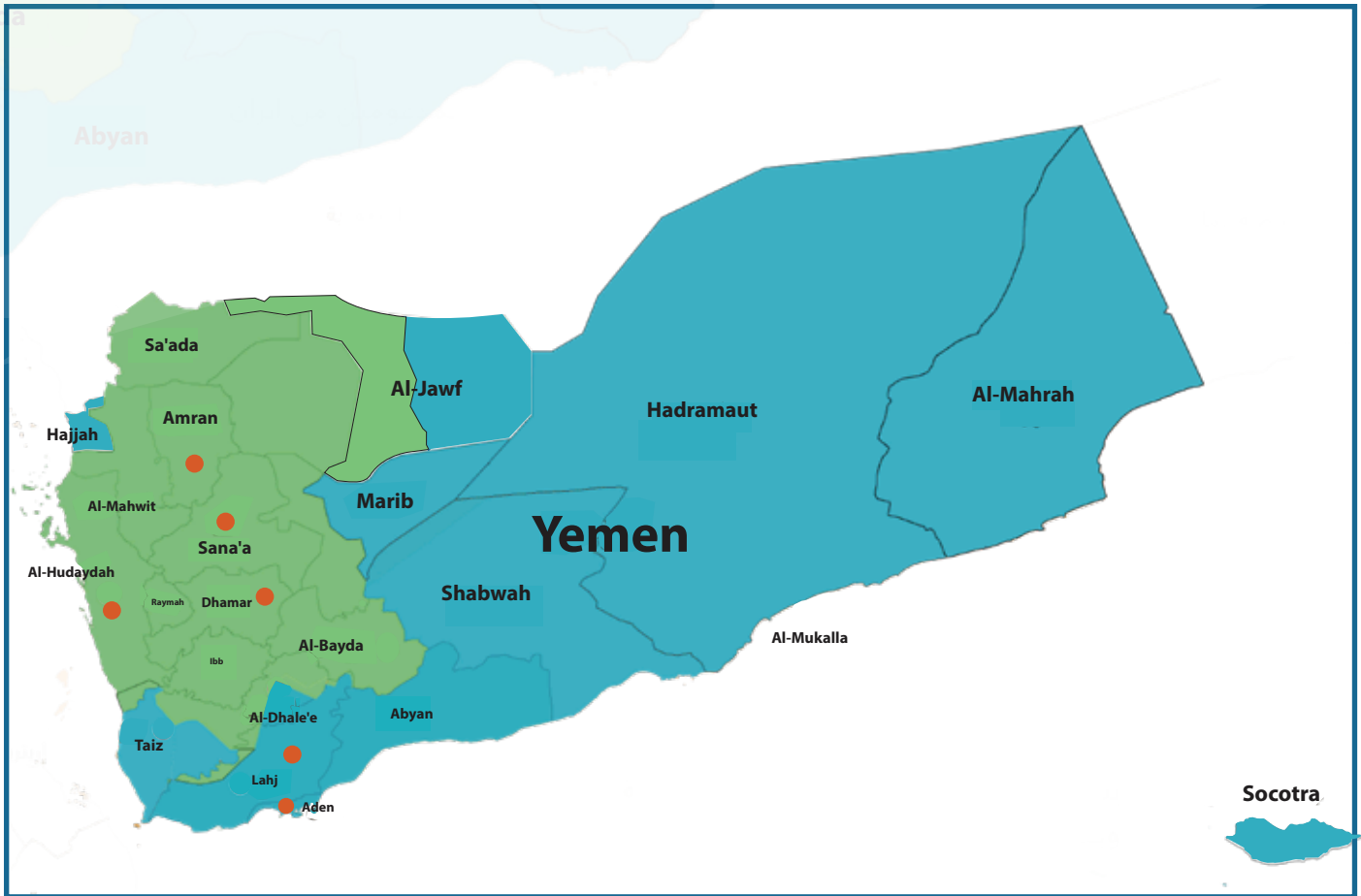
The cases were distributed among military formations affiliated with the legitimate government or parties linked to it, in addition to unidentified actors, while the facts—consistent with other international reports—show that the Houthi group remains the party most responsible for violations, and the most dangerous in terms of their scale and patterns. Some cases were also recorded as being committed by relatives, local residents, and unidentified groups.

These findings do not measure the scale of violations as much as they primarily reflect the ability to document and report them. This requires interpreting the data within the context of these logistical and security challenges, rather than as a measure of the relative weight of violations between the two sides.

Observed patterns

- Most of the cases monitored in this report by the INSAF Center for Rights and Development involved dropping out of school and inability to obtain education due to displacement from war zones to safe areas and because their families did not take their children's official documents with them to the displacement areas. The report shows that 25 children of school age, representing %58, were not enrolled in school. Three of these children were younger than school age, representing %7. About %35 of the children are enrolled in education in the displacement areas. This is due to the instability in the host communities, in addition to lack of financial resources to meet basic needs, which have forced children to work and go out in search of a source of livelihood for themselves and their families, exposing them to the risk of violations.
- In addition to displacement and school dropouts, poverty and the absence or inability of a breadwinner played a significant role in most of the observed violations. These factors pushed children onto the streets in search of a livelihood, exposing them to the risk of assault, kidnapping, and other abuses. They also pushed families to accept the recruitment of their minor children. The lack of family guidance and ongoing support for children also makes them vulnerable to extremist groups that exploit them for military or other purposes.
- The conflict has reinforced the control and misuse of power by some, giving them the right (from their point of view) to violate the rights of others, especially vulnerable children, marginalized women, and those who are still viewed with contempt by society. Some perpetrators belong to influential figures within both the legitimate government and the Houthi group (Ansar Allah), complicating accountability and exposing victims and their families to threats.
- The monitoring results showed that the violations were distributed between official and unofficial parties. Although the military formations affiliated with the legitimate government emerged as responsible for 28 cases (more than %62 of the total documented cases), this number does not necessarily reflect the actual scale of violations on the ground, as the monitoring and documentation conditions in areas under the control of Ansar Allah (the Houthis) are more difficult and complex than in the government areas. The team concerned also documented 8 grave violations attributed to the Houthis, including forced recruitment, physical assaults, and deprivation of education, which are practices that constitute a clear breach of international humanitarian law and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.² The violations committed by the various parties include child recruitment, abuse of power, and sexual assaults against minors, where 9 cases were monitored involving relatives or unidentified groups, reflecting the fragility of community protection in displacement areas or areas outside the control of the state.
- Support from human rights organizations and civil society organizations has declined through ongoing awareness-raising and rehabilitation programs aimed at educating the community and parents about the dangers of child exploitation and the violation of their rights. The role of these organizations has been limited to providing relief. There is also a lack of networking with relevant bodies concerned with human and child rights, especially in marginalized and displaced communities, which face numerous challenges in integrating and engaging with society.

Map illustrating the governorates covered by the monitoring of the six grave violations



The report concludes with some recommendations to the authorities concerned with the rights of marginalized and displaced children in Yemen, such as the Ministry of Human Rights, the National Committee for Investigating Allegations of Human Rights Violations, human rights organizations, civil society organizations, judicial and security authorities, and international organizations concerned with children's rights, in accordance with international charters, treaties, agreements, and national laws that support children's rights

Recommendationst:

1- Ensuring equitable and non-discriminatory access to basic services, including education, healthcare, and legal protection, for children from marginalized and poor families, particularly in conflict-affected areas.

2- Integrating the needs of marginalized children into recovery and reconstruction plans.

3- Allocating sufficient resources to design interventions that take into account the social, economic, and developmental dimensions of their situation.

4- Strengthening protection for victims and communicating with supporting international organizations, such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF, Geneva Call, and Save the Children, and providing legal and safe protection for families, eyewitnesses, and the victims themselves.

5- Providing urgent psychological and social support to the victims and the affected families, as negative trauma symptoms or reactions, such as fear, anxiety, and lack of integration, have a significant impact on their daily lives.

6- Pressuring the conflicting parties to stop all child recruitment, in line with international standards, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, the Statute of the International Criminal Court, and ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. International standards include prohibiting the recruitment of children and the use of children in combat; setting a minimum age for mandatory and voluntary recruitment; and adoption of rehabilitation and reintegration, accountability, and protection principles.

7- Establishing an independent and transparent accountability mechanism for violations committed by all parties to the conflict, particularly military formations, with the power to conduct public investigations, protect witnesses and victims, and ensure that there is no impunity.

8- Restructuring and unifying military and security formations within official state institutions under professional and legal standards, subjecting their personnel to mandatory courses in humanitarian law and human rights, and ensuring their separation from any political or economic influence in the areas they control.

9- Raising awareness of the local community about the dangers of child recruitment and legal alternatives to protect them economically and socially. Enhance local community's awareness of the dangers of exploiting places of worship and public institutions for military or partisan purposes. Additionally, call on civil society organizations concerned with the rights of minorities and marginalized people to develop awareness-raising programs and to monitor communities vulnerable to recruitment.

Introduction

Children, especially marginalized and displaced ones, are among the most vulnerable and targeted during armed conflicts, because they heavily rely on others for their basic needs, lack essential elements for a safe life, and cannot take steps to protect themselves. In Yemen, these children face a tragic situation worsened by the ongoing war and its various actors.

The protection of children in armed conflict has been a priority on the international agenda since the United Nations General Assembly encouraged gathering information about their situation and strengthening international cooperation to safeguard them. In 1999, the Security Council adopted the first resolution on children and armed conflict³, recognizing six severe violations. This was followed in 2005⁴ by the creation of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism to systematically track and document these violations. These violations are the focus of efforts by many local and international organizations, working together with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Virginia Gamba.

In March 2025, the UN Secretary-General issued his report on the situation of children in Yemen for the period from January 2021 to December 2023⁵, documenting 5,539 grave violations against 2,422 children (1,997 boys and 425 girls). Denial of humanitarian aid ranked first with 2,806 cases, followed by killing and maiming with 1,941 cases, and recruitment and use with 564 cases. Regarding the parties responsible, %51 of the violations were attributed to Ansar Allah group (Houthis), %27 to unidentified perpetrators, %18 to the Yemeni Armed Forces and affiliated groups, and %3 to the Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen. The report also recorded 1,352 children injured by explosive ordnance, calling on the parties to the conflict to intensify their efforts in the field of landmine action.

These findings align with data from Yemeni human rights organizations. The Yemeni Coalition to Monitor Human Rights Violations recorded 127 violations between April 2022 and December 2023 across 13 governorates. According to the coalition, killing and maiming were the most common violations, caused by the excessive use of weapons, especially by the Houthi group.

Child recruitment was also a disturbing issue, fueled by families' economic hardships and propaganda aimed at influencing minors. The coalition noted that fear of social stigma often prevents reporting of sexual violence. About 26,000 children were affected by attacks on schools and hospitals and the denial of humanitarian aid, especially in areas controlled by the Houthi group.⁶

This report, issued by the INSAF Center for Rights and Development, documents and analyzes the most significant violations against marginalized and displaced children amid the internal conflict, as the center is one of the unofficial parties involved in monitoring and reporting efforts. The report also references specialized human rights sources, such as the Arab Reform Initiative's report (April 2024) on "Activism among Marginalized Communities and Combating Discrimination in Yemen"⁷. The Equal Rights Foundation's report (December 2018), titled "Sifting the Grain: 6,000 Testimonies of Discrimination and Inequality in Yemen," is also utilized.⁸

The report reviews the totality of grave violations documented by the INSAF Center, including sexual violence, killing and maiming, recruitment, abduction, and denial of humanitarian aid. Each section presents a summary of the researchers' and monitors' findings, followed by case studies and legal analysis. The report concludes with a set of recommendations addressed to the parties to the conflict, human rights organizations, and UN agencies, aimed at reducing violations against children and mitigating their impact.

Report Methodology

Monitoring and Documentation Methodology

INSAF Center for Rights and Development selected six researchers to conduct this study. They received training on monitoring and documentation standards, human rights, and gross violations of children's rights. Data collection forms were developed for the research process, according to the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism established by the Security Council in 2005.⁹ The data includes the victim's name, gender, age, educational status, the date the case was monitored, the date the incident occurred, the child's previous and current residence, and the child's social background (as they are marginalized and displaced). The researchers also gather details of the incident, including the perpetrator and their affiliation, if any; the justification for the violation; and subsequent measures taken, such as reporting the violation to official authorities (judicial and police), reasons for not reporting, and other relevant information following the incident.

Forty-five cases of both genders were monitored with informed consent from the victim, their parent, or their first-degree relative, outlining the purpose and method of handling the collected data. The team followed an ethical approach to monitoring and documentation to ensure the best possible privacy for the child and the safety of their families, and witnesses included in the reports. Victims were identified by pseudonyms to protect their identities and information.

The INSAF Center for Rights and Development relied on field monitoring as the primary method of gathering information. The research team traveled to the targeted areas in the six governorates covered by the study and conducted face-to-face interviews with most of the victims, their relatives, peers, and eyewitnesses from their areas. The research team conducted these interviews between November 2024 and May 2025. Some cases required follow-up at police stations or courts. INSAF Center also relied on reports and information published in open sources about violations, as well as statements published by parties to the conflict and organizations and stakeholders concerned with children, particularly marginalized children.

Note on Documentation Limitations:

It should be noted that the ability of INSAF team to document violations in areas under the control of the Houthis group is limited, due to restrictions on access, security risks, and the obstruction of independent monitoring in those areas. Therefore, the figures and percentages cited in this report do not necessarily reflect the full reality on the ground; rather, they only represent the cases that the team was able to document in the targeted locations and within the specified timeframe.

Despite these limitations, the available evidence including cases documented by the team, comparisons with human rights violations databases, and reports issued by the United Nations confirms that the Houthis group is classified as one of the main perpetrators of violations against children's rights in Yemen. International monitoring reports also indicate that the proportion of violations attributed to the Houthis often exceeds those attributed to other parties to the conflict.

Accordingly, the findings presented in this report reflect the scope of what could be verified and documented, and are consistent with other independent reports.

Concepts and Terms

Victim: According to General Assembly resolution 40/34¹⁰, a victim is defined as a person who has suffered individual or collective harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss, or substantial deprivation of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that constitute a violation of the criminal laws in force in Member States, including laws criminalizing criminal abuse of power. A child who has been subjected to any of the six grave violations is also called a victim.

Child: A child is defined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in child-friendly language as “a person under the age of eighteen years,” unless national laws define him or her by an earlier legal age.¹¹

The Six Grave Violations: Violations covered by relevant Security Council resolutions¹², namely killing, maiming, recruitment and use of children, sexual violence, abductions, attacks on schools and hospitals, and denial of humanitarian access.

The Houthis: This name refers to Ansar Allah group, which controls Sana'a and several governorates in northern Yemen. It is a political movement that originated in Saada Governorate and gained influence in Yemeni circles due to the discourse of its founder, Hussein Al-Houthi, to whom the Houthis are affiliated. Its ideological roots go back to its origins as part of the Zaidi sect, an offshoot of Shiite Islam, which, from a jurisprudential perspective, is closest to Sunni Islam.

The Yemeni Government: The internationally recognized government led by the Presidential Leadership Council, headed by Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi.

Verifying the Perpetrator and Evaluating Evidence

INSAF Center sought to identify the perpetrator, determine his identity, the party to which he is affiliated among the conflicting parties, the means he used to commit the violation, and the background and motives of the crime.

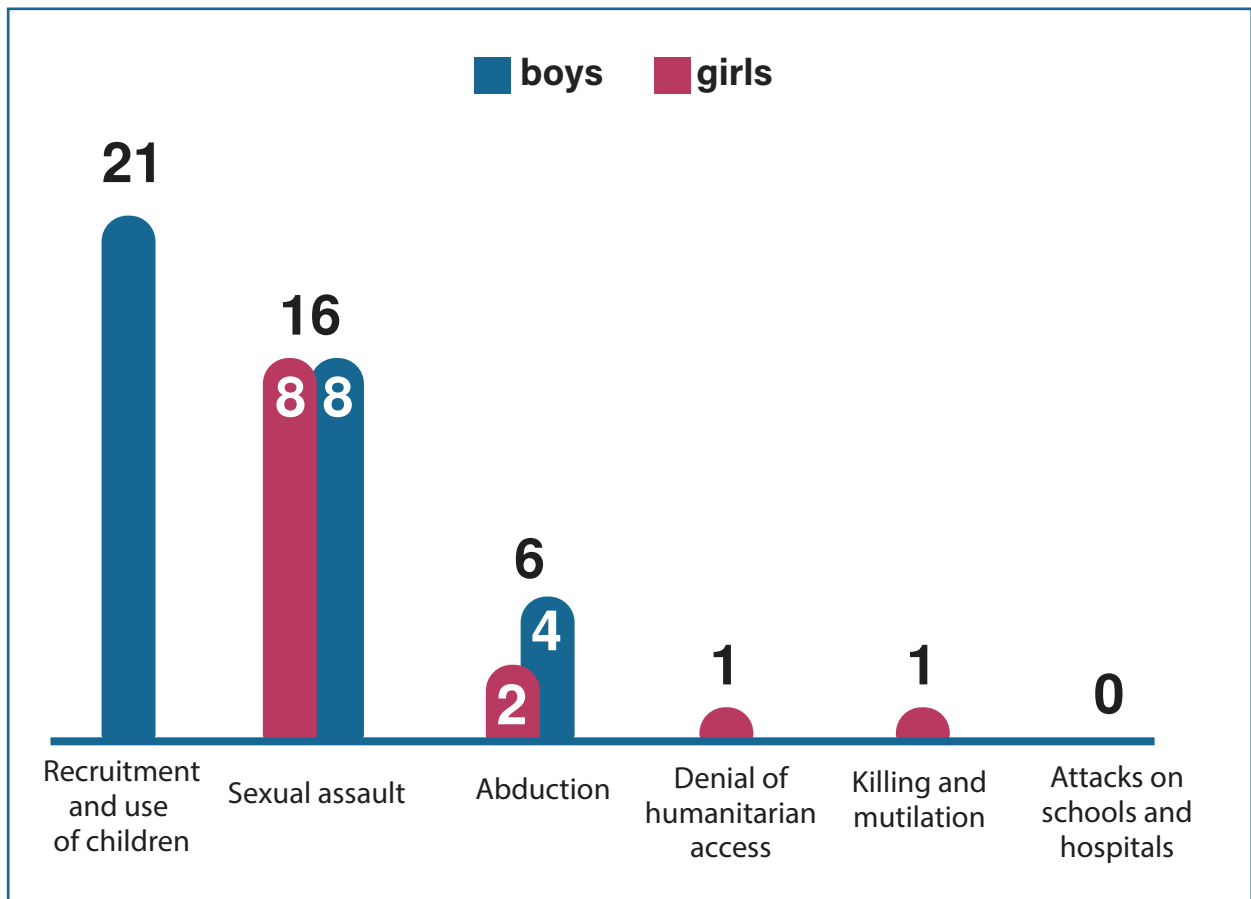
INSAF Center for Rights and Development was committed to adhering to standards of accuracy, objectivity, and impartiality in its review of violations. It relied on the statements of victims or their first-degree relatives or those close to the child, to avoid any bias in reporting the violation and to exclude any information or sources of questionable credibility and impartiality.

Barriers and Challenges during data collection

The team and monitors faced numerous challenges and risks in meeting victims and collecting data. This was due to the reticence of victims and their families to discuss violations related to one of the dominant parties to the conflict, which the families feared would be subjected to further abuse. The victims' families also fear the scandal and stigma that could befall them if any details of the abuse were disclosed, as this would affect the family's reputation and honor. There were also many cases that the monitors were unable to reach due to the perilous route.

Analysis of Monitored Violations

The field monitoring team of INSAF Center for Rights and Development tracked a total of 45 incidents of violations from June 2019 to February 2025. These incidents included various serious violations against children, most targeting the most vulnerable groups, such as marginalized communities, displaced persons, and people with disabilities. Sixteen cases of sexual assault and harassment were recorded, including eight cases, involving girls aged 7 to 15, and eight additional cases, involving boys aged 5 to 10. Nine of these children were marginalized, including one with a disability. Additionally, two separate cases involving girls were documented; one was physically assaulted, and the other was denied access to humanitarian aid.



Regarding recruitment, the center recorded 21 cases involving male children aged 13 to 16, including 14 marginalized children, clearly highlighting the exploitation of their economic and social vulnerabilities. Concerning kidnapping incidents, there were six cases, involving two girls — one with special needs — and four boys aged 14 and 15, all of whom were displaced. Notably, three of these victims have mental disabilities. One kidnapping case involved physical assault, while another case of kidnapping appears to have been carried out for exploitation and organ trafficking purposes.

These violations were spread across several governorates, including Aden, Lahj, Hodeida, Dhamar, Amran, and Sana'a, highlighting the broad geographic extent of the violations and the ongoing exposure of children, especially from marginalized and displaced groups, to serious risks in a conflict environment marked by a lack of protection and weak accountability. These incidents, based on international standards, clearly violate the obligations of the conflict parties under the Convention on the Rights of the Child¹³, the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict¹⁴, and relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly those addressing sexual violence, recruitment, abduction, and humanitarian access.

The systematic and intersecting nature of grave violations against children

The report reveals systematic patterns of complex violations targeting marginalized and displaced children, where one crime is coupled with other grave violations within the context of a single incident, compounding the physical, psychological, and social harm and complicating opportunities for redress and accountability. Cases of rape accompanied by abduction and death threats were documented, as in the case of a minor girl who was lured by a member of the security forces. Cases of abduction followed by sexual assault, mutilation, and murder were also documented, as in the case involving a two-year-old girl. Incidents of forced recruitment targeting marginalized children were also documented, preceded by economic exploitation and deception, and followed by permanent injuries or death as a result of being conscripted into combat, such as the case of a child who partially lost his sight while serving on the military front.

Complex violations against children with disabilities have also emerged, combining deliberate denial of humanitarian aid, forced labor, and neglect, such as the case of a girl from Hodeida who was forced to support her family under conditions beyond her abilities. These patterns represent a simultaneous violation of several international legal obligations, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict. In some instances, they amount to war crimes, requiring a comprehensive human rights response and accountability mechanisms that take into account the interconnected nature of these violations.



Types of Monitored Violations to which Marginalized Children were exposed

Rape and sexual harassment

16 cases of sexual assault and harassment were monitored, including 8 cases involving females aged between 7 and 15 years, and 8 cases involving males aged between 5 and 10 years.

After reviewing and studying these cases, the field research team at the INSAF Center for Rights and Development concluded that there were some similar circumstances among the monitored cases in terms of the security, economic, and social status of the victims and their families, as follows:

- The absence of the breadwinner and head of the household, who is considered a support mechanism for family members in protecting them, or the separation of the parents, which leads to neglect in monitoring the children.
- The abuse of power by perpetrators, who have exploited their positions in security agencies to violate the honor of vulnerable, displaced, and marginalized victims.
- The state's failure to achieve justice amid the country's political instability, and the absence of a judicial role in adjudicating such sensitive cases that affect aspects of internal security.
- The research team noted that victims of this violation and their families are significantly more reluctant to report the violation than other types of documented violations due to fear and threat of scandal. This indicates that the actual number of cases exceeds what is documented by human rights and international organizations.

Practical Cases

First Incident: Kidnapping, Rape, and Threatening a Minor Girl, 12th June 2024

Incident details:

A.M.M., a 14-year-old minor, while she was collecting plastic cans with her friend, a soldier affiliated with the Security Belt in Lahj Governorate stopped her and dragged her to his car after she refused to get in with him. Her friend immediately informed her mother. On the same day, A.M.M. returned crying after being raped. The soldier was standing outside, threatening to beat her friend and her mother. He also threatened the victim if she spoke about anything or complained about him. They did not take any action against him out of fear of him, and because no one could stand with them, as the head of the family was deceased. A.M.M. was displaced with her mother after she was assaulted and threatened the incident. She now lives with her mother in Al-Buraiqa area of Aden. the incident. She now lives with her mother in Al-Buraiqa area of Aden.

Second Incident: Rape of a Minor Supporting her Family by a Member of the National Guard, 12th November 2024

Girls from marginalized groups in Yemen suffer from grave and systematic violations among the armed conflict, weak laws, and the collapse of social protection institutions. This case is a horrific example of the lack of protection and accountability.

Incident details: A minor girl from the marginalized group (Muhamasheen) was raped by an armed security officer affiliated with one of the regular forces (believed to be a member of Al-Anad camp) in Aden Governorate. The girl (R.Sh.A.), born in 2009, is 15 years old and belongs to the marginalized group. She left school at an early age and lives with her mother and brothers after her father divorced her mother and married another woman. She is the sole breadwinner for the family in light of the absence of a breadwinner and the prevalence of poverty.

Since she was fifteen years old, the girl had been repeatedly harassed by a soldier stationed at Al-Anad camp. He repeatedly followed her in the street and verbally and physically harassed her at gunpoint. Despite her repeated refusals, he continued to pursue her. On the evening of 12th November 2024 at 9:00 PM, while she was returning home, the soldier forcibly dragged her into his house and raped her. She returned home crying and told her mother what had happened, emphasizing that this was not the first time the soldier had harassed her and that she had told her about it before. Later, the mother and daughter went to confront the attacker, but he, with the help of a group of his colleagues, threatened to kill them and the mother's children as well. which prevented them from officially reporting the incident for fear of retaliation.

The third incident: Rape of a Minor Girl, Sex Trafficking and Exploitation of Her and Her Minor Brother by Their Father, 1st January 2024.

Incident details:

(S.Kh.B.), a thirteen-year-old girl, was displaced with her family due to the war. She also belongs to a marginalized segment of society. (S.Kh.B.) is a child from Hodeida

Governorate who was displaced to Haradh District after her father raped her and kidnapped her and her brother to Al-Hali District in Hodeida without her mother's knowledge. He then began sexually trafficking her and her brother, exploiting them to sell hashish and drugs, which prompted the boy to run away and be handed over to an orphanage, after which he reported his father's actions to the police.

Legal Analysis of Rape and Sexual Harassment Cases

A review of past rape and sexual harassment cases, based on Yemeni domestic and international laws, condemns the perpetrator from multiple perspectives. Rape and sexual harassment are accompanied by additional psychological, physical, and moral violations. We present the legal opinion on these cases.

1- Premeditated rape of a minor: This crime is considered a full-fledged felony, and the penalty is supposed to be increased due to the young age of the victim, her belonging to a vulnerable group, and the use of weapons and threats, according to the Yemeni Crimes and Penal Code (Law No. 12 of 1994),¹⁵ Article (269),¹⁶ which states, "Anyone who commits sodomy or rape by force or with a minor shall be punished by death," and Article 264,¹⁷ which states, "Anyone who has sexual intercourse with a female without her consent shall be punished by death." The Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Yemen, also states in Article 34,¹⁸ "States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse." As well as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography,¹⁹ 2002.

2- Using weapons and security authority as a mean of terrorism: This constitutes a violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, especially Article (7),²⁰ which stipulates that no person shall be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, as well as Article (5) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,²¹ which stipulates the same thing.

3- Violation of the right to physical integrity and human dignity: Article (34) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child²² obligates the state to take measures to protect children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation, and Article (7) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights²³ prohibits cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Sexual abuse against a minor is also considered one of the six grave violations against children in times of war, according to UNICEF²⁴

4- Discrimination against marginalized groups: This crime reflects the state's inability to protect the most vulnerable groups, which constitutes a violation of Article (2) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child²⁵, which stipulates the right of every child must be respected and ensure by the State without discrimination.

5- Incest is one of the most severe crimes under criminal law. It is considered a felony punishable by death or life imprisonment in many laws. It is also considered a major sin under Islamic law and positive law.

6- The crime of human trafficking, the sexual exploitation of minors, and drug trafficking are punishable by severe imprisonment and heavy fines. According to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography, which Yemen ratified in 2007²⁶, states are required to effectively prohibit the sale of children and the exploitation of children in prostitution.

Abductions

Six cases of abduction of children were documented, all of them displaced, including a girl with special needs and three boys with varying degrees of mental disability.

These cases reflect a pattern of complex and escalating violations, not limited to forced abduction alone, but accompanied by other serious violations, including physical assault in one case and suspected exploitation for organ trafficking, as documented in another case.

Data indicate that four of these cases occurred in areas controlled by the internationally recognized Yemeni government, with its security and military forces responsible for these violations. Two cases were recorded in areas controlled by Ansar Allah group, where unidentified armed groups are suspected of involvement in the kidnapping and accompanying violations.

Observers noted that the most significant role played in these monitored forced abductions was:

1- The victims' families are displaced due to the war and are vulnerable, because they left everything they owned in their first hometown.

2- The power of the perpetrators, who believe that it gives them the right to violate the rights of others.

3- Poverty, the families' financial situations, and the absence or inability of the head of the household to support the families make their children vulnerable to going out to earn a living at a young age and facing numerous abuses.

4- Displaced children, especially those with disabilities, face a heightened level of threat due to their fragile circumstances.

Practical Cases

First incident : A two-year-old girl who was not safe from the Four Types of Violence, 6th March, 2024

Incident Details:

Two-year-old (Sh.Kh.M.) was displaced with her family from the Houthis-controlled areas in Hodeida, fleeing the war and settling in Aden Governorate. During her stay in Aden, a soldier working with the Abyan Security Forces and the Security Belt in the south kidnapped the child and took her to a deserted area, where she was subjected to a horrific rape and mutilation, before being killed. Her body was then dumped in a landfill where rats ate part of it, demonstrating the brutality of the crime and the contempt for human life and dignity.

Second Incident: Kidnapping of a special needs girl under two years of age, 17th April, 2024

Incident Details:

(M.A.M.) is a one-year-and-four-month-old baby girl, born in Aden Governorate. She lives with her mother, who has been separated from her father for a short time. The girl suffers from a congenital physical disability in her foot and hand. A gang kidnapped her, but the girl's father was informed and immediately notified the authorities. The perpetrators were tracked down, arrested, and the girl was returned by monitoring the surveillance cameras at the scene. During the investigation, the perpetrators were identified as five young men belonging to the Security Belt Forces, located in areas controlled by the internationally recognized legitimate government. The perpetrators coordinated with a female beggar, who would kidnap children and send them to the gang. The gang would then send the children to the northern areas for organ trafficking or hand them over to Houthis, who would recruit them and put them on the battlefield and use the girls as beggars. The case is still under investigation.

The third incident: The kidnapping of a 9-year-old girl by armed elements, and the forced recruitment of her brother, (F. A. A.), 23rd September, 2019.

Details of the incident:

M.A.E., a 9-year-old schoolgirl, was displaced with her mother and brother from the war zones to Al-Buraiqah in Aden. She was kidnapped by armed men in front of her family and neighbors. The aim was to pressure the mother to hand over her 10-year-old son, F.A.A., whom she had hidden for fear of being taken away. The armed men wanted to forcibly recruit him and continued to follow him from school to home, raiding the house more than once. They responded to the mother with a crime even more heinous than their first crime: the kidnapping of her younger sister. After the intervention of local notables, she was amicably returned to her mother. However, the mother did not file an official complaint against the girl's kidnappers because, according to the mother, they were the perpetrators and the judges at the time. The mother was also in shock, which affected her, even when she spoke about the incident. She was overcome by fear, anxiety, and nightmares about losing her children to the point that she volunteered at the school to protect them.

Legal Analysis

1- The Abduction of Children is one of the most serious violations threatening their safety and psychological and physical integrity. It constitutes a serious crime under international law, especially when it concerns children from the most vulnerable groups, such as displaced people or those with disabilities. It is not merely an isolated incident; rather, it is often accompanied by a pattern of complex violations, such as physical violence or exploitation. It may be classified as enforced disappearance if it is committed by an entity that refuses to acknowledge the detention or conceals the child's fate, thus keeping the crime legally active until accountability is achieved and the full truth is revealed. Abduction is a serious crime under Yemeni law, especially if the victim is a minor. Article (249) of the Yemeni Penal Code punishes the crime of abduction with severe penalties²⁷. The state is also obligated to take all appropriate measures to prevent the abduction of children under Article (35) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child²⁸. Instead, government agencies were the ones who carried out this violation. In addition, the abduction of children is considered one of the six grave violations against children in times of war, according to UNICEF²⁹.

2- Kidnapping an infant, especially one with a disability, is considered one of the most serious crimes under Yemeni law. The penalty shall be increased if the kidnapping is for harm, profit, or trafficking. Legally, this act may carry the death penalty or life imprisonment, according to Article 249 of the Yemeni Penal Code³⁰.

3- Sending children for the purposes of organ trafficking, begging, or fighting falls under the crime of human trafficking, which is also an international crime. According to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime of 2000³¹, this is considered a serious crime punishable by severe imprisonment. Article (2) of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children states that "the sale of children means any act or transaction by which a child is transferred by any person or group of persons to another person for remuneration or other consideration."³² Furthermore, cases in which children are forcibly recruited against their parents' wishes, abduction and recruitment of children are considered grave violations according to the United Nations. Under customary international law³³, trafficking in persons is considered a crime, and 186 countries have signed and/or ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Children and Women.³⁴

4- The crime of exploiting children in drug trafficking is a double crime: Drug trafficking and the exploitation of minors. In this case, the minor is considered a victim, not a criminal.

5- Abuse of influence and affiliation with a security agency: The involvement of individuals from a security agency increases the seriousness of the crime, because they abused their authority. This is considered an abuse of duty and undermines confidence in state institutions. If proven, the punishment will be more severe, and their security status must be completely revoked.

6- Rape is a crime punishable by law with the most severe penalties, according to Article (269)³⁵ of the Yemeni Penal Code. Article (34) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child obliges the state to take measures to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation in all its forms³⁶. Article (7) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights holds that no one should be subject to torture, or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.³⁷ Many types of physical and sexual abuse against minors are considered torture or inhuman and degrading treatment. They are a crime and a violation of children's rights, and the state must protect them from all forms of violence and exploitation. Sexual violence against children is considered one of the six grave violations in times of war, according to UNICEF.³⁸

7- Rape is criminalized and punishable by long prison terms, which may include severe penalties depending on the circumstances.

8- Premeditated Murder: The murder of a minor girl after one of the aforementioned assaults falls under premeditated murder, one of the most serious crimes punishable under Yemeni law by death or life imprisonment (Article 234 of the Yemeni Penal Code), which states: "Whoever intentionally kills an innocent person shall be punished by death in retaliation until the avenger (the victim's avenger) pardons. If the pardon is absolute or conditional on blood money, or if the perpetrator dies before the sentence is passed, the blood money shall be paid, regardless of the victim's prior consent."

9- Infanticide (Killing children) is also one of the six grave violations against children in times of war, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

10- Mutilation and neglect: The physical mutilation of the victim and their subsequent dumping in a deserted place and then in a landfill reflects contempt for the victim's life and dignity and constitutes an additional crime of inhuman treatment. Under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,³⁹ the mutilation of the bodies of the dead during armed conflict is prohibited pursuant to Article 8 (40). Although Yemen is not a party to the Rome Statute, the Statute establishes the acceptance of this provision in customary international law.⁴¹ Customary law also addresses the disposal of remains, which must be buried or stored temporarily and securely if immediate burial is not possible. In the aforementioned case, the child's body was left to rot and be eaten by animals in the landfill.

Forced recruitment

Twenty-one cases of child recruitment were monitored, all male, between the ages of 13 and 16. Most of the children are marginalized, located in both the northern areas controlled by Ansar Allah group (Houthis), between Dhamar and Hodeida, and the southern areas controlled by the internationally recognized legitimate government, between Aden and Lahj. The violations are not limited to recruitment itself but extend to a pattern of complex violations to which recruited children are subjected before, during, and after their recruitment.

Two cases have been documented that reflect this complex nature of violations: one of a child who sustained permanent physical disfigurement as a result of a direct injury sustained while on the battlefield, and the other of another child who was killed while participating in an armed clash.

During their monitoring, researchers and observers noted that most cases are influenced by the following:

- 1- Exploitation of the family's dire economic situation, which forces parents to send their children to military service in order to receive a monthly salary that covers even a small portion of their material needs.
- 2- The absence of the family's primary breadwinner, which forces male children to assume responsibility and abandon education in order to provide for the rest of the family.
- 3- Instigating the victims into believing that military service is a religious duty that everyone must join, under the pretext that Ansar Allah group claims to liberate Palestine and prepare for the holy battle of jihad.
- 4- The absence of the family's role in supervising children and the negative influence of friends.
- 5- Child recruitment is not a single violation, but rather a precursor to a host of other, more serious violations, including physical assault, mutilation, and murder, resulting from their being thrown into combat without protection. This pattern reveals the compounded exploitation of children, especially those from the most vulnerable groups, and underscores the urgent need to hold responsible parties accountable and ensure comprehensive protection for these victims.

Practical Cases

First Incident: Recruitment of a displaced minor into the ranks of an armed group, mid-January 2024.

Details of the Incident:

According to the mother of (A.R.A.), a 16-year-old minor from a displacement area affected by the armed conflict, he was forcibly recruited by the Ansar Allah group, with the consent and assistance of his father, who sent him to training camps to obtain financial compensation to cover the needs of the minor's family. However, the minor returned a month and a half later without any financial compensation, under the influence of psychological trauma, which caused his mother fear and anxiety about what he had been exposed to during his conscription.

The second incident: The incident of recruiting the child (K.S.M.) (15 years old) - from the marginalized group, 5th February 2024:

Details of the incident:

(K.S.M.), a 15-year-old child who did not attend school and is from the marginalized group, was recruited by Ansar Allah group (Houthis). He was working with his father when he left for work on February 2024, 5, but did not return that day. The father searched extensively for him and learned that he had not gone to work and that one of his friends had confirmed that Abu Hussein, a Houthi supervisor, had taken him with him in an army vehicle that morning. The father did not search for him because he was certain that K.S.M. was taken to a training course with them. On 13th March 2024, the son returned and informed his father that he had received intensive training in weapons, disassembling and assembling them, and combat tactics, under the pretext of preparing to liberate Palestine, as part of the "reserve forces." He was not given any of the financial benefits he had been promised before his recruitment, and he would not receive any financial benefits or any weapons unless he went to the front to fight, at which point he would receive a weapon. When the boy refused, they sent him back home. Currently, the father is watching his son day and night for fear of his being recruited again.

Third Incident: The crime of recruiting a child who dropped out of school for a living, 2nd January, 2024:

Details of the Incident:

(Y.A.Y.), a 16-year-old child from a marginalized group, lives in a turbulent social environment devoid of family support. He joined religious classes at a local Mosque known as "Al-Salaf Al-Salih" (The Righteous Predecessors), where he was recruited by individuals claiming to be from the "righteous predecessors" and without consulting his guardian. The minor joined the camp and was assigned some logistical tasks such as delivering meals and supplies. However, he sustained an injury that damaged his left eye as a result of an explosion while he was at the front. His cousin, (T.S.A.) rushed him to Sabir Hospital, where he confirmed that he was receiving medical care. A testimony from a female neighbor confirms that he was injured while serving with an armed group led by the imam of the Al-Salaf Al-Salih Mosque in the neighborhood, who had recruited him.

Fourth Incident: Abduction and forced recruitment of a child from the marginalized group, 20th September, 2024:

Incident Details:

(N.A.H.), a 13-years-old marginalized child, residing in Beit Al-Bannous in Ma'bar, Dhamar, and is not enrolled in school. He worked to support himself and his family. He was recruited and used, according to his father, on the morning of Saturday, 28th September 2024, when Abu Mohammed Ibrahim Al-Bannous, a member of Ansar Allah group (Houthis), took him and some other neighborhood children from the street to a training center in Ma'bar for military training and to attend a cultural and military/combat course. The father went to Ansar Allah supervisor, Abdulmajeed Al-Bannous, and asked him to return his son, but he refused and asserted that everyone was needed for these courses, which were in preparation for the holy jihad battle and would last for a month and a half. Not content with just refusing, he threatened the father with imprisonment if he did not return home and stop demanding the return of his son or objecting to what they described as the holy jihad camps. The father was so worried about his son that he was forced to retreat for fear of arrest or retaliation and wait for his son's return. On November 2024, 13, the child returned safely and told his father that Al-Bannous had lied to him, promising him work and a monthly salary in return. He was taken to a large, monstrous building and then to the basement. He was accompanied by six other neighborhood residents and several other people from the city of Ma'bar, most of them his age. They were subjected to ideological lessons related to Houthi leaders. They were then trained for six days in the use of weapons (Kalashnikovs) and recruited into the so-called reserve forces under the slogan "The Flood of Al-Aqsa," without receiving any financial compensation. Currently, the father lives in constant anxiety and takes his son with him regularly for fear of being re-kidnapped or recruited again.

Fifth Incident: Recruitment of the child (R.G.A.) (15 years old), 26th November 2024: Incident details:

R.G.A. is a 15-year-old marginalized child, who lives with his parents. He stopped attending school. The child's family lived under difficult economic circumstances. According to his father, he was the eldest of his siblings, and the family was in dire need of an income. The family suffered from ignorance and deprivation and was not sufficiently aware of the dangers of conscription or the effects of war on children. In the absence of support and awareness, the family agreed to his enrollment in the camp, hoping he would receive financial compensation to help support the rest of the family.

Sixth incident : Recruitment of the child (Y.J.A.), under the age of 3 ,18rd April, 2024:

Incident details:

The child Y.J.A. comes from a displaced family suffering from difficult living conditions. He suffered from a lack of family stability after his parents separated. His father left them and married another woman, no longer providing for them. This left the child responsible for supporting his large family of seven. The child stopped studying due to circumstances, and due to extreme poverty, he joined the First Division – The Shield of the Nation, along with a number of other children from his village. They were registered without awareness or understanding of the dangers of joining training camps at this age. Neither the child nor his family knew the military details that awaited him, but the need for a salary and assistance in supporting his siblings pushed him to accept this harsh reality.

Legal Analysis

- 1- State recruitment of children under the age of 15 is a flagrant violation of Article (38) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been ratified by most countries, including the Republic of Yemen⁴². It is one of the six grave violations against children in times of war, identified by UNICEF⁴³. replace it with: Which prohibits the recruitment and use of children as soldiers.
- 2- It also violates Article (4) of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, which raises the minimum age to 18 years for forced recruitment or participation in conflict by non-governmental armed groups⁴⁴.
- 3- The state's role in the economic exploitation of the child and misleading him with false wages, which is a systematic deception of marginalized children and exploitation of their economic situation is considered a violation of Article (32) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, from work that is likely to be hazardous or exploitative⁴⁵.
- 4- Discrimination against marginalized groups (those not enrolled in education, in a vulnerable work environment, or from low-income families) constitutes a class-based exploitation policy and a violation of the rights to equality and dignity. These rights are evident and deeply rooted throughout the world, are enshrined in international law, and can be found in the Convention on the Rights of the Child⁴⁶.
- 5- Dropping out of school as a result of forced recruitment replace it with: goes against the spirit of Article (28) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which requires that states recognize the right to education⁴⁷.
- 6- Yemen is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict. The recruitment of people under the age of eighteen by non-governmental groups constitutes a flagrant violation of the Optional Protocol⁴⁸, and may elevate the issue to the level of torture. According to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: "Torture"⁴⁹ means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. Furthermore, Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child includes the protection of children from economic exploitation and sale.⁵⁰
- 7- Under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which Yemen ratified in 2009⁵¹, the state and government actors are required to respect the human dignity and individual autonomy of all persons with disabilities, including children. This is what was mentioned in the previous case, where government soldiers were the ones who kidnapped the girl who had a disability and were the ones who violated her rights instead of protecting her, pursuant to Article (28)⁵².

Denial of humanitarian access

One case was reported in Hodeida Governorate. Due to the war and conflict, aid delivery to areas controlled by Ansar Allah was prevented.

A.A.A. represents a tragic example of the suffering of children with disabilities in conflict zones, especially when poverty is coupled with displacement and lack of protection. Child A.A.A. lives in Hodeida Governorate, an area under the control of Ansar Allah group (Houthis) and due to the conflict and political classifications of the regions, residents have been denied the delivery of humanitarian aid by some international agencies and supporting organizations, which previously reached them.

This has deprived the orphan girl and her brothers of food, health, and psychological assistance. She suffers from cerebral atrophy and a disability that exacerbates her living conditions.

And according to her neighbor's testimony, her health and social condition were relatively stable when she received supportive aid. However, her health and psychological state deteriorated after the aid was cut off, forcing her to transition to vocational training and work in productive communities to secure food and a minimum standard of living for her siblings. This burden was disproportionate to her mental abilities and her legal age.

Legal Analysis

1- The Convention on the Rights of the Child - Articles (6), (19), (23), (27):

These articles stipulate the right of every child to life and development, the right to an adequate standard of living, and special care for children with disabilities⁵³.

2- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - Article (28):

It affirms the right of persons with disabilities to social protection and assistance in cases of poverty and conflict⁵⁴.

3- Deliberate denial of humanitarian aid (Violation of International Humanitarian Law): According to Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions⁵⁵, preventing the delivery of essential aid to civilians in conflict areas is a Humanitarian Crime. It is one of UNICEF's six grave violations against children in times of war⁵⁶.

4- Forced Child Labor: Forcing a child under the age of 18 to work and bear the responsibility of supporting her family is a form of exploitation prohibited by the International Labor Organization and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 32)⁵⁷.

Physical Assault

Physical abuse of children is a form of grave violation that leaves deep and long-lasting impacts on victims, particularly when perpetrated by those supposed to protect them, such as the family or security services. In contexts of conflict and fragility, this violation often takes on a compound nature, with children exposed to violence in more than one location, reflecting the absence of protection and accountability systems and perpetuating a cycle of violence and vulnerability against the most vulnerable groups.

First incident : A 15-year-old girl is subjected to severe physical abuse, 29TH November 2024.

Incident Details:

(R.S.A.), a 15-year-old girl, lives with her family of nine marginalized people. They live in poverty and are plagued by paternal neglect of their financial and emotional security. R.S.A. was subjected to physical assault by her father, who forces her to go out to work to pay him 30,000 Yemeni riyals per day. In addition to the physical violence she experiences at home, she is also subjected to physical assault by a soldier working in the police department in Aden Governorate when she leaves home for work, he forcibly drags her away. There is eyewitness testimony to the incident, when the soldier drags her away and severely beats her.

Legal Analysis

1- A security officer's assault on a minor girl is a criminal offense punishable under Yemeni law, as it constitutes an abuse of power and a violation of human and child rights, in accordance with the Child Protection Law and penal codes and the escape of the aggressor constitutes an attempt to evade justice and requires the issuance of an arrest warrant and intensified efforts to apprehend him.

2- Domestic violence by the father, where the father beats his daughter and steals her money, is classified as psychological and physical violence, and is considered a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms" stipulated in this Declaration⁵⁸ and guaranteed by Yemeni law. The father's inhumane and degrading treatment of his daughter via his abuse and enablement of further severe abuse is a breach of his legal and moral duties and is considered a violation of Article No. (7) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights⁵⁹. The aforementioned violations constitute a grave violation of children as defined by the United Nations (UNICEF)⁶⁰. The state must address the child's abuse by her father and the soldier under international law. Specifically, Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child obliges the state to take all appropriate measures to protect children from all forms of physical and psychological violence, torture, and neglect. This includes economic violence and neglect, as in the case of the girl's father, who was subjected to physical violence by his father and sexual abuse by the soldier. The law specifically states that this applies "while the child is in the care of a parent... or other person who has the care of the child,"⁶¹ and the article obliges the state to take specific preventive measures to provide the necessary support for the child.

Recommendations

To UN agencies and donor countries concerned with children's rights in Yemen:

- 1- Enhancing cooperation and coordination between UN agencies and Yemeni organizations to ensure violations documented by local groups are included in UN reports on serious violations against marginalized children.
- 2- Incorporating economic and livelihood support into efforts aimed at reducing serious violations against marginalized children, as poverty and material needs are major factors driving these violations.
- 3- Funding projects to provide psychological and legal assistance to marginalized child victims and their families, considering the psychological and physical effects caused by severe violations against children.
- 4- Supporting national and local transitional justice mechanisms that recognize marginalized children both as victims and as actors.
- 5- Establishing an independent and transparent accountability mechanism for violations committed by all parties to the conflict, particularly military formations, with the power to conduct public investigations, protect witnesses and victims, and ensure that there is no impunity.

To Human Rights Organizations Working in Yemen:

- 1- Reporting violations against marginalized children to relevant government agencies, such as the Public Prosecutor or the Complaints Office at the Ministry of Interior.
- 2- Providing UN mechanisms (including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF, Save the Children, and Geneva Call) with files on violations against marginalized children for inclusion in international reports on grave violations against children in Yemen.
- 3- Conducting awareness programs for marginalized families on the importance of monitoring their children's activities and preventing them from joining military groups.

To the internationally recognized legitimate Yemeni government:

- 1- Review national laws to ensure they align with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict.
- 2- Investigate mechanisms for registering children in military units without parental consent.
- 3- Restructure and unify military and security formations within official state institutions according to professional and legal standards, require their personnel to complete mandatory courses in humanitarian law and human rights, and ensure they are free from any political or economic influence in the areas under their control.

To all parties to the conflict (the internationally recognized legitimate Yemeni government and Ansar Allah group (Houthis):

- 1- Immediately cease the recruitment of children and rehabilitate and reintegrate those recruited, including psychosocial support, education, and vocational training.
- 2- Revoking security status from perpetrators proven to have committed violations against children.
- 3- Considering permanently withdrawing parental guardianship in cases where the father is the perpetrator.

Endnotes

² United Nations General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Resolution 25/44, adopted on 20 November 1989, entered into force on 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/crc.pdf>

³ United Nations, Security Council, Resolution (1999) 1261, op. cit.

⁴ United Nations Security Council, Official Records, Sixtieth Year, 5129th Meeting (Resumption 1), S/PV.5129, New York, 23 February 2000. Available at: <https://documents.un.org>

⁵ United Nations Secretary-General, Report on the Situation of Children in Yemen, January 2021 – December 2023, Humanitarian Report No. 01, March 2025, New York. Available at: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/03-2025/yemen-76.php>

⁶ <https://justice4yemenpact.org/wp-content/uploads/04/2024/%D8AA%D82%D8B1D89A%D8B1-%D8AA%D8AD%D8A7D89%4D81%D8B1D8B5D8AF-%D8A3D8B7D81%D8A7D849-%D8A7D849D89A%D859D869-%D8A7>

⁶ <https://justice4yemenpact.org/wp-content/uploads/04/2024/%D8AA%D82%D8B1D89A%D8B1-%D8AA%D8AD%D8A7D89%4D81%D8B1D8B5D8AF-%D8A3D8B7D81%D8A7D849-%D8A7D849D89A%D859D869-%D8A7>

⁶ <https://justice4yemenpact.org/wp-content/uploads/04/2024/%D8AA%D82%D8B1D89A%D8B1-%D8AA%D8AD%D8A7D89%4D81%D8B1D8B5D8AF-%D8A3D8B7D81%D8A7D849-%D8A7D849D89A%D859D869-%D8A7>

⁶ <https://www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/Sifting%20>

⁸ <https://www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/Sifting%20>

⁸ <https://www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/Sifting%20the%20Grain%20Arabic.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/Sifting%20>

⁸ <https://www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/Sifting%20the%20Grain%20Arabic.pdf>

¹⁰ Security Council, Sixtieth Year, Meeting S/PV.5129, op. cit.

⁹ <https://www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/Sifting%20the%20Grain%20Arabic.pdf>

¹¹ https://s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/storage.arab-reform.net/ari/15-04-2024/25111605/04/2024-AR-Muhamasheen_Aisha.pdf

¹² Security Council, Sixtieth Year, Meeting S/PV.5129, op. cit.

¹³ United Nations General Assembly, Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, Resolution 40/34, adopted on 29 November 1985. Available at: <https://archive.unescwa.org/ar/declaration-basic-principles-justice-victims->

¹³ [ne-and-abuse-power](https://archive.unescwa.org/ar/declaration-basic-principles-justice-victims-)

¹⁴ Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.

¹² United Nations, Security Council, Resolution (1999) 1261, op. cit.

¹⁵ Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.

¹⁴ Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, adopted by United

¹⁶ Nations General Assembly resolution 263/54 of 25 May 2000, entered into force on 12 February 2002.

¹⁷ Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/optional-protocol-convention-rights-child>

¹⁷ [involvement-children](https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/optional-protocol-convention-rights-child)

¹⁸ Republic of Yemen, Law of Crimes and Penalties, Republican Decree by Law No. (12) of 1994. Available at

¹⁸ https://agoyemen.net/lib_details.php?id=5

¹⁸ Article (269) of the Yemeni Penal Code (Law No. 12 of 1994).

¹⁹ Article (264) of the same reference.

²⁰ Article (34) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.

¹⁹ See the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography,

²⁰ adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 May 2000 (General Assembly resolution 263/54), entered into force in January

²¹ 2002, and ratified by Yemen on 23 August 2004.

²⁰ Article (7) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted on 16 February 1966, entered into force on 23 March 1976,

²¹ and ratified by Yemen on 29 February 1987.

²³ Article (5) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, and ratified by Yemen on 9 February 1986.

²⁴ Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/ar/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

²³ Article (34) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.

²⁴ Article (7) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, op. cit.

²⁴ Children Under Attack: Six Grave Violations Against Children in Times of War, UNICEF Global Website, 27 June 2025.

²⁶ Available at: <https://share.google/YwXtUaiRCwCVYfzAr>

²⁶ Article (2) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.

- ²⁷ Article (249) of the Yemeni Penal Code, Republican Decree by Law No. (12) of 1994.
Available at: https://agoyemen.net/lib_details.php?id=5
- ²⁸ Article (35) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.
- ²⁹ Children Under Attack: Six Grave Violations Against Children in Times of War, UNICEF Global Website, 27 June 2025, op. cit.
- ³⁰ Article (249) of the Yemeni Penal Code, op. cit.
- ³¹ United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, a multilateral treaty under the auspices of the United Nations of 2000, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 November 2000, also known as the Palermo Convention and its three Protocols.
Available at: <https://www.unodc.org/romena/ar/untoc.html>
- ³² Article (2) of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, paragraphs (a) and (b), op. cit.
- ³³ Customary International Law, Available at: <https://www.icrc.org/ar/law-and-policy/customary-ihl>
- ³⁴ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by United Nations General Assembly resolution 25/55 of 15 November 2000.
- ³⁵ Article (269) of the Yemeni Penal Code, op. cit.
- ³⁶ Article (34) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.
- ³⁷ Article (7) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, op. cit.
- ³⁸ Children Under Attack: Six Grave Violations Against Children in Times of War, UNICEF Global Website, 27 June 2025, op. cit.
- ³⁹ Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.
Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/rome-status-international-criminal-court>
- ⁴⁰ Article (8) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, op. cit.
- ⁴¹ Customary International Law, <https://www.icrc.org/ar/law-and-policy/customary-ihl>, op. cit.
- ⁴² Article (38) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.
- ⁴³ Children Under Attack: Six Grave Violations Against Children in Times of War, UNICEF Global Website, 27 June 2025, op. cit.
- ⁴⁴ Article (4) of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.
- ⁴⁵ Article (32) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid.
- ⁴⁷ Article (28) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.
- ⁴⁸ Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.
Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/optional-protocol-convention-rights-child-involvement-children>
- ⁴⁹ Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, entered into force on 26 June 1987, ratified by Yemen on 5 November 1991.
Available at:
<https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-against-torture-and-other-cruel-inhuman-or-degrading>
- ⁵⁰ Article (32) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, *ibid.*
- ⁵¹ United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-right-persons-disabilities#1>
- ⁵² Article (28) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, *ibid.*
- ⁵³ Articles (6), (19), (23), and (27) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.
- ⁵⁴ Article (28) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, op. cit.
- ⁵⁵ Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions, adopted in 1977, entered into force on 7 December 1978, and ratified by Yemen on 17 April 1990, <https://web.archive.org/web/20160305133519/https://www.icrc.org/ara/resources/documents/misc/5ntce2.htm>.
- ⁵⁶ Children Under Attack: Six Grave Violations Against Children in Times of War, UNICEF Global Website, 27 June 2025, op. cit.
- ⁵⁷ Article (32) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.
- ⁵⁸ See the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, available on the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights website, *ibid.*
- ⁵⁹ Article (7) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, op. cit.
- ⁶⁰ Children Under Attack: Six Grave Violations Against Children in Times of War, UNICEF Global Website, 27 June 2025, op. cit.
- ⁶¹ Article (19) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, op. cit.

