



Justice4Yemen Pact
ميثاق العدالة لليمن



On the International Day of the Girl: Let's invest in Yemeni girls for the future

Justice4Yemen pact Coalition

11th Oct 2024

On the International Day of the Girl Child, girls in Yemen continue to struggle for survival. This is an occasion to celebrate and plan for the future. The Justice Pact for Yemen coalition calls on the Yemeni government and parties to the conflict to work to save girls from the dangers of war, address their needs to invest in their capabilities for the future, highlight their invisible issues, and break the rules of discrimination and violence against them.

The war and many factors, most of which are man-made, including the economic crisis, poverty and scarcity of resources, and increased violence, have had an impact on Yemeni girls on several levels: educational, health, psychological and economic. Among the most dangerous repercussions of the war on girls are mines. In a governorate such as Taiz, the director of the Center for the Peripheries stated that the percentage of female mine victims, from 2015 to the first half of 2024, reached 85% out of 120 women injured by mines. On the other hand, the Secretary-General's report on children and armed conflict in Yemen issued in June 2024 stated that (120) girls were affected by violations related to the armed conflict during the year 2023.

The world is facing a climate challenge that is alarming and has severe implications for girls' protection and empowerment. Climate change has exacerbated droughts and floods, exacerbating the water crisis in Yemen. Extreme weather events have destroyed irrigation facilities. The parties to the conflict and the fragile institutions involved are both unable to address the effects of climate change. Water insecurity is a constant concern for Yemenis, especially women and girls who bear the responsibility of collecting water, spending entire days traveling to fetch it. They are exposed to many dangers during these journeys, including mines. This directly affects the situation of girls, the protection of their rights, and wastes their chances for a better life.

Girls in Yemen are disproportionately affected by war, poverty, and increasing inequality. According to UNICEF, 2,916 schools in Yemen have been damaged or destroyed due to the conflict. This has a direct impact on girls. Conflict not only destroys educational infrastructure, but also undermines children's access to education, especially girls, and robs



them of their hopes for a full future. The Yemen humanitarian needs overview 2024 estimates that more than 4.5 million Yemeni school-age children (5-17 years old) are and have been out of school over the past few years.

Gender-based violence against girls is widespread, both by parties to the conflict and by their families. There is an intersection between girls dropping out of school or not attending school, and early marriage. These factors are closely linked to conflict and climate change. UNICEF said in its report, "Compensating for Lost Education", that "more than 30% of girls in Yemen are married before they reach 18 years of age. Once they drop out of school, their chances of returning and resuming their education are diminished, leading to a vicious cycle of illiteracy and poverty across generations." Early marriage doubles girls' health risks and exposes them to death. It deprives girls of their childhood and is an obstacle to achieving all the Millennium Development Goals. The highest mortality rate among children under five is among children whose mothers are under 20 years of age.

The percentage of people living in multidimensional poverty in Yemen is 82.7%. The war in Yemen has an impact on Yemenis' access to economic security, and economic insecurity has direct links to families' thinking about marrying off girls to alleviate their families' suffering. Due to poverty, many girls have also fallen victim to the illusion of mixed marriages with foreigners during the war. In light of the political and military division in Yemen, updating legislation has been stalled, or those in charge of it do not want to put an end to the suffering of girls. Yemen still does not have a minimum age for marriage, despite attempts made in the House of Representatives to raise the minimum age for marriage to 18 years. This was discussed in the National Dialogue Conference, and this age was approved in its outcomes. This exceptional situation requires that the parties to the conflict take executive measures to protect girls from this type of violence, by preventing specialists from writing marriage contracts for girls before the age of 18 and preventing their registration in the courts.

Girls face unique types of violence in the field of science and technology that limit their protection. They are exposed to attacks, extortion and crimes by networks, gangs and individuals. Girls have said that there are a number of reasons for this, most notably traditional illiteracy and deprivation of traditional education such as reading and writing, societal restrictions that limit women's presence in the digital space, and fear of publishing what they are exposed to.

Protecting Yemeni girls and enhancing their chances for a better life is the responsibility of everyone, including the Yemeni government. The Justice Pact for Yemen Coalition stresses



the need to combat various discriminatory social practices against girls in Yemen and calls for paying attention to girls by strengthening the services dedicated to them at all times; helping them achieve change and make their voices heard; and meeting their demands for protection, education, and living in peace without racism or discrimination.

Recommendations:

- The planting of mines must be stopped and what is planted must be removed, to protect girls from risks and harm.
- All parties to the conflict must plan and work to confront climate change, address the damage caused to girls because of it, and allocate resources to repair infrastructure instead of allocating them to fighting.
- The Yemeni government and the Houthis "Ansar Allah Group" must create executive procedures to prevent the marriage of girls under the age of 18 and hold those responsible accountable.
- The international community must provide sufficient funding to rebuild and rehabilitate schools damaged by the war and intensify programs to encourage girls to enroll in education.

Signatory organizations:

1. The Yemeni Coalition for Monitoring Human Rights Violations
2. Musaalah Organization
3. Al-Amal Women's and Socio-cultural Foundation
4. Marib Dam Foundation for Social Development
5. Free Media Center for Investigative Journalism
6. Center for Strategic Studies to Support Women and Children
7. Studies and Economic Media Center
8. Human Rights Monitoring Organization
9. Abductees' Mothers Association
10. SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties



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11. National Committee for Women - Taiz Office
12. Family counseling and development foundation
13. Lana basma
14. yemen women Union Marib
15. Social Researcher foundation