

# **Tortured childhood**

## **The hidden wounds of war**



Field study on the impact of armed conflict on the mental health of Yemeni children during March 2015-December 2022.

November 2023



## **Tortured childhood**

### **The hidden wounds of war**

A field study on the impact of armed conflict on the mental health of Yemeni children during March 2015–December 2022.

November 2023

[www.samrl.org](http://www.samrl.org)  
[info@samrl.org](mailto:info@samrl.org)



## Who is Sam?

An independent, non-profit human rights organization based in Geneva that began its activity in January 2016

I obtained a work permit in December 2017. Seeking to defend human rights in The Middle East and Yemen in particular, and the delivery of human rights violations to...

Decision-making institutions and effective and influential international organizations have been exposed to many...

Campaigns of distortion and incitement, as well as piracy of its platforms, by the parties to the Yemeni war because of

It exposed the crimes they committed and issued dozens of reports in Arabic and English

And human rights statements documenting war and human rights violations in Yemen

# index

<b>introduction .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Executive summary .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>The first axis is the general framework of the study .....</b>	<b>10</b>
- the study Problem	
- the importance of studying	
- Objectives of the study	
- Study sources	
- Study Approach	
- Study community	
- The study sample	
- Study tool	
- The validity of the study	
- Constancy	
- Statistical methods	
- Terminology of study	
- Psychological effects	
- Childhood	
<b>The second axis is the legal framework .....</b>	<b>20</b>
- For the armed conflict in Yemen	
- The humanitarian situation	
- International law classification of the conflict in Yemen	
- The law applicable to fighting in Yemen and who adheres to it?	
- International laws to protect children in wars and armed conflicts	
<b>The third axis: The theoretical framework of the study variables .....</b>	<b>27</b>
- Children pay the price	
- Murdered and disabled children	
- children kidnapping	



- Loss and premature exhaustion
  - Health risks
    - Militarization of childhood
- Psychological support as a human right
- The effects of the war on mental health in Yemen
- The psychological effects of armed conflict on children
- The most prominent symptoms of the psychological effects of war on children

**The fourth axis is the results of the study ..... 39**

- Presentation and interpretation of results
  - Study conclusions

**General recommendations ..... 44**

**the reviewer ..... 49**

## Introduction:

Armed conflict is considered one of the most devastating crises that affect humanity, leaving catastrophic effects on individuals and entire communities. It creates a state of instability, both material and psychological, resulting in severe damage to the impoverished class. The lack of access to water and electricity, diminished employment opportunities, and food insecurity lead to nervousness, psychological tension, and frustration. These factors are sufficient to cause physical and mental illnesses such as emotional disorders, anxiety, depression, agitation, panic, aggression, and others.

Indeed, the armed conflict in Yemen has resulted in immense destruction and displacement of the population, greatly impacting all aspects of life, especially children. These children in Yemen have faced significant challenges and have been subjected to serious psychological effects. It is distressing because children are the most vulnerable to psychological reactions and emotional disorders resulting from the conflict, such as shelling, destruction, loud noises, witnessing killings, and bloodshed.

All of these tragedies have generated in children a sense of fear, anxiety, shock, and loss of security. Accompanying these feelings, children affected by the war have a sense of being targeted and that their lives are under threat, that they could be killed at any moment. The armed conflict has subjected Yemeni children to immense psychological pressure on a daily basis.

Most tragically, these children face significant challenges in accessing adequate mental healthcare and necessary support. This lack of access has resulted in negative impacts on their mental health and overall development, leading them towards introversion, isolation, and withdrawal.







# Executive Summary:

The armed conflict in Yemen since September 2014 has led to a devastating deterioration in all economic, security, and human rights levels. It has caused further destruction and devastation that has surpassed the country's infrastructure to affect its people. All parties to the conflict have committed numerous human rights violations, particularly against human rights and children. These violations included the killing of a large number of children and the injury of others as a result of aerial and artillery bombardment or due to the densely planted mines by the Houthi group in residential areas, public roads, main streets, houses, and crossing areas frequented by children on a daily basis. Mines were also swept by floods from conflict areas into densely populated areas, and many of them exploded, causing harm to children returning from displacement areas to their homes. This resulted in the killing and maiming of children, as well as causing many of them to suffer permanent disabilities.

Among the violations were the abduction of a number of children in areas controlled by the Houthi group and the infliction of psychological and physical torture upon them. Additionally, children were recruited and used as fuel in the armed conflict, which is a blatant violation and clear breach of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted on November 20, 1989, as well as the First and Second Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 in 1977. Furthermore, it contravenes the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (May 25, 2000) and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998), which considers the recruitment of children under the age of fifteen as a war crime.

The armed conflict has also resulted in many indirect effects on children, such as the loss of thousands of caregivers. This has led to depriving children of a normal childhood and burdening them with responsibilities beyond their capacities. Many of them have become the breadwinners for their families, engaging in strenuous and hazardous work or resorting to begging on the streets.

Among the indirect effects, schools have been targeted, attacked, occupied, and converted into military bases, causing severe damage or complete destruction as a result of airstrikes, shelling, and clashes. These attacks have resulted in the killing and injury of students and teachers, as well as leaving profound psychological impacts on students.

Many schools have also become hazardous areas due to the presence of weapon remnants and explosive devices from the remnants of shells, both inside and in the vicinity of these schools, which are often located near front lines and conflict areas.

In addition to the dangers posed by the armed conflict, there have been significant health risks and



repercussions on the healthcare sector. Diseases have taken a toll on children, with millions suffering from severe malnutrition, stunted growth, cholera, and other illnesses.

"SAM for Rights and Liberties" has prepared this study on "The Psychological Effects of Armed Conflict on Children in Yemen" with the aim of understanding the scope of the problem and the nature of the damages, highlighting their effects, and providing recommendations and solutions that contribute to mitigating these effects, which can have significant and long-term consequences on children.

The study relied on a descriptive methodology, and a survey was used as a data collection tool.

The research team affiliated with the organization collected the data from a study sample consisting of 50 children, aged between 7 and 13 years, who were selected from children affected by the armed conflict. Additionally, data was collected from 35 caregivers of these children.

The research community consists of children who have experienced the psychological effects and disorders resulting from war, forced displacement, and their caregivers. This community is geographically located in the governorates of Taiz, Sana'a, and Marib. The study sample was distributed across these three governorates to ensure diversity in the characteristics and dimensions of the phenomenon.

It includes areas that have been experiencing ongoing military conflict at a high intensity for years.

The study was divided into four main axes. The first axis included the general framework of the study, which addressed the problem and its dimensions. It encompassed the objectives, research questions, temporal and spatial boundaries, as well as the terminology used in the study. Additionally, it discussed the study methodology, tools, and samples.

The second axis covered the legal framework, providing a general overview of the human rights and children's rights situation in Yemen during the armed conflict. This background information helps in understanding the details of the study. It reviewed international humanitarian laws that govern armed conflicts and the protection of children, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Fourth Geneva Convention concerning the protection of civilians in times of armed conflict, among others. It also discussed the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Convention on the Rights of the Child, highlighting seven key articles that emphasize child protection.

The third axis addressed the theoretical framework of the study, providing an overview of the armed conflict in Yemen and its impact on the mental health situation in the country. It explored the consequences of this conflict on children and the various psychological effects it has on their mental and emotional well-being. Meanwhile, the fourth axis focused on the analysis and presentation of the study's findings, as well as highlighting the key conclusions drawn from the research.

# The first axis: the general framework of the study





## Study problem

The armed conflict in Yemen has entered its ninth year, leaving behind thousands of fatalities, injuries, and physical disabilities. It has also caused widespread destruction and devastation that has impacted the economy, education, healthcare, and all aspects of life. The effects of the armed conflict have not been limited to the warring parties but have also affected thousands of civilians, including children who have no connection to the war.

There is no doubt that this war has left and continues to have a devastating impact on the mental health of a significant number of Yemenis. While there is currently limited data available on the overall mental health situation in Yemen, the available information suggests that many individuals are likely suffering from negative psychological, social, and emotional consequences (Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies, 2017).

For example, an official at Sana'a's Al-Amal Psychiatric Hospital reported a significant increase in the number of patients compared to the pre-war period. (Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies, 2017)

The continuation of the armed conflict, coupled with the limited capacity of mental support institutions to provide their services, highlights the need to shed light on this issue. The goal is to understand the magnitude of the problem, the nature of the damages, and to highlight its effects. Additionally, it aims to provide suggestions and solutions that contribute to mitigating these effects, which can have significant and long-term consequences on children. Thus, the problem of the study is defined as the psychological effects and behavioral disorders left by the armed conflict on society as a whole, with a particular focus on children.

## Importance of the study:

The importance of this study lies in the fact that it is concerned with analyzing these devastating psychological effects on children in Yemen as a result of the war and armed conflict that began at the beginning of 2015, and drawing attention to the importance of developing recommendations to mitigate the effects of armed conflict and enhance children's support and mental health.

The study contributes to raising awareness of the magnitude of the problem, documenting the effects on children, and providing practical proposals to stakeholders,

local and international organizations and the international community to develop sustainable programs and policies to deal with this humanitarian crisis.

The importance of the study also lies in uncovering the psychological and behavioral disorders inflicted upon Yemeni children as a result of the war and armed conflicts. The study specifically targeted provinces that have been experiencing ongoing military conflicts at a high pace for years, such as Sana'a, Taiz, and Marib. Researching this topic contributes to preserving the well-being of individuals and communities in line with international and local human rights conventions, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international and local agreements and frameworks.

## Objectives of the study:

The study aims to:

- 1- Identify the most prominent psychological and behavioral effects of wars on children affected by armed conflict.
- 2- Providing a package of solutions and recommendations to stakeholders in local authorities, local and international organizations and the international community to address the psychological effects of armed conflict on children.

## Objectives of the study:

The study relies on two main sources for data collection, which are as follows:

A- Primary sources: This involves gathering primary data through the study instrument (questionnaire) developed by the research committee. Emphasis was placed on clarity and coherence in formulating its items to provide respondents with a better understanding of their purpose.

B- Secondary sources: This involves gathering secondary data by reviewing the existing literature related to the psychological effects of armed conflict on children in Yemen. It includes referring to sources such as books, studies, research papers, theses, and online resources. The research team utilized these sources to build the theoretical framework of the study, which served the practical framework in terms of study design and development.



## Study Methodology:

The team adopted the descriptive analytical approach as a research method, where descriptive research aims to describe phenomena or events, collect information and facts about them, and propose steps and methods that can be followed to reach the image that the phenomenon should be.

## Importance of the study:

The term "population" refers to the entire group of elements that the researcher aims to generalize the results to, which are relevant to the studied problem (Al-Rubai, unpublished study).

The research population consists of children who have been affected by the psychological consequences and disorders resulting from the war and forced displacement. This population is geographically located in the provinces of Taiz, Sana'a, and Marib, and temporally covers the period from 2015 to 2023.

## Study Sample

This sample is a subset of the population to which the phenomenon applies, based on the information about this sample, in order to generalize the results to the population. Selecting the sample is an important step in conducting most educational and psychological research, and it should be representative of the population in a valid manner (Al-Rubai, unpublished study).

The research sample consisted of 50 children, selected from the age group of 7-13 years.

## Study Tool:

The tool is usually determined according to the nature of the study and its requirements, and the research tool is a basic element, used by the researcher to solve the problem of his research, which requires the researcher to choose the most appropriate tool that corresponds to the nature of the studied problem.

To verify the objective of the research study and after reviewing the sources, literature, and relevant previous studies, a research tool was prepared following the steps and

procedures for developing statistical surveys and questionnaires. The following is a description of the process:

- A questionnaire specifically addressing the psychological effects of war on children was developed, consisting of 32 items. For each item, four alternatives were provided (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree), according to the Likert scale.

The questionnaire was administered by calculating the total scores for each response to each item in the questionnaire. The sum of the responses was recorded on the top of the answer sheet.

## Validity of the questionnaire:

In order to verify the validity of the questionnaires, the questionnaire was presented to a group of specialists in psychology to express their opinions and observations about the validity of the questionnaire paragraphs, and some paragraphs of the questionnaires were formulated and modified based on these observations, thus achieving the apparent validity of the questionnaire.

## Stability

Stability is one of the conditions that must be met in the questionnaire, and it means that the results are not materially affected in the event of a change in the research (Al-Rubaie/, unpublished study)

To achieve this, the following was done :

Stability of the tool: To verify the stability of the tool, the researcher applied his tool to a random sample of (50) children, and after processing the data statistically, the stability ratio of the tool was verified, so that the tool is ready for application.

## Statistical means:

After applying the study tools, the data were collected and processed statistically by SPSS, and appropriate statistical methods were used in the data analysis to achieve the objectives of the study:

1. Arithmetic mean.
2. The arithmetic mean of the standard error.
3. Standard deviation.





## Study terminology:

**Wars:** It is an armed conflict based on the use of armed force using organized armed groups called regular armies and sometimes semi-regular groups called (militia) and the armed forces use all means to inflict damage and harm to the other party in the war, whether in its military capabilities or civilian capabilities. It is all forms of violence and force used by a particular party against another party, which causes harm of all kinds to the second party. (Al-Jabbar, 2015)





**Psychological effects :** Negative effects that result from the loss of the basic elements of human life in his society in conditions of war and aggression, such as anxiety, delirium, psychological and mental disorders of varying severity: such as anxiety disorders (obsessions, fears, depression, somatic appearance disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorders) or psychotic disorders (cyclical insanity, delirium, paranoia, schizophrenia) and others.






**Childhood:** It is the stage immediately following birth, and starts from the first year of the child's life, which becomes able to sit and then walk, and psychologists and educators divide childhood into two parts or two stages, the first section is the first childhood, which starts from the first year until the age of four years, and the second section starts from the age of five years until the age of ten years, and some of them believe that it reaches the age of twelve. (Gerges, 2005, p. 358)

**Children** as defined by UNICEF: is every individual under the age of eighteen years.

---







**The second  
axis is the legal  
framework**



## The armed conflict in Yemen. General background

Yemen has been witnessing a violent armed conflict for more than nine years, which has caused a massive humanitarian crisis, as the situation in Yemen is one of the most complex in the world, due to the devastating suffering it has caused to the Yemeni people.

Following the National Dialogue Conference in 2014, the Houthi rebels seized control of the capital, Sana'a, by force of arms after previously taking over the neighboring province of Amran. They benefited from their military alliance with the former president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, and began expanding their influence and expanding into Sana'a and other provinces. They imposed de facto control over the legitimate president, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, who was forced to submit his resignation. Later, he managed to escape from his house in Sana'a and headed to Aden on February 21, 2015, where he withdrew his resignation. This led to an escalation of confrontations and increased intensity in all military operations theaters.

The coup by the Houthi group, their seizure of power, control over state institutions, and their expansion towards the south of the country, along with military maneuvers on the border with Saudi Arabia and the opening of Yemeni airspace for daily Iranian flights, disregarding all red lines, led to rapid and dramatic repercussions. This resulted in the intervention of an Arab coalition consisting of ten countries led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in March 2015. The objective of the intervention was to end the coup and restore legitimacy. Following the intervention, the armed conflict entered a new phase, with its scope widening and intensity increasing. On April 2, 2022, the parties involved signed a ceasefire agreement, which included a cessation of hostilities, under the sponsorship of the United Nations. The ceasefire aimed to create a conducive environment for achieving a comprehensive political settlement. However, the political and military situation in Yemen remains complex, requiring further efforts to achieve lasting stability in the country.

After approximately six days of signing the ceasefire, President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi issued a decision to transfer his powers to a Presidential Leadership Council composed of eight members, with Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi serving as its president.

Despite the complexities of the current situation in the armed conflict in Yemen, there are ongoing hopes and efforts to find a comprehensive political solution and restore stability to the country. The United Nations, along with international and regional powers led by the UN Special Envoy to Yemen, Mr. Hans Grundberg, and Gulf mediators, are leading these efforts. This requires a strong commitment from the conflicting parties and effective international support to reach peaceful solutions and provide necessary humanitarian assistance to the Yemeni people.



## Humanitarian situation

The conflict in Yemen witnesses strong external interventions. Saudi Arabia leads the Arab coalition, which supports the legitimate government, while Iran supports the Houthi rebels. The United Arab Emirates supports the forces of the Southern Transitional Council, which advocates for the separation of southern Yemen, as well as the National Resistance Forces led by Brigadier General Tariq Saleh, the nephew of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. These regional powers provide military and financial support to the conflicting parties, which reinforces the continuation of the conflict and makes it challenging to reach peaceful solutions.

This ongoing conflict, lasting for nearly nine years, has caused a significant deterioration in the humanitarian situation in Yemen. Yemen is facing a severe humanitarian crisis, with civilians suffering from food and water shortages and a lack of healthcare. This increases the risk of disease outbreaks and famine. The population is living under the burden of war, hunger, and diseases. The country's infrastructure lacks basic services such as water, electricity, and healthcare. Children, women, and the elderly are particularly affected by these difficult conditions.

International and local relief organizations are working tirelessly to provide humanitarian assistance to the population affected by the conflict. These efforts include providing food, water, healthcare, and shelter for the displaced. However, these efforts face significant challenges due to funding shortages, security instability, and operational difficulties in accessing affected areas.

Indeed, parties to the conflict have committed numerous violations, including those that have targeted civilians, throughout the period of the armed conflict. They have continued to violate international humanitarian law, exacerbating what is considered the worst humanitarian crisis in history.





## Classification of international law for armed conflict in Yemen

International humanitarian law, or the laws of war, works to distinguish between "international" and "non-international" armed conflicts. Under the Geneva Conventions of 1949, the laws relating to international armed conflicts apply to all instances of armed conflict between two or more states.

In a non-international armed conflict, the parties to the conflict can involve a confrontation between government forces and one or more non-governmental armed groups, or between two or more non-governmental armed groups. Under international law, armed groups are required to demonstrate sufficient organization and control to effectively conduct military operations and adhere to international humanitarian law in order to be considered "parties" to the conflict. Additionally, an armed conflict also requires a certain level of intensity in the hostilities between the parties, which is measured by the weapons used, the duration of the hostilities, and other factors.

Although many countries are involved in the conflict in Yemen, the fighting does not involve a state engaged in an armed conflict with another state. Therefore, it is not an international armed conflict, and instead falls under the legal framework of non-international armed conflicts. This information is derived from a report by Human Rights Watch in 2015.





## The law applicable to fighting in Yemen and who abides by it?

The non-international armed conflict between the internationally recognized government forces and the Arab coalition on one side, and the Houthi forces on the other side, is subject to international humanitarian law as outlined in treaties and customary international law. One of the key treaty provisions is Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, which considers all members of the coalition as parties to the conflict. As we discuss below, Common Article 3 establishes minimum standards for all parties in a non-international armed conflict. Additionally, Yemen and some participating states in the armed conflict are also parties to Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions, which provides additional protection measures for combatants and civilians during non-international armed conflicts.

All parties to the armed conflict in Yemen, including non-governmental armed groups, are responsible for complying with the provisions of international humanitarian law. This means that each party must respect the laws of war and ensure their adherence to them. This commitment is not based on the principle of reciprocity, meaning that each party must respect the conditions regardless of whether the opposing party does so or not. It is also independent of the underlying causes of the conflict or the reasons that led a particular party to resort to the use of force, whether it be government forces or non-governmental armed groups. All parties to the armed conflict are bound by the same standards, irrespective of any variations in the harm caused by alleged violations. (Human Rights Watch, 2015)

## International laws for the protection of children in war and armed conflict

Children, as civilians, are entitled to protection under international humanitarian law in two different situations. Firstly, if they fall into the hands of the enemy forces, they must be protected against killing, abuse, torture, and other forms of mistreatment, including sexual violence, arbitrary detention, hostage-taking, or forced displacement. Secondly, they should not be targeted in any circumstances. Their lives must be safeguarded, and they should be protected from any harm. As a result, there are multiple rules of customary international humanitarian law that are binding on parties to the conflict, regardless of whether these parties have ratified the relevant treaties or not. The principles of protecting children in armed conflicts are always at the top of the international political agenda. The United Nations Security Council has a dedicated team that annually addresses various violations that affect the rights of children in wars and conflicts.

### There are a range of legal instruments aimed at protecting children:

- The Geneva Convention on the Protection of Children in War (Fourth Geneva Convention) of 1949.
- The Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I) adopted in 1977.
- The Second Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II) adopted in 1977.
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989.
- The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) of 1990.
- The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 1998.
- The International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour adopted in 1999.
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC) of 2000.
- The Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (Paris Principles) adopted in 2007.

### (Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1990 (No. 260))

#### **1- Article 6:**

- States Parties recognize that every child has an inherent right to life.
- States Parties shall ensure to the greatest extent possible the survival and development of the child.

#### **2- Article 16:**

- No arbitrary or unlawful interference with a child shall be carried out in his or her private life, family, home or correspondence, nor any unlawful infringement of his or her honour or reputation.
- The child has the right to be protected by law from such exposure or prejudice.

#### **3- Article 19:**

States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental harm or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, abuse or exploitation, including sexual abuse.



#### **4- Article 27:**

- States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for his or her physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.
- The parents, one of them or the other persons responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their financial means and capabilities, the living conditions necessary for the development of the child.

#### **5- Article 37:**

- No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. No death penalty or life imprisonment are imposed.
- No child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child must be carried out in accordance with the law and may be exercised only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time.

#### **6- Article 38:**

- States Parties undertake to respect and ensure respect for the rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts involving children.
- States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons under fifteen years of age do not take a direct part in the war.

#### **7- Article 39:**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child who is a victim of any form of neglect, exploitation or abuse, torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, or armed conflict. This rehabilitation and reintegration takes place in an environment that promotes the health, self-esteem and dignity of the child.



# The third axis: The theoretical framework of the study variables



The armed conflict in Yemen has entered its ninth year with no clear political solution in sight or an end to the crisis that has led to an unprecedented deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the country.

Despite the increasing international pressure on the parties to the conflict in Yemen over the years, which has resulted in consultations, prisoner exchanges, ceasefire agreements, and cessation of hostilities, the war has not subsided. The conflict has resurfaced, and the Houthi group has persisted in attacking Marib, launching artillery and ballistic missile strikes on residential areas and displacement camps throughout several months of 2021.

Despite ongoing international pressure, there are no clear indications of a decline in human rights violations in Yemen. Moreover, the efforts of the United Nations and the international community have not prevented the worsening of the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, which is on the brink of famine spreading across the country.



## Children pay the price

The ongoing armed conflict in Yemen since the end of 2014 has resulted in thousands of civilian casualties. Additionally, there has been extensive destruction of properties, civilian infrastructure, and various aspects of the country's infrastructure on a large scale.

Children have not been spared from the impacts of this conflict. Prominent expert teams have expressed great concern regarding the irreparable harm inflicted upon children, which continues to be caused by the parties involved in the conflict.



## Dead and disabled children:

In the ongoing armed conflict in Yemen, according to a report by the United Nations Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in the country, approximately 2,600 children were killed or maimed, with intensified hostilities during the years 2019 and 2020. The report details how these young individuals became victims of indiscriminate use of mortar shells, artillery, ground fighting, anti-personnel mines, and other explosive remnants of war. (Yemen: New report points to continued suffering of children due to war and aid crisis, 2021)

UNICEF confirmed that since the escalation of the conflict in Yemen, it has verified the death and injury of more than ten thousand children, which means that the actual number may be much higher. (UNICEF, 2022)

While UN reports estimated that the number of dead and wounded during the years of war amounted to more than 10,200 children, other reports by international human rights organizations put the number of dead and wounded at more than 14,000 children (5,700 dead and 8,310 wounded).

In ICRC-supported physical rehabilitation centres, 38 per cent of patients are children who need prosthetic and orthopaedic services as a result of losing or severely injured limbs as a result of unexploded ordnance and landmines, often picked up by children thinking they were toys. (ICRC, 2019)

International human rights reports have confirmed that during the period from 2014 to 2022, (477) children were documented as killed, while the number of children injured due to landmine explosions reached (730).

## Abduction of children:

While international humanitarian law prohibits harming civilians, especially children, international human rights reports confirmed that the cases of abduction involving children amounted to 888 cases. SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties held the Houthi group responsible for 90% of these cases, saying that "the group is responsible for 797 out of 888 incidents of child abduction," while the rest of the 10% were distributed among other parties to the conflict in Yemen, during the war period.

(Yemen: Children in the crosshairs of seven years of war, 2022)





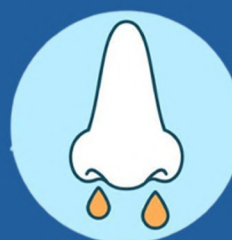
## Premature loss and exhaustion:

Armed conflict has prevented thousands of students from attending education and caused others to drop out of school, and the United Nations estimates that more than two million children are out of school and that more than 2,000 schools have been damaged or destroyed by the war, making it difficult for many children to access education. (ICRC, 2019)

During the conflict, attacks on education continued, with 37 attacks on schools recorded, and the military use of 80 schools, further weakening children's right to education. The armed conflict has led to premature occupancy of children; they have not lived their normal childhood life, assumed responsibilities beyond their means and capabilities, and have become breadwinners for their families by going to work, including hazardous work, or begging in the streets. (ICRC, 2019)

## Health risks:

Diseases have killed children as a result of the armed conflict and its repercussions on the health sector; the number of children and women suffering from acute malnutrition in Yemen is estimated at 3.2 million children and women, and 50% of children in Yemen suffer from permanent stunting. According to Save the Children, Yemen has 200,000 suspected cases of cholera among children and at least 193 deaths related to the disease. (ICRC, 2019)





## Militarization of childhood:

Although the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, to which Yemen is a party, states that non-state armed groups "shall under no circumstances recruit or use individuals under the age of 18 in hostilities ." The Protocol sets the minimum age of 18 years for participation within the national armed forces in armed conflict. Under the laws of war, the recruitment or use of children under the age of 15 by parties to a conflict is a war crime, for which commanders can bear criminal responsibility.

However, Human Rights Watch reported that Houthi forces used child soldiers. The Group of Eminent Experts stated that, since its establishment, it had intensively investigated the recruitment and use of children under the age of 18 in hostilities by all parties to the conflict. Human Rights Watch, 2015

According to a report published by Deutsche Welle in 2021, it said: "The phenomenon of child recruitment is one of the most prominent forms of human rights violations during the war in Yemen for years, during which human rights reports documented many cases in various parties, especially the Houthi group, which accounted for more than 77% of the cases of recruitment and use of children documented in the annual United Nations report on children and conflict areas, while the documented cases of recruitment into government forces



amounted to 16% and less. of 5% by the Security Belt Forces loyal to the Southern Transition Council."

There are no accurate statistics on the number of child soldiers in the Yemen war, but a number of human rights organizations indicate that there are tens of thousands of child soldiers by parties to the conflict. SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties said the Houthi group is accused of recruiting more than 20,000 children and involving them in the armed conflict. (Yemen: Children in the crosshairs of seven years of war, 2022)

## Psychological support as a human right:

Children are the weakest link in society due to their mental, physical and intellectual composition; therefore, the impact of armed conflicts on them is greater, and the effects caused by war far exceed the physical destruction, leaving tens of thousands of children with behavioral disorders and psychological disabilities, which may accompany some children to advanced stages of their ages.

Currently, the Canadian organization Warchild refers in its slogan to the great psychological effects of war on children under the slogan "We can get a child out of war; but who can get war out of a child?"

In order for a child's personality to develop properly, in light of wars and conflicts, they need to satisfy many of their basic needs, such as the need for security in stable and positive family relationships, the need for love to build a healthy psychological balance, the need to play as a natural instinct that enables the development of their psychological, mental and physical abilities, and the need for praise, encouragement and motivation to build a strong personality capable of overcoming crises.

The United Nations affirms that, in order for a child's personality to develop fully and harmoniously, he must grow up in a family environment in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding, and that, due to his physical and mental immaturity, he needs special preventive measures and care, including appropriate legal protection, as stated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. It stresses the importance of international cooperation to improve the living conditions of children in each country, particularly in developing countries.

UNICEF, a United Nations organization, aspires to protect and advocate for children with the aim of assisting them in meeting their essential and basic needs and expanding the available opportunities for them. In carrying out this mission, UNICEF relies on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes various provisions and legal frameworks that specify the minimum rights and freedoms that governments must respect.





## Effects of the war on mental health in Yemen

The armed conflict in Yemen has posed additional challenges to mental health institutions. Although there is "no detailed information on the specific effects of the conflict on mental health facilities and access to their services," a WHO survey found that out of 3,507 health facilities, "services related to diseases are noncommunicable and mental health conditions are only available in 21% of health facilities." (Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies, 2017)

There is a lack of precise statistics on the number of cases affected by mental illnesses and disorders since the outbreak of the war in March 2015. However, a study conducted by the Family Counseling and Development Foundation to estimate the prevalence of mental disorders among the population in Yemen revealed that during the period from 2014 to 2017, the number of individuals suffering from mental and psychological illnesses reached approximately 5.5 million Yemenis. The youth in the age group of 16-30 years constituted 80% of the total cases affected by mental and psychological disorders, which represents 50% of the youth population, accounting for one-third of Yemen's total population.

Certainly, the numbers of those seeking psychological treatment do not reflect the actual reality of the prevalence of mental illnesses, for several reasons. One of the most prominent reasons is the social stigma associated with mental illnesses. Families of patients often consider it shameful for a family member to seek treatment at a psychiatric hospital. As a result, they tend to keep such cases hidden, leading to underreporting. Additionally, there is a prevailing cultural belief that regular check-ups, diagnosis, and treatment should only be sought when the condition becomes severe and critical. Furthermore, the lack of awareness among people about mental health and its symptoms affects their inclination towards seeking treatment. Many people are unaware of the signs and symptoms of mental illnesses

and disorders, and they may rely on alternative traditional solutions such as seeking religious rituals or turning to traditional healers using the Quran or folk remedies. This can have a negative impact on the patient's well-being. Moreover, many Yemenis hesitate to discuss their concerns or seek professional services regarding the conditions they are experiencing. Reports indicate that Yemenis suffering from mental illness have been detained in family homes, "In addition, the cost of medication remains prohibitive for most Yemenis, and the use of electrotherapy is still common" (Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies, 2017).



## Psychological effects of armed conflict on children

Wars lead to devastating consequences for individuals and communities, particularly affecting the impoverished class. The disruption of water and electricity supply, lack of employment opportunities, and food insecurity create nerve-wracking and psychological tensions. These factors are sufficient to cause physical and mental illnesses such as mood disorders, anxiety, depression, agitation, panic, aggression, and others. Consequently, they result in the breakdown of social bonds, family disintegration, addiction, and suicide.

Children, by virtue of their mental, physical and psychological composition, are the most exposed to psychological damage due to stressful events and war conditions; they appear through a set of symptoms that negatively affect their performance and academic achievement and lead to disruption in their lives in general.

Like all war-affected children, Yemen's children faced severe physical injuries, physical disabilities, abduction, forced recruitment, loss of one or both parents, poverty, lack of basic needs, stress and psychological crises.

Daily psychological stress in children leaves a range of behavioral and psychological problems, such as fears, anxiety, mood swings, poor educational achievement, learning difficulties, sleep and memory disorders, in addition to psychotic symptoms, and personality disorders that may accompany them throughout their lives.

A child's experience of armed conflict, violence, physical disability, abduction, forced recruitment and the loss of a relative result in a range of behavioral and psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, mood swings, poor educational attainment, sleep and memory disorders, psychotic symptoms and delayed mental, physical and emotional development.

The conflict leads to numerous destructive psychological effects on children, such as impaired ability to think, plan, and problem-solve, inability to form emotional bonds with others, loss of trust in their surroundings, disruption of their sense of safety and psychological stability, inclination towards isolation and introversion, and the prevalence of a culture of fear and withdrawal. These factors hinder their ability to live well and contribute to the emergence of feelings of sadness, depression, aggressive reactions, and chronic fear of losing loved ones. Consequently, they withdraw from engaging in normal activities such as playing, entertainment, and education.

The disabilities resulting from landmine explosions, explosive devices, or airstrikes generate continuous sleep disturbances for children, as well as a fear of loud sounds resembling explosions. In general, children with disabilities of both genders experience profound frustration because they are unable to play with peers or run in open spaces as they used to. Some of them have expressed hesitancy in continuing to attend school due to embarrassment about their appearance after acquiring the disability (Citizen Rights Organization, 2022).





## **The most prominent symptoms of the psychological effects of war on children**

Armed conflict inflicts numerous damages on children, and scientific studies indicate that children are the most affected group by the moral and psychological consequences of conflict. Their impact is manifested through a range of symptoms, including exposure to physical and mental setbacks, memory impairment, night terrors, sleep disorders, disturbing dreams, bedwetting, speech problems such as stuttering or functional speech loss, nail-biting, and the emergence of certain nervous manifestations. In addition, they develop a fear of loud sounds such as gunfire or aircraft noises, as well as phobias or pathological fear of sounds and darkness.

The psychological effects on children due to armed conflict also manifest through other symptoms, such as eating disorders and loss of appetite, persistent feelings of anger and self-blame, substance abuse including smoking or drug addiction, and the reliving of painful memories. They may also exhibit heightened sensitivity to stimuli and hyperarousal. Additionally, behavioral problems can arise, including theft, aggression, academic underachievement, school dropout, and mistreatment. Physical symptoms may appear, such as somatic complaints, panic attacks, paranoia, and psychosis.



# Fourth axis: Study Results:

At the end of the research study and after processing the data, the results included in Table (1) were reached, which shows the most important psychological effects of war on children (arranged in descending order) according to the arithmetic mean (the first fifteen).

No	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	Rank
1	Feels reassured when he's with you	3.66	1
2	Prefers to sleep with you	3.16	2
3	He feels scared when left alone	3.04	3
4	Has difficulty paying attention or focusing on tasks such as homework	2.72	4
5	He is stubborn in his actions	2.58	5
6	Seems sad, tired, restless, or seems unstable	2.48	6
7	Has problems with functioning and behaviors at school	2.48	6
8	Sleeps hardly	2.48	6
9	He is afraid of soldiers and loud sounds	2.46	7
10	He spends a lot of time alone	2.42	8
11	Behaves aggressively with others	2.34	9
12	sucks his finger	2.32	10
13	Hold the hem of your dress outside the house	2.26	11

14	Has low self-esteem	2.18	12
15	Shows sudden changes in eating and sleeping patterns	2.18	12
16	Sleeping-nightmares	2.16	13
17	Biting his nails	2.14	14
18	He gets angry for the simplest things	2.6	15
19	He cries for the most trivial reasons	2.6	15
20	Afraid of simple things	2.6	15

## Presentation and interpretation of results:

From Table (1), it is evident that the paragraph titled "Child's Sense of Security by Being with Father or Mother" ranked first with an average of (3.66) and a standard deviation of (0.51942). This is because the terrifying and tragic conditions of war, characterized by bombardment, mines, shells, and the sound of gunfire, which have plagued these areas for years, and the resulting destruction, killing, and disabling of children, their parents, or their peers. All of these circumstances have created an atmosphere filled with fear, panic, and anxiety, and the child can only feel secure when they are with one of their parents, especially the mother.

As for the paragraph titled "Child's Preference to Sleep with Both Parents," it ranked second with an average of (3.16) and a standard deviation of (0.93372). The child only feels secure and stable when they are with their mother. It is observed that they seek comfort and stability in the embrace of their mother, whereas in a normal situation, the child should be stable and have their own identity and bedroom.

The paragraph titled "Feeling Fear When Left Alone" ranked third with an average of (3.04) and a standard deviation of (1.00934). This is because when the child is alone, distressing war scenes come to their mind, and their imagination becomes active in drawing terrifying scenarios about the war and its potential consequences towards them or their loved ones. Therefore, they seek refuge with their parents or older siblings to alleviate the fear that overwhelms them when they are alone.

As for the paragraph titled "Facing Difficulty in Attention or Concentration on Tasks such as Homework," it ranked fourth with an average of (2.72). It is observed that war has



caused many educational and academic problems for the child, such as poor academic performance, lack of motivation to study, psychological and behavioral issues, and other effects influenced by multiple factors. These factors include the interplay of personal psychological factors with environmental, social, economic, and familial factors in the child's life. These factors leave various imprints on the child's personality and weaken their ability to pay attention, concentrate, and fulfill their academic and household responsibilities.

The paragraph titled "Child's Defiance in Behavior" ranked fifth with an average of (2.58).

This can be attributed to the fact that children at this age want to freely express their desires and needs. However, due to the unusual circumstances, the child finds themselves faced with the commands and requests of their parents and their restrictions. This pushes them to oppose both their parents and the environment in which they live.

The paragraphs titled "Appearing Sad, Tired, Disturbed, or Unsettled," "Having Difficulty Sleeping," and "Experiencing Problems in Performance and Behavior at School" ranked sixth with an average of (2.48). The devastating scenes of war and its tragic consequences have had a significant impact on the child's psychological well-being. They feel sadness, exhaustion, disturbance, and instability. The sound of gunfire, cannons, and shells, as well as the atmosphere of terror and anxiety that looms over the family, make it difficult for the child to sleep peacefully. Moreover, witnessing their parents' worry and fear for their safety further worsens the children's psychological state, leading to difficulties in falling asleep. This, in turn, affects their performance and behavior at school.

The paragraph titled "Fear of Soldiers and Loud Sounds" ranked seventh with an average of (2.46). This is because there are soldiers around the child, both in close proximity and in various locations, and among them may be a family member such as the father, brother, or uncle. Additionally, the sounds of artillery, shells, tanks, and continuous explosions, especially when accompanied by the interruption of basic services such as water and electricity, create fears and anxieties in children. This fear is reflected in the children's lives and affects them significantly.

The paragraph titled "Spending a Lot of Time Alone" ranked eighth with an average of (2.42). The psychological trauma caused by war, the fear of death, and the loss of loved ones, whether within the family or in the surrounding environment, create reactions in children characterized by a tendency towards introversion and isolation. As a result, the child spends a significant amount of time alone.

The paragraph titled "Behaving Aggressively Towards Others" ranked ninth with an average of (2.34). Aggressive behavior has become a characteristic displayed by almost all children affected by the consequences of war. It becomes their way of fulfilling their desires and needs. This behavior is primarily attributed to the violent and harmful events that occur in the child's environment across various aspects of life.

The paragraph titled "Thumb-sucking" ranked tenth with an average of (2.32). Thumb-sucking is a natural behavior that children exhibit when they feel fear, anxiety, or confusion.

The paragraph titled "Holding onto Your Clothing Outside the House" ranked eleventh with an average of (2.26). This behavior is a result of the fear that dominates the child and their sense of insecurity outside the house.

The paragraph titled "Experiencing Low Self-Esteem" and the paragraph titled "Exhibiting Sudden Changes in Eating and Sleeping Patterns" ranked twelfth with an average of (2.18). The impact of war and psychological pressures can manifest as a diminished sense of self-worth and a feeling of inadequacy in the child, leading to negative emotions and a lack of self-respect. The child may believe they are destined to fail and are unfit for any task. Consequently, this tension and disruption can cause sudden changes in eating and sleeping patterns.

The paragraph titled "Experiencing Nightmares" ranked thirteenth with an average of (2.13). This is due to the horrors of war and its negative consequences, as children witness various scenes of conflict, casualties, injuries, destruction, and hear the sounds of explosions and gunfire. All of these experiences can lead to children experiencing nightmares during sleep. Additionally, the traumatic event or parts of it may appear in children's dreams in the form of nightmarish images.

The paragraph titled "Nail-biting" ranked fourteenth with an average of (2.14). The child's resort to nail-biting is considered a natural behavior in situations of fear, anxiety, and unease. The paragraphs titled "Getting Angry over Small Things," "Crying for Trivial Reasons," and "Being Afraid of Simple Things" ranked fifteenth with an average of (2.6). These expressions indicate the sadness and melancholy that overshadow the child's psyche. This is manifested through anger over small things, crying for trivial reasons, and fear of seemingly simple things. It's a state that may appear as a natural occurrence in almost all children and in various circumstances.



## Conclusions of the study:

- The armed conflict in Yemen has led to a widespread deterioration of mental health.
- War causes various psychological effects and disorders among children.
- The negative impacts of war affect children in general, albeit to varying degrees.
- War leaves profound effects on children due to the traumatic experiences they have endured in their environment. This disrupts their sense of security and stability, making them more vulnerable to different risks.
- The psychological and mental health issues experienced by children can result in functional impairments that hinder their ability to perform well in school, complete homework assignments, or engage in social relationships.
- The role of the family is crucial in helping children cope with crises and challenges and overcome their effects.
- Answering children's questions, attempting to clarify their surroundings, and providing them with a space to express their feelings are important factors in helping them release pent-up emotions and concerns.
- It is essential to accept all children's behaviors as expressions of their internal experiences.

# General recommendations:





## **At the level of the government and its relevant ministries:**

- Strengthen legislation and laws to protect children's rights and ensure a safe and sustainable environment for their development.
- Establish a strong network of accessible psychosocial services in the affected areas.
- Provide legal support for children who have been exploited and subjected to war violence.
- Improve the role of schools in providing psychosocial support to war-affected children.
- Strengthening the role of hospitals and health centers in providing appropriate psychological care for children and their families.
- Ensure that medicines and resources for psychiatric care are available at all times
- Networking with local and international organizations to enhance available capacities and resources.
- Call on governments, NGOs and UN bodies to increase attention to mental health issues in Yemen.
- Paying attention to the cause of war victims and compensating them as much as possible to overcome their material crises and enacting laws to ensure this.
- Providing awareness programs to parents through satellite channels and various media.
- Establish contact points and support in the community for children and parents to obtain psychosocial assistance.
- Promote public awareness about the psychological effects of war on children and its long-term effects.

## **Health institutions and hospitals:**

- Improve access to mental health services and provide appropriate psychological care for children and their families in hospitals and health centres.
- Provide training and guidance to staff to improve their competence in providing psychological care to war-affected children.
- Create a supportive and child-friendly environment to help relieve stress and anxiety.
- Provide counselling and therapeutic services to children and their families to help them cope with the effects of war.
- Ensure that medicines and resources for psychiatric care are available at all times.
- Strengthen cooperation with other entities to ensure smooth coordination in the provision of psychiatric care.

- Train health professionals and social workers on how to deal with war-affected children and provide them with psychosocial support in effective and appropriate ways.

## Schools & Educational Institutions

- Providing educational programs that promote the psychological and social health of children.
- Promote awareness of the psychological effects of war on children and provide a supportive and safe environment for their learning.
- Provide additional support to war-affected children through psychological counselling and guidance.
- Organizing recreational and educational activities for children to reduce stress and enhance social communication.
- Provide resilience and coping skills enhancement programmes for war-affected children.
- Teaching topics on peace and conflict resolution in the curriculum to raise awareness among students.
- Strengthen the partnership between schools and parents to provide comprehensive support to war-affected children.
- Provide activities for positive thinking and promote a sense of belonging and optimism in children.
- Provide health and sports care programs to promote children's mental and physical health.
- Allocate rooms or spaces for children to express their feelings and promote creativity and social interaction.
- Provide educational support to children who have been greatly affected by the war to overcome academic difficulties.
- Strengthen child safety awareness programmes and protection measures in cases of emergencies and threats.
- Provide activities for positive thinking and promote a sense of belonging and optimism in children.
- Provide health and sports care programs to promote children's mental and physical health.
- Provide training courses for teachers and staff to increase their awareness of the psychological impact of war on children.



## Family & Community

- Create a mitigating environment for the effects of shock, such as avoiding noise and sounds, providing appropriate lighting, heating, and staying away from windows.
- Encourage more community support for people psychologically affected by the conflict.
- Educating families to pay attention to supervisory relations and kinship, especially in circumstances of crises and wars.
- Involve children and adolescents in behavioral and therapeutic activities such as: playing, guided play, drawing, singing, relaxation, and emotional discharge.
- Psychological support aimed at supporting the child's responsibility and entrepreneurial spirit through participation in volunteer work and targeted social activity.

## Non-governmental organizations

- Provide legal support for children who have been exploited and subjected to war violence.
- Provide training and resources for psychosocial workers to enhance their capacities.
- Expand programmes for war-affected children and provide services that meet their psychosocial needs.
- Contribute to the collection of data and research to improve understanding of the psychological effects of war on children.
- Promote public awareness about the importance of psychosocial care for war-affected children.
- Promote awareness and education about the psychological effects of war on children and how to deal with them.
- Enhance cooperation and knowledge exchange between different organizations.

## The international community and international organizations

- Increase funding to support psychosocial programmes for war-affected children in Yemen.
- Strengthen political and diplomatic pressure to achieve the protection of children's rights and provide them with the necessary support.
- Providing technical and skill support to local authorities in the development and implementation of psychological support programs.

- Strengthen cooperation with the Government of Yemen and NGOs to ensure the implementation of inclusive and sustainable programmes.
- Work to provide educational and training opportunities for war-affected children to enable them to build a better future.
- Strengthen funding for NGOs working in the field of psychosocial support for children in Yemen.
- Organizing workshops to design social and psychological integration and rehabilitation programmes for children affected by conflict, drawing on the experiences of countries that have experienced similar civil conflicts and with the broad participation of local civil society organizations concerned with children.
- Expand programmes to remote and disadvantaged areas in Yemen to reach as many affected children as possible.
- Provide training and guidance to NGOs on best practices in providing psychological support to children.
- Providing legal support to children who have been exploited and subjected to war violence.
- Provide support for public awareness programs on the psychological effects of war on children and how to deal with them.
- Increase funding and resources for the provision of psychological care for war-affected children.
- Providing funding and technical support for programs to provide psychological care for affected children.
- Provide psychosocial and therapeutic support to child war survivors and their families.
- Develop psychological counseling and psychological support programs for children who have witnessed or been subjected to war violence.



## References:

1. The effects of war and violent conflict on young people. (2015). Retrieved from (UN 2015).
2. Mental health in Yemen. Time catastrophe. (8 January, 2021). : Retrieved from the Yemeni Institute for Media Freedom. <https://yem-imf.com/%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A7/>
3. International Committee of the Red Cross. (15 October, 2019). Imperfect childhood: The consequences of the conflict for Yemen's children. Retrieved from <https://www.icrc.org/ar/-document/yemen-childhood-interrupted-conflicts-toll-yemens-youth>
4. Yemen: Children in the crosshairs of seven years of war. (25 July, 2022). Retrieved from Yemen Future: <https://yemenfuture.net/news/9517>
5. Yemen: New report indicates children continue to suffer due to war and aid crisis. (27 September, 2021). Recovered from the United Nations: <https://news.un.org/ar/story/2021/09/1084002>
6. UNICEF. (24 January, 2022). Violence has escalated rapidly in Yemen, leaving a severe impact on children. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/ar/%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%86%D9%81-%D8%A8%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%8B-%D8%A3%D8%AB%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D9%88%D8%AE%D9%8A%D9%85%D8%A7>
7. Gerges Michel Gerges. (- 2005 p. 358). Dictionary of educational and psychological terms. Lebanon First Edition: Without.
8. Children's rights in Islam. (July 14, 2008). Retrieved from the story of Islam: <https://islam-story.com/ar/artical/23410>
9. Dr. Fatima Al-Hamsas Al-Youbi. (29 July, 2021). Children's rights in the most important civilizations and heavenly laws. Retrieved from Manar al-Islam website: <https://islamanar.com/child-rights>
10. Dr. Asma Abdul-Jabbar. (2015). Wars and their psychological effects on the children of Diyala Governorate, . : Retrieved from Childhood and Maternal Research Center, p. 6. <https://childcenter.uodiyala.edu.iq/>
11. Eng. Donia Jalil Ismail Al-Rubaie / Iraq. (without). Social problems facing widowed women in Iraqi society (a field study) in the city of Baquba. Retrieved from the Center for Childhood and Maternal Research - unpublished study. : <https://childcenter.uodiyala.edu.iq/>
12. Eng. Donia Jalil Ismail Al-Rubaie /. (Unpublished study). Social problems facing widowed women in Iraqi society (a field study) in the city of Baquba. Retrieved from the Childhood and Maternal Research Center: <https://childcenter.uodiyala.edu.iq/>
13. Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies. (14 December 2017). The impact of the war on mental health in Yemen: a neglected crisis. Retrieved from Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies: [https://sanaacenter.org/ar/publications-all?filter\\_year=2017#navigation\\_by\\_year](https://sanaacenter.org/ar/publications-all?filter_year=2017#navigation_by_year)

# Appendices

## List of questionnaires addressed to parents of children affected by armed conflict in Yemen

Dear Father/Dear Mother

good greeting

The researchers seek to conduct a field study entitled  
**The psychological effects of armed conflict on children in Yemen (Sana'a, Taiz, and Marib governorates as a model).**

For the purposes of scientific research, researchers put in your hands a set of paragraphs that express your possible answer to a number of these problems, asking you for honesty and objectivity in the answer in the service of scientific research.

In order to save your time, answering all the questions on this list requires placing a (✓) in front of the answer that reflects your point of view in the designated field. Given the daily behavior of your children in this field, the researchers hope that you will work with them to complete the data contained in this list accurately and objectively.

The researchers extend their sincere thanks and appreciation for your cooperation with them and kindly answer the questions of this list, stressing that your answers will remain strictly confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study.



# Study Team

## Personal data

Child's name (optional)----- Age -----

## Questionnaire Questions

### Questionnaire Questions

Below is a list of some phrases to the left of each phrase four choices according to the Likert quadruple scale according to the degree of importance, from (4) to (1).

Please tick (✓) your agreement with the statement that reflects your view for each of the following:

Table (2)

No	Phrase	مدى الموافقة			
		Strongly	Moderately	Basically	N/A
		4	3	2	1
1	Feels reassured when he's with you				
2	He feels scared when left alone				
3	Prefers to sleep with you				
4	Seems sad, tired, troubled or seems unstable				
5	He is stubborn in his behavior				
6	He sucks his finger				
7	He bites his nails				
8	He gets angry over the simplest things				
9	He cries for no reason				
10	He spends a lot of time alone				
11	He has low self-esteem				
12	He has trouble getting along with family and friends				
13	Feels anxious about things				
14	Feels difficulty breathing				
15	Always feels vomiting				
16	Suffers from appetite disorders				



17	Sleeps hardly				
18	He has nightmares while sleeping				
19	He suffers from bedwetting at night				
20	He shows sudden changes in eating and sleeping patterns				
21	Acts aggressively towards others				
22	He engages in excessive aggression and self-destructive behavior				
23	He is afraid of soldiers and loud sounds				
24	Has problems with functioning and behaviors at school				
25	Has difficulty paying attention or concentrating on tasks such as homework				
26	Hold the hem of your dress outside the house				
27	Pee in his bed				
28	He is afraid of simple things				
29	He always feels sad and melancholy				
30	Loss of interest in hobbies such as sports and play				
31	He talks about death or suicide				
32	Hares, tortures, or even kills animals				

Table (3) shows the statistics of range, minimum, maximum, arithmetic mean, arithmetic mean of standard error, standard deviation, and variance.

No	Paragraph	عدد الاستمارات للفقرة	احصائيات النطاق	احصائيات الحد الأدنى	احصائيات الحد الأقصى	إحصائية المتوسط الحسابي	المتوسط الحسابي للخطأ المعياري	الانحراف المعياري الإحصائية	التباين الإحصائية
1	Feels reassured when he's with you	50	2	2	4	3.66	0.07346	0.51942	0.27
2	He feels scared when left alone	50	3	1	4	3.04	0.14274	1.00934	1.019
3	Prefers to sleep with you	50	3	1	4	3.16	0.13205	0.93372	0.872
4	Seems sad, tired, troubled or seems unstable	50	3	1	4	2.48	0.12854	0.90891	0.826
5	He is stubborn in his behavior	50	3	1	4	2.58	0.13121	0.9278	0.861
6	He sucks his finger	50	4	0	4	2.32	0.16767	1.18563	1.406
7	He bites his nails	50	4	0	4	2.14	0.15389	1.08816	1.184
8	He gets angry over the simplest things	50	4	0	4	2.6	0.18516	1.30931	1.714
9	He cries for no reason	50	4	0	4	2.6	0.1277	0.90351	0.816
10	He spends a lot of time alone	50	3	0	4	2.42	0.13729	0.9708	0.942
11	He has low self-esteem	50	4	0	4	2.18	0.14482	1.024	1.049
12	He has trouble getting along with family and friends	50	4	0	4	2.4	0.16162	1.14286	1.306
13	Feels anxious about things	50	4	0	4	2.3	0.15452	1.09265	1.194
14	Feels difficulty breathing	50	3	1	4	1.92	0.11006	0.77828	0.606
15	Always feels vomiting	50	3	1	4	2.2	0.11006	0.9689	0.939
16	Suffers from appetite disorders	50	4	0	4	2.04	0.15639	1.10583	1.223



17	Sleeps hardly	50	3	1	4	2.48	0.15969	1.1292	1.275
18	He has nightmares while sleeping	50	4	1	4	2.16	0.12571	0.88893	0.79
19	He suffers from bedwetting at night	50	3	1	4	1.92	0.13352	0.94415	0.891
20	He shows sudden changes in eating and sleeping patterns	50	3	1	4	2.18	0.12017	0.84973	0.722
21	Acts aggressively towards others	50	4	0	4	2.34	0.17522	1.23899	1.535
22	He engages in excessive aggression and self-destructive behavior	50	4	0	4	1.88	0.12662	0.89534	0.802
23	He is afraid of soldiers and loud sounds	50	4	0	4	2.46	0.16465	1.16426	1.356
24	Has problems with functioning and behaviors at school	50	3	1	4	2.48	0.14354	1.01499	1.03
25	Has difficulty paying attention or concentrating on tasks such as homework	50	3	1	4	2.72	0.12467	0.88156	0.777
26	Hold the hem of your dress outside the house	50	4	0	4	2.26	0.17569	1.24228	1.543
27	Pee in his bed	50	4	0	4	2.1	0.14639	1.0351	1.071
28	He is afraid of simple things	50	4	0	4	2.6	0.14846	1.04978	1.102
29	He always feels sad and melancholy	50	3	1	4	2.2	0.1178	0.83299	0.694
30	Loss of interest in hobbies such as sports and play	50	4	0	4	2.2	0.15119	1.06904	1.143
31	He talks about death or suicide	50	3	1	4	1.66	0.13883	0.98167	0.964
32	Hares, tortures, or even kills animals	50	3	1	4	1.64	0.14501	1.02539	1.051









## **Tortured childhood**

### **The hidden wounds of war**

A field study on the impact of armed conflict on the mental health of Yemeni children during March 2015-December 2022.

November 2023

[info@samrl.org](mailto:info@samrl.org)

[www.samrl.org](http://www.samrl.org)