

# UNICEF Yemen



Zahra standing on her neighbour's destroyed house. Lahj, Yemen, 6 August 2016. © UNICEF Yemen/Kram Kamal

## CHILD PROTECTION

## THEMATIC REPORT

JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2016

PREPARED BY:  
UNICEF YEMEN  
MARCH 2017

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## 1. ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

BR	Birth Registration
CTFMR	Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting of Grave Child Rights Violations
CRA	Civil Registration Authority
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HAC	Humanitarian Action for Children
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
J4C	Justice for Children
MRE	Mine Risk Education
MRM	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ORE	Other Resources (Emergency)
ORR	Other Resources (Regular)
RR	Regular Resources
RWP	Rolling Workplan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TfPM	Task Force on Population Movement
USD	United States Dollar
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
YEMAC	Yemen Executive Mine Action Center
YGUSSWP	Yemen General Union of Sociologists, Social Workers and Psychologists

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The conflict in Yemen has escalated significantly since March 2015, affecting 20 out of Yemen's 22 governorates and exacerbating pre-crisis humanitarian needs. Continued shelling and ground fighting have resulted in the destruction of civilian infrastructure including hospitals, schools, roads and bridges and a collapse of public services, particularly national health, water and sanitation services. Supplies of food, fuel and medicines are critically low and the lack of safe water and proper sanitation pose serious health risks to millions of children and their families.

The looming liquidity crisis in Yemen threatens to limit the country's ability to respond to these needs and is pushing national systems to the verge of collapse. On a micro level, the situation is leaving households unable to afford the rising cost of basic food and services, which in turn will have a huge impact on early child development. Availability of food is being hit by compound factors, including poor wheat harvests in 2015 which almost 30 per cent lower yields than previous years due to access difficulties and low rainfall.

Coping mechanisms are becoming more and more desperate, with people limiting their food intake and negative coping mechanisms such as early marriage being reported with increasing frequency. Civilians are facing growing difficulties purchasing the food they need, with a recent survey suggesting 63 per cent of people rely on credit or loans to buy food<sup>1</sup>. Yemenis are thus also becoming increasingly reliant on humanitarian support, and will be for many years to come.

The complex nature of the conflict and the proliferation of sudden mass population movements presents significant challenges to UNICEF's humanitarian response and ongoing development work in certain areas. Access to some locations such as Taizz, Shabwa, Abyan, Marib, Al Jawf and Hadramout due to ongoing insecurity can hinder the identification of children in need of services. In addition, the two opposing authorities in targeted locations can lead to delays in the implementation of planned activities. However, UNICEF is working through different partners, ministries, NGOs and INGOs in addition to communities through the Community-Based Child Protection Committees and child friendly spaces in order to reach children and families in need.

Protracted displacement in districts hosting displaced populations also places a heavy burden on host populations with already-limited resources, creating the potential for additional protection risks. Today, over 21.1 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance with a caseload that continues to increase, in addition to 3.1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) - according to the latest report of the TFPM<sup>2</sup> - a six-fold increase in the number of IDPs at the same time last year.

An assessment of the 'Justice for Children' system was planned with relevant stakeholders with the aim to assess the current Justice for children related interventions and institutions in light of the current conflict and identify priorities as well as strategic interventions. The J4C (Justice for Children) assessment tools have been prepared and finalized by the J4C Working Group which includes Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, The Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood

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<sup>1</sup> 'Yemen's Invisible Food Crisis', Oxfam, March 2016.

<sup>2</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> Report of the Task Force on Population Movement (TFPM)

and the Yemen NGOs Coalition for Child Rights Care, with the technical support of UNICEF. The assessment will be implemented in the first quarter of 2017.

### 3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT OF 2016

The ongoing conflict and the continuous hostilities in several Yemeni governorates have taken a severe toll on the life of civilians including children and subjected them to extreme violence, abuse and exploitation. 20 out of 22 governorates have now been affected by airstrikes or ground fighting. Children continue to be killed and maimed, recruited and used by parties to the conflict, abducted and arbitrarily detained, and schools and hospitals have been often attacked or used for military purposes denying children of their basic rights to services. The denial of humanitarian assistance and basic services has deprived children of basic services.

UNICEF and its partners have identified a large number of injured children as a result of the continued conflict including mines and UXOs are in need of referral to responsive and viable services. Since March 2015, the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on grave violations of child rights verified the killing of 1,339 children and the injury of 1,978. Armed forces and armed groups continue to recruit and use children in the conflict. 1,247 cases of recruitment and use of children have been verified since the escalation of the conflict. Moreover, schools and hospitals have been frequently attacked and used for military purposes, denying children access to their rights to basic services. At least 270 attacks on schools and hospitals have been documented and verified.

Furthermore, the case management system indicates that children who lost their care givers, witnessed hostilities, engaged in fighting or were held captive or detained have significantly increased levels of psychosocial distress and mental disorders and are in need of specialized mental health and psychological counselling. The lack of available, quality services, coupled with the lack of sufficient trained human resources, is creating a constraint in the functioning of referrals and response to children in need.

The Yemen General Union of Sociologists, Social Workers and Psychologists (YGUSSWP) conducted a rapid assessment in August 2016 in six conflict affected districts of Sana'a governorate to identify the protection risks that children have become exposed to as a result of the conflict. In total the rapid assessment covered 300 heads of household (179 IDPs and 121 conflict affected). The key findings indicate a high level of psychological distress amongst children - at least 90 percent of households noticed changes in their childrens' behaviour. Around 45 percent of children were suffering from severely disturbed sleeping patterns, 33 percent experienced fear or anxiety regularly, and 19 percent were increasingly unwilling to go to school. More than 74 boys and 35 girls needed emergency health services due to disabilities or injuries resulting from the conflict. Furthermore, 96 boys and 92 girls were found to require intensive psychosocial interventions. At least 23 households reported that one or more of their children were separated during displacement or due to the conflict.

UNICEF has interviewed 48 children who were recruited and used by one party to the conflict and detained by the opposing party on the pretext that they are violators/offenders and not victims. Following the release of the children, UNICEF and its implementing partners assessed that those

children were subjected to high psychological distress and physical violence and are in need for psychosocial support, referral to health services, life skills education and support to stable their reintegration in the community including their enrolment to education.

An assessment was conducted in February 2016 by Intersos on the situation of children associated with armed force or armed groups by interviewing 70 individuals in each of Aden, Sana'a and Al Mukalla has found out that the main reason of recruitment was the economic situation. In Sana'a, 42 % of the respondents indicated that children join armed forces and groups to seek monetary and material support and 55% of the respondents indicated that families send their children to recruitment for the same reason. Similar trends were seen in Aden and Al Mukalla in which 49% in Aden and 62% in Al Mukalla responded that children were driven by money and 67% in both Aden and Al Mukalla responded that families send their children to support the family.

A considerable risk to children lies in the form of early marriage. Yemen has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the Middle East and North Africa. Child marriage has increased as a result of the conflict and is more prevalent amongst girls as they become more subjected to early and forced marriage. Early marriage of girls has deprived them of education and limited their opportunities to learn skills to empower them in their community. Child marriage leaves many of the girls vulnerable and feeling isolated in their community. It has also been estimated that there is a correlation between health consequences and early marriage such as reproductive health issues and miscarriage. Rates of child marriage seems to be increasing as families seek dowry payments to cope with conflict-related hardship. A UNICEF-YLDF KAP survey was run across 6 governorates in September 2016, indicating widespread incidence of child marriage practice as follows:

- 72,5% of respondents got married before they reached 18 years (15-49)
- 44,5% got married at the age of fifteen or less

The increase has been reported particularly in Hodeidah, Hajjah and Ibb governorates which currently host large numbers of displaced people. For example, 45.9% of surveyed women in Hodeidah got married at the age of 15 or before. Additionally 43.6% in Dhamar were married before the age of 15, with some cases confirmed at the age of ten and eleven.

Another assessment was conducted by Intersos in five northern governorates and six southern governorates on child marriage interviewing 131 individuals in the North and 120 individuals in the South. In Aden, Abyan, Lahj and Hadramout (72%, 75%, 67%, 69%) of the respondents suggested that child marriage has increased over the last year 2015-2016. They referred to social insecurity and poverty resulting from the war as main reasons. The assessment stated that girls are the most affected of child marriage and child marriage is most prevalent in IDP and marginalized groups. Child marriage results in divorce in which in the majority of situations have problems to integrate into society or be accepted by parents. In the north 50% of the survivors stated to have a bad to very bad relationship, many problems between the partners and their respective families, lack of respect and little to no sense of appreciation and extreme abuse leading to separations. While in the South, 38% of the survivors indicated that they have negative self-image, 34% indicated that they have a loss of appetite, 31% indicated a feeling of loneliness and isolation from the community and 28% indicated a feeling of loneliness and isolation from their family.

A significant challenge for UNICEF is strengthening national capacity to respond to the growing number of grave violations of child rights being committed as a result of the conflict. For a number of years, UNICEF has been working with MoSAL to build the capacity of social workers and strengthen the case management system, including the development of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that give a clear guidance on what actors must do, when to make referrals, what action to take at each stage. The SOPs will furthermore provide a common understanding about the type of services and the way in which they should be delivered to the identified children.

UNICEF is now building on its mapping of service providers in order to address the needs of identified children, including medical interventions and psychological counselling, as well as preventive activities in partnership with YEMAC (Yemen Executive Mine Action Center) through community and school based Mine Risk Education programme as a life-saving activity to protect children and families from the risk of mines and UXOs.

## 4. RESULTS IN THE OUTCOME AREA

UNICEF's programming in Yemen has continued in an L3 emergency context ever since the escalation of the conflict in March 2015. The Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan for 2016 is integrated in the Rolling Work Plan (RWP) of 2016. In the first half of 2016 development oriented activities such as Birth Registration, Child Protection case management and prevention of Child Marriage resumed, indicating a more conducive environment in the country to focus on issues not strictly related to the conflict.

The social work and case management system was strengthened and now provides improved and equitable preventive and responsive services addressing violence, abuse and exploitation of children. Five Standards Operating Procedures (SOPs) on Casement Management and referral pathway have been developed in series of meetings led by the Case Management Working Group. These SOPs have been further reviewed and finalized in two workshops attended by at least 106 participants (female: 46, male: 60) represented different stakeholders. The SOPs were endorsed with technical support and capacity building provided to CP actors and Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

In 2016, a total of 292 social workers (female: 111, male: 181) were equipped with information and skills on how to identify and refer the most vulnerable children to social services. A total of 432 social workers (female: 216, male: 216) have been trained since 2014, indicating a significant scale up in 2016. As result, a total of 2,854 vulnerable children (boys: 1,474, girls: 1,380) have been identified and referred to services in 2016 compared to 1,486 (boys: 865, girls: 621) referred to services between 2014 and 2015.

During 2016 significant efforts were made in establishing strategic partnership to address child marriage through response and prevention, with a focus on adolescent girls who are married and at risk of marriage. A total of 1,587 married adolescent girls have been provided with direct response, through a multi-sectorial package of services (health, legal, psychosocial, education and empowerment). They also received knowledge and skills on the adverse consequences of child marriage, maternal and reproductive health care, the benefits of delayed marriage, as well as the importance of education and staying at or returning to school. At least, 950 at risk adolescent have

been trained on life and coping skills (Training of Trainers), in order to enable them to pass the knowledge on to their peers and other community members and reached 3,924 adolescent girls and 2,483 adolescent boys as well as 5,108 community members (2,883 males; 2,225 females).

At least 278,080 duty bearers, parents, care givers and community and religious leaders were equipped with knowledge and information on the adverse consequences of child marriage and FGM/C, the importance for girls to delay marriage and stay in schools in order to fulfil their own potential, and how to seek services, if needed. During the implementation of community engagement activities by adolescents in targeted locations, five cases have demonstrated changes in relation to child marriage perception and stopped a planned marriage for three girls and two boys.

UNICEF continues to engage with the Civil Registration Authority (CRA) in promoting birth registration and registration of children is ongoing despite the challenging circumstances. Despite the protracted crisis UNICEF, in collaboration with CRA, has managed to resume limited but very important activities on promotion of birth registration with focus on rapid birth registration, outreach and awareness campaigns. We are able to reach the most vulnerable displaced and conflict affected children needing birth certificates and also procured vital items such as birth certificate forms.

In 2016, a total of 254,550 marginalized, displaced and conflict affected children (123,731 girls and 130,908 boys) have been provided with birth certificates during birth registration campaigns through mobile CRA teams in 12 governorates (Hajjah, Ibb, Al Baydha, Amran, Lahj, Al Dhale'e, Amanat Al Asima, Dhamar, Hodeidah, Mahweet, Rayma, and Sana'a).

Pre-assessment and verification of the feasibility of the CRA proposal for a civil registry software, plan and the supplies to be procured in order to establish and equip registration stations in health facilities has been implemented by a Yemeni technical company "FOCUS Softnet Yemen".

The overall objective of this assessment was to review, assess, and verify with justifications the civil registration software development plan/proposal as well as list of supplies (hardware) submitted by the CRA. Specific objectives include:

- Provide technical recommendations on the CRA software proposal.
- To provide actionable conclusions and recommendations to ensure a submission of a realistic and logical proposal, which in turn will contribute to the success of the execution of the project at a later stage.

The recommendations from the assessment included the suggestion on how to develop a software development plan Milestones, based on the information obtained from the evaluation of the current system, the meetings with CRA officials and the visits conducted to birth registration centers in three governorates (Sana'a, Aden, and Ibb).

The conflict continues to take a devastating toll on children. Reports of child rights violations have increased dramatically since March 2015 and continued in 2016. Children are facing significant psychosocial stress inflicted by prolonged violence, instability and displacement. UNICEF-supported psychosocial activities, have reached 476,241 children (211,912 girls and 264,329 boys) through child friendly spaces and community based activities in 18 conflict affected governorates.



Mine risk education (MRE) sessions for children, communities and Internally Displaced Population were considerably expanded reaching additional Governorates and districts of Northern governorates including Saada'a, al Jawf, Taizz and Southern Governorates including Abyan, Lahj and Dhale. In 2016, at least 1,017, 434 people including 821,087 children (girls: 378,249 , boys: 442,838) and 196,437 adults (women: 78,502 , men: 117,845) in 12 governorates received life-saving information through community and school based approach on protecting themselves from the risks of mines, unexploded ordnance (UXO) and explosive remnants of war (ERW).

The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) continued to monitor and report the rights of children affected by the conflict and reached 1,526,930 children (763,465 boys and 763,465 girls) in the catchment area. The expanded network of the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting of Grave Child Rights Violations (CTFMR) managed to cover 157 out of a total of 333 districts across the country, despite the ongoing conflict. Agreement has been reached with partners on resuming the prevention and response activities in those governorates where child marriage is prevalent. The legislative reviews and legal amendments were put on hold due to absence of the government and the prevailing conflict situation.

UNICEF has put in place a multi-sectoral reintegration programme for under 18 who are associated with armed groups and forces who have been detained and released. The programme addresses their immediate protection needs including opportunities to support their stable return to their communities. The reintegration plan is built on the work of the social workers and case management established by UNICEF through the MoSAL to manage the individual cases of children, identify available services, refer those children to appropriate service and follow up on their needs. As a result, 111 boys released from armed groups and forces or released from detention were registered and their needs were assessed out of which 96 boys received services including life skill training, vocational training, psychosocial support, school reintegration or referred to apprenticeship opportunities.

Justice for Children Assessment is planned to be implemented during the first quarter of 2017. The assessment tools have been finalized after thorough discussions, meetings and workshops conducted with active participation of J4C Working group members during all phases of preparation of assessment tools.

The purpose of the assessment is to assess the current J4C related interventions and existing institutions in light of the current conflict include assessing the root causes of child detention in Yemen. Based on the assessment results, there will be a developed an action plan which would include a wide range of Justice for Children related planned interventions which will benefit the children in conflict with the law.

In order to ensure facilitated and smooth implementation of the assessment in the target governorates, and given the difficulties and challenges which are being faced by UNICEF and its partners during the ongoing conflict and the political situation. An agreement has been reached that UNICEF Aden will facilitate the implementation of the assessment in the southern governorates through our partners in the south using the decentralized approach and the partners in the south will report/update on the implementation of assessment to UNICEF Aden. This arrangement is being taken in order to avoid any possible miscommunication between UNICEF partners in the south and the central (HQs) during the ongoing complex political situation.

## 5. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The cross-sectoral needs of children have grown exponentially as the conflict wears on, and the Child Protection section has seen long-term development gaps compounded by conflict, displacement and loss of coping mechanisms. Despite attempts to achieve and improve value for money in its programmes, the Child Protection funding gap continues to grow. The increased funding request in the 2017 Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) therefore reflects these new needs. Predictable and flexible funding will be vital to supporting a scaled-up response.

Table 1: Country-level thematic contributions to outcome area received in 2016 (including funding rolled over from previous years)

Donor	Grant Number	Contribution Amount (USD)	Programmable Amount (USD)
Netherlands Committee for UNICEF	SC1499060006	268,079	251,457
UNICEF-Yemen	SC1499060060	22,000	20,636
<b>Total</b>		<b>290,079</b>	<b>272,093</b>

Table 2: Expenditures in the Outcome Area

Organisational Target	Expenditure Amount (USD)			
	Other Resources - Emergency	Other Resources - Regular	Regular Resources	All Programme Accounts
06-02 Child Protection Systems	308	-136,298	210,027	74,037
06-03 Violence, Exploitation and Abuse	-10	-1,294	0	-1,304
06-06 Child Protection and Emergencies	167,014	-177	210,992	377,829
06-08 Child Protection General	8,495,611	1,105,133	1,345,949	10,946,693
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,662,923</b>	<b>967,365</b>	<b>1,766,967</b>	<b>11,397,255</b>

Table 3: Thematic expenses by programme area

Organisational Target	Expenditure Amount (USD)			
	Other Resources - Emergency	Other Resources - Regular	Regular	All Programme Accounts
06-02 Child	0	4,968	0	4,968

Protection Systems				
06-06 Child Protection and Emergencies	55,598	0	0	55,598
06-08 Child Protection General	270,576	105,835	0	376,411
<b>Total</b>	<b>326,174</b>	<b>110,803</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>436,977</b>

Table 4: Expenses by Specific Intervention Codes

Intervention	Expenditure (USD)
06-02-01 Child Protection systems strengthening	60,893
06-02-02 Child Protection # mapping and assessment	-9,401
06-06-05 Child Protection # sub-cluster coordination in humanitarian action [for GBV, MHPSS and mine/ERW Risk Education (MRE)]	270,372
06-08-01 Child Protection # general	8,855,484
08-03-01 Cross-sectoral Communication for Development	91,416
08-08-03 UNICEF support to programming and capacity development on gender	13,059
08-09-11 Emergency preparedness and response (General)	10,036
09-02-05 CO Programme coordination	529,636
09-02-06 CO Advocacy and communication	230,043
12-03-01 Procurement services for Governments, UN and other organizations	185,145
4012 Support to strengthen laws, policies, standards, regulations and budget analysis of child protection systems	-
4113 Systems and programmes in support to prevent and respond to violence against children including at home	-1,297
6901 Staff costs (includes specialists, managers, TAs and consultancies) for multiple Focus Areas of the MTSP	288,771
6902 Operating costs to support multiple focus areas of the MTSP	555,530
7921 Operations # financial and administration	-15,403
7971 Communication (DOC)	
Unknown	332,971
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,397,255</b>

## 6. FUTURE WORK PLAN

UNICEF Yemen's Child Protection programme will continue working towards strengthening the protective environment for children in Yemen and building on partnerships and network built with government counterparts and local, national and international non-governmental organizations.

In particular core funding will support the following activities in 2017:

- Finalize the assessment of the current Justice for Children related interventions and institutions in light of the conflict and identify priorities as well as strategic interventions.
- Prioritize the implementation of the recommendation coming out of the assessment.
- Follow up and support to partners on ensuring provision of legal aid services to identified children.
- Strengthen social work and scale up the case management system, particularly in relation to the mapping of available services for referral as well as supporting MOSAL in developing a database to support case management.
- Expand provision of specialised psychosocial support to conflict affected children and communities.

## 7. EXPRESSION OF THANKS

The operational context in Yemen is complex and varied, shifting with the exigencies of conflict. Quick onset emergencies such as a cholera outbreak in October 2016, and the tightening of the siege around the Taizz enclave have required flexible programming. The Child Protection section has benefitted significantly from thematic funding, particularly for the scale-up of mine risk education, psychosocial support, birth registration and ongoing monitoring. These activities could not be implemented without thematic funding from its committed partners, as well as cooperation with de facto and internationally recognised governments, implementing partners and local staff.

## ANNEX I: HUMAN INTEREST STORIES

Helping children cope with violence in Yemen -  
[https://www.unicef.org/protection/yemen\\_90865.html](https://www.unicef.org/protection/yemen_90865.html)



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Children yell out in unison during the morning assembly at the Al-Fadheela Basic School in Sana'a. Acting out scenes is one of the many ways children are learning to cope with the ongoing violence and conflict in Yemen.

**By Bismarck Swangin**

*The ongoing conflict in Yemen has had a profound effect on the lives of children. In schools, students are learning how to use drama, sport and peer support skills to cope with the war and violence that surround them.*

**SANA'A, Yemen, 14 April 2016** – “Boom! Boom!” a girl yells, before she and four others dive to the ground in unison. A few minutes later, one of them starts screaming. The others rise to their feet and begin to calm her down. “You are ok, you are not hurt,” one of the girls says, comforting her classmate.

It's morning in Yemen's capital Sana'a. My colleagues and I arrived just in time to join students at the Al-Fadheela Basic School for their assembly, where the girls are acting out a scene reminiscent of their current reality. While the drama here excites the students, the actual situation in the country is perilous, especially for children.

“This is part of coping for the children,” says Mohammed Elfadili, the Director General of Education in Sana'a. “You can see them laughing and clapping as they watch the drama. Such activities and sports help them to temporarily forget about the war and concentrate on learning.”

As we walk into the head teacher's office, Mr. Elfadili taps me on my shoulder and I look back. He points to my right side, where shards of glass are scattered on the ground.

“There was a lot when I first visited in November to assess the damage,” he says.

### Repairing the damage

In the past year, Yemen has witnessed intensive bombardment and ground fighting. Civilian infrastructure including schools have been attacked, and children have been killed or maimed, some of them on their way to and from school.

The escalating conflict also forced the closure of nearly 3,600 schools and interrupted the education of 1.8 million children. Despite some improvements, more than 1,600 schools are still closed because of damage or insecurity, leaving about 387,000 children unable to resume their education.

Like more than 1,000 other schools in the country, Al-Fadheela School was damaged, though not directly. Residents say intensive bombardment on a nearby hill caused vibrations, shattering some of the windowpanes. With support from UNICEF, the school was able to replace and clean the broken windows, so that children can learn once again.

>> Read the UNICEF report: [Education Under Fire](#)



Children play volleyball during their sport classes. Activities like drama and physical education can help them temporarily forget about the war and concentrate on learning.

UNICEF is also supporting the rehabilitation of other schools across the country, as well as providing training for teachers and students to help children cope with the horrors of the conflict. Teachers are learning how to be more aware of children's emotions to help them learn, while students are learning peer support skills, such as acting out scenes like the one at today's assembly, which put smiles on all of their faces.

### **Dreams in the face of despair**

After the morning assembly, the students go to their classes for lessons. Later, there is a sports period where they play games and do various other physical activities, including volleyball, hula hoop and skipping ropes. It all looks normal – but it is far from it.

Ghadeer, a 13-year-old girl in grade nine, says it's difficult to concentrate in class when the sounds of bombs and gunshots rattle through the air.

"Sometimes in the middle of a lesson, you hear 'boom'. What can you expect?" she asked. "Some students scream, others run out of the class."

Ghadeer wants to be a doctor. And although this conflict poses a threat to her education, she says it is now more urgent than ever that she achieves her ambitious dream.

"I want to treat all the people whether injured or sick. Each child in the school has a plan for the future and that is why those of us alive keep coming to school," she says.

"Even in despair, our hope for a bright future is undiminished."

A dream nearly shattered by Shrapnel in Yemen -  
[https://www.unicef.org/yemen/reallives\\_11748.html](https://www.unicef.org/yemen/reallives_11748.html)



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A child shows off wounds sustained when two bombs hit near a grocery store in which he was shopping. Two of his friends were killed.

*Little Mena's dream of becoming a doctor nearly came to a sudden end when she was hit by a shrapnel*

**By a staff writer**

**NEHM, 9 March 2017** - Mena Naif Dahish is just 12 years old. She lives in Gholat Assem, a small village of Nehm district in Sana'a Governorate. Her tender age does not stop Mena from dreaming big and flying high. Her father often asks her, "Mena, what is your dream?"

"I have never had a different one baba, it was always the same. I just want to change our house to a hospital," the daughter tells her father without blinking. The father laughs, "And what are you going to do then?" The daughter thinks for a moment and says, "I want to save people's lives...I want to be a doctor." Thus, Mena was growing up innocently nurturing her dream of becoming a doctor some day. She was clear in her mind. What she was unprepared for was the consequences of a war in her own country.

The harsh reality of war literally descended on her like a ton of bricks one day. It was the morning of 16 August 2016, explosions were heard all around Gholat Assem village. People ran out of their homes in a wild rush, running from house to house fearing for their lives. Mena too was caught in this mad rush. The airstrike had hit the very house next to hers. The whole village seemed to burst with the sound of the explosions and the screams of people, running helter-skelter. Mena remained calm and tight lipped. When the rescuers rushed into the bombed house to pull survivors out of the debris and save whatever could be recovered, Mena ran with them into the house. She tried doing all that she could, whatever was possible for a girl of her age in the rescue effort. That is when a second airstrike hit the house in which she was.

Mena was injured on her leg by a shrapnel. The shooting pain was unbearable. She was unable to move her legs and lay immobilized, helplessly watching the chaos around her. All her dreams appeared to have crashed in a moment. Then help finally came within a few minutes of the incident. A team of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) supported by UNICEF soon arrived to the area, checking every single hospital to see if there was any child that needed medical assistance. That is when the team received a call from Mena's father asking for help. "My daughter, Mena needs urgent surgery or she will be paralyzed for the rest of her life," he pleaded from the other side of the phone.

The team arrived almost immediately and took her to a hospital. The doctors did not take very long to operate upon her and remove the invasive shrapnel from her leg. After a few days rest she was able to walk with support from her father. The UNICEF/DRC followed her case almost on a daily basis, referring her to more than one doctor, making sure that she had recovered fully. It did not take Mena long to return to her old self, running and playing. Now she is back at school pursuing her studies and her dream of becoming a doctor some day.

Since the conflict in Yemen escalated in March 2015 nearly 1,500 children have been killed and more than 2,300 maimed. Together with its partners, UNICEF is working to support children like Mena get back to normal life and pursue their ambitions.



## ANNEX II: DONOR REPORT FEEDBACK FORM

### Report Feedback Form

UNICEF is working to improve the quality of our reports and would highly appreciate your feedback. Kindly answer the questions below for the above-mentioned report. Thank you!

Please return the completed form back to UNICEF by email to:

Name: Sherin Varkey and Peter Tubman

Email: [svarkey@unicef.org](mailto:svarkey@unicef.org) and [ptubman@unicef.org](mailto:ptubman@unicef.org)

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**SCORING: 5 indicates “highest level of satisfaction” while  
0 indicates “complete dissatisfaction”**

1. To what extent did the narrative content of the report conform to your reporting expectations? (For example, the overall analysis and identification of challenges and solutions)

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we missed or what we could do better next time?

2. To what extent did the fund utilization part of the report meet your reporting expectations?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we missed or what we could do better next time?

**SCORING: 5 indicates “highest level of satisfaction” while  
0 indicates “complete dissatisfaction”**

3. To what extent does the report meet your expectations in regard to the analysis provided, including identification of difficulties and shortcomings as well as remedies to these?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we could do better next time?

4. To what extent does the report meet your expectations with regard to reporting on results?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we missed or what we could do better next time?

5. Please provide us with your suggestions on how this report could be improved to meet your expectations.

6. Are there any other comments that you would like to share with us?

**Thank you for completing this form!**