

## **Education Needs Immediate and Collaborative Support to Prevent One Whole Generation missing out on Education**

### **YCEA, ACEA, AND GCE POSITION PAPER ON EDUCATION CRISIS IN YEMEN**

While the world celebrated earlier this month both the anniversaries of International Literacy Day, and International Day for Peace, more than 263 million children are currently not in school<sup>1</sup>. Two million children of these are in Yemen alone!<sup>2</sup>This number is likely rise every few minutes.

Yemen is viewed as the worst humanitarian crisis in the region. In 2018, Yemen ranked 4th in the Fragile States Index as “highly alerting”.<sup>3</sup>According to UN OCHA data, twenty-two million (75%) of the population, need humanitarian assistance<sup>4</sup> and protection. In addition to countless casualties and human rights violations, massive population displacement, economic pressure and social infrastructure continue to collapse. Children bear the brunt of the conflict as many boys and girls are killed and injured. In July 2018 alone, at least 21 children were killed and 82 more were injured during attacks in several governorates. Between March 2015 and June 2018 over 2,635 children were recruited by armed groups<sup>5</sup>.

**The Yemeni Coalition for Education (YCEA), Arab Campaign for Education (ACEA) and the Global Campaign for Education are shocked by the continuous deterioration of education situation in Yemen.**YCEA, ACEA and GCE are aware of the huge challenges facing millions of male and female children in Yemen in accessing their right to basic education. More than 3,584 schools (21% of all basic and secondary schools) are closed and almost two million children lack access to education (an increase of an estimated 500,000 children since the start of the conflict). In addition, reports show that 4.1 million children need support to access education, transportation and basic needs such as food and water supply<sup>6</sup>.

**YCEA, ACEA, and GCE call on all international actors and Yemeni parties to actively collaborate towards halting the war and all grave violations against children.** Peace and

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<sup>1</sup>UNESCO GEM report 2017

<sup>2</sup>Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2017

<sup>3</sup>The Fund for Peace 2018

<sup>4</sup>Source: 2018 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan

<sup>5</sup>Yemen Humanitarian Update Covering 16 - 26 August 2018

<sup>6</sup>(Source: Education Cluster, 2017 and OCHA Yemen HNO 2018)

recovery must be prioritized if children in Yemen are to resume their schooling and get the quality education they urgently need and deserve.

**YCEA, ACEA and GCE firmly stand against targeting children and education staff by different conflict parties.** This threatens children's rights to be protected and violates their rights to life and education. We call on parties to keep schools, teachers and children away from violence and disengage the education process from political and security bargaining. All conflict parties and those with influence must cease school attacks and unconditionally commit to protect children's education across Yemen. Children and education staff must be kept out of harm's way and schools maintained as safe zones for learning.

**YCEA, ACEA and GCE salute the many Yemeni teachers, who despite the lack of salaries for two years, continue to be present in their classrooms. Attacks and politicization<sup>7</sup> of teachers** attributes to teachers' absenteeism and unavailability. **Teachers belong in classrooms and should be supported to remain politically neutral.** We call on all Education Authorities across Yemen to provide salaries for all teachers and education personnel so that children can continue to learn.

The urgency to implement long-term salary solutions and support public education system in Yemen is heightened. **We at YCEA, ACEA and GCE are quite alarmed that many girls may continue to drop out as retaining female teachers in the region is a challenge.** Heightened security issues and conflict-driven poverty impacts the girl child. Adverse coping mechanisms, including early marriage, negatively affects girls more than others.

The fact that outside Yemen, Yemeni refugees are required to complete long administrative processes to acquire legal status before their children access their basic right to education is highly problematic.

**YCEA, ACEA and GCE appeal to all donors and development partners of Yemen to consider education as top priority in their humanitarian profiles and in their financial contributions to Yemen's Humanitarian Response plan.** Currently, less than 2% of education needs are funded.<sup>8</sup>

We urge international donors to increase funding for education and demonstrate urgency in delivering pledges to the education sector. We hope the international community can permit frequent visits of education partners to monitor the education situation on the ground.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://pomeps.org/2018/01/12/yemens-education-system-at-a-tipping-point-youth-between-their-future-and-present-survival/>

<sup>8</sup>Futures on the Line: Yemen's children missing an education, Save the Children 2016

ACEA and GCE will continue to work with the Yemeni Coalition for Education for all and civil society in Yemen to advocate for the fulfilment of right to education for all Yemeni children.

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