

# CHILD RECRUITMENT IN YEMEN

A HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT MONITORING AND  
DOCUMENTING CHILD RECRUITMENT IN YEMEN

From July 2014 to July 2018

التحالف اليمني لرصد  
انتهاكات حقوق الإنسان

Yemeni Coalition for Monitoring  
Human Rights Violations





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**Cover Photo;**  
A photo of a child carrying  
a gun  
By Agencies

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## Child Recruitment in Yemen

Yemeni Coalition to Monitor Human Rights Violations (YCMHRV), also known as “Rasd Coalition”, is a coalition of a number of specialized Yemeni NGOs active in human rights issues including monitoring and documenting human rights violations in the country. YCMHRV was established in January 2015, License No. 1240 in response to valid need in the field of human rights, and considering the deteriorating human rights situation in Yemen, the matter that necessitated establishment of such Coalition.

YCMHRV monitors and documents all human rights violations in Yemen and issues specialized reports on them. Also, organizes seminars and various events to disseminate and publicize these reports. YCMHRV submits these reports to relevant concerned entities. Noting that the first step in bringing justice to victims is to document their grievances for the moment of truth, committing ourselves in this respect with relevant human rights standards and laws.

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## Introduction:

The Houthi Militia calls them (the Cubs of Quranic March), while Al-Qaeda Extremist Group calls them (the Caliphate Cubs) and many other alluring designations that are purposefully designed to attract children to join the ranks of the warring parties. Thus, it seems that the next phase would witness a frantic race between the parties to the conflict in attracting this group of fighters.

The children of Yemen are taken to the battlefronts every day, resulting in 1539 fatalities and 1166 casualties among child recruits in four years of a war, which was started by the grown-ups and fed by the youngsters, who are still paying the exorbitant bill of this war to the moment.

Rasd Coalition issued a Rights report entitled (Yemen Children.. From School Benches to War Trenches)<sup>(1)</sup> on child recruitment in Yemen during the year 2017. The report discussed in detail the historical context and roots of the phenomenon, in addition to the social, economic and ideological causes, which have in some way or another, contributed to its expansion and exacerbation. However, and in view of the gravity of the situation and the escalating pace of the war in Yemen with the concomitant increase in the staggering number of child recruits particularly in the ranks of Houthi Militia, the Yemeni Coalition for Monitoring

1- <http://www.ycmhrv.org/Home/MonthlyReport/MJ16z99x/Yemen-Children-From-School-Benches-To-War-Trenches>

Human Rights Violations (YCMHRV) thought to prepare a new report on the issue of child recruitment in Yemen, to include the cumulative monitoring and documentation processes of the Rasd Coalition team over the past four years, to document the phenomenon that threatens not only the present and the future of Yemen's children but also the future of the country as a whole. Children became the main fuel that feeds the battlefields in Taiz, Hodeidah, Marib, Al-Jawf, Sana'a, Al-Bayda, Hajjah, Sa'ada, Hodeidah and Lahj). Enforced recruitment of those who are under 18 years in all parts of the country has gone beyond reasonable limits and has gone to the extent of raiding schools, public parks and house fronts and has reached every neighborhood and bloc.

The recruitment and involvement of Yemeni children in armed conflict has become a systematic policy, an integral part of the military plans of the warring parties and has been promoted in the curricula and various media outlets as a kind of courageous act of heroism to defend the nation and its religion together, while the international community with all its organizations, bodies, conventions, laws, charters and treaties stands by and is unable to address this phenomenon or even work to put an end to it.

We, in Rasd Coalition, have prepared this report, which includes among other things documented facts and statistics, which are

only a fraction of this phenomenon really is on the ground, to put the international community, United Nations bodies and offices, panels of experts and all local, regional and international human rights organizations before their legal and moral responsibility towards the children of Yemen, against whom war crimes and genocide have been committed, and those who survived the shelling and sniping that target populated neighborhoods, have fallen dead in the battlefields.

### **Report Methodology**

Due to the difficulty of the situation in the areas controlled by the Houthi militia, as well as some areas controlled by the legitimate government, when documenting many cases of child recruitment, the monitoring teams of the Yemeni Coalition for Monitoring Human Rights Violations (also known as Rasd Coalition), have applied several criteria that varied from one governorate to another, including reports, written complaints by relatives of the victim, testimonies of relatives and neighbors of victims or social VIPs, as well as emergency and admission records in hospitals that receive children who are dead or injured in different war fronts.

The Rasd Coalition Monitoring teams also used the photos of the dead children documented on different occasions such as the date of martyrdom in photo galleries, the celebrations of the

Martyr's Day, Martyr's Week, and the lists of Honor displayed in the martyrs' graveyards and on public streets. The teams also used those photos carried during the processions of the dead children, which are used by some parents to express their pride of their children's fate, while some of the parties to the conflict use such photos as a means of motivating the other children to go to the battle fronts so that they can get the reward [i.e. Martyrdom] their childhood companions did. In such cases, the age of the dead recruited child is identified either by the testimony of their relatives or by comparison between the child's school class and the year in which they were recruited.

Rasd Coalition Monitoring teams also used testimonies from school teachers working in the areas controlled by the Houthi militia, which report the existence of recruitment campaigns in schools for underage students, most of whom are in the standard and secondary levels. In addition, Rasd Coalition Monitoring teams used recorded interviews conducted by the team with children who were captured by the pro-legitimate government forces while fighting with the Houthi militia in several battlefronts. Further, Rasd Coalition monitoring teams conducted 35 video and audio interviews with children recruited by the Houthi militia, the forces loyal to the former president and the legitimate government forces in several governorates. The team was unable

to meet the children recruited by Al-Qaeda for security reasons related to the safety of the members of the team.

Furthermore, Rasd Coalition Monitoring team conducted 270 written interview with recruited children and eyewitnesses. The recruited children were under 18 years, and they came from the governorates of Sana'a, Dhamar, Amran, Taiz, Marib, Al-Jawf, Raymah, Al-Bayda, Sa'ada, Hajjah, Al-Mahweet, Ibb, Hodeidah, Aden, Lahj and Shabwa. The team also used documented database and information collected during the monitoring and documentation period as the basis for the preparation and write-up of the current report.

The observations made by the field monitoring and documentation team also constitute the basis upon which the report has been written as many of the scenes of child recruitment and child involvement in armed conflicts have become part of our daily life. Such scenes are recurrent in front of all, especially at the checkpoints run by both the Houthi militia and the forces loyal to the former president, in the streets, in public markets and neighborhoods close to the positions of the conflicting parties. However, such cases are difficult to document with the camera.

## The Legal Framework

The International Humanitarian Law defines a child as «every human being below the age of 18 years, unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier,» and it defines recruitment as «compulsory, forcible or voluntary placement of children in any type of armed forces or armed group.»

The term «use of children» is a broader concept than «recruitment» as it refers to the use of children by regular forces or armed groups in any capacity, including «the use of children, boys and girls, as combatants, cooks, porters, messengers or spies».

The draft Constitution promulgated in January 2015 criminalizes the voluntary recruitment of all persons under the age of 18, while Article 6 of the Yemeni Constitution in effect affirms its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter of the League of Arab States and all the generally recognized norms of International Law.

Article 149 of the Yemeni Children's Rights Law of 2002 states: «The State shall endeavor to respect and protect the rules of International Law applicable to them in armed conflicts related to children by: (Banning the carrying of arms on children- protection of children from the effects of armed conflict- protection of children suffering from revenge issues- Refraining from involving children directly in the war-not to recruit anyone

under the age of 18).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child stresses the need that: «Children shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. Children shall not be employed before reaching the age of majority and in all cases shall be prohibited from working or leaving any occupation or profession that harms his health or education or hinders his physical, mental or moral development». Article 39 of the same Convention states: «States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child who is the victim of any form of neglect, exploitation or abuse, torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading Treatment or punishment, or disputes. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.

On the first of July 1998, the participation of children under 15 years in hostilities or their recruitment into the national armed Forces during an international armed conflict was recognized as of war crimes under the jurisdiction of the Rome Criminal Court. The first Additional Protocol of the Geneva Conventions of 1977 defined the legal age of recruitment as 16 years. However, the Optional Protocol of 2000, supplemented to the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 changed the age of compulsory recruitment to the age of 18 and any banned regular army or

armed groups from using Children below that age in any case. The Human Rights Law also sets the age of 18 as the minimum legal age limit for recruitment and use of children in hostilities; parties to the conflict which recruit and use children shall be added to the UN Secretary-General's list of shame on an annual basis.

### Executive Summary

As a result of its cumulative efforts exerted during the period from July 2014 to July 2018, the monitoring team of the Yemeni Coalition for Monitoring Human Rights Violation (Rasd Coalition) documented 6408 cases of child recruitment perpetrated by three key parties, which are the Houthi militia, the legitimate government forces, and Al-Qaeda) in 19 Yemeni governorates.

**6408**

CASES OF CHILD  
RECRUITMENT

The Houthi armed militia was at the forefront in perpetrating one of the six most serious violations against children, which is child exploitation in armed conflicts. The Houthi militia recruited 6172 children under 18 years old. In addition, the legitimate government forces recruited 191 children. The team also documented Al-Qaeda recruitment of 45 children whose fate is still unknown at the time of writing this report.

The percentage of the children recruited by the Houthi militia

is %96 of all cases of recruitment documented by the team, in comparison with %3 of children recruited by the pro-legitimate government forces, which had fierce battles with the Houthi militia for four years. Besides, only %1 is the percentage of the children recruited by Al-Qaeda, which intermittently attacks the regular army in the north and the south of the country.

Statistics documented by Rasd Coalition team indicated that %52 of all the children recruited in the Houthi militia were between 13 to 15 years old, which is the highest percentage. This is followed by the age group of 16 to 17 years old with the percentage of %41. Next is the age group of 8 to 12 years old with the percentage of %7, which is the lowest in the ranks of the militia.

The percentage of children between 16 and 17 years old recruited by the pro-legitimate government forces was %61. It was the highest among the ranks of the pro-legitimate government forces. The percentage of recruited children between 13 and 15 years old recruited by the pro-legitimate government forces was %3. %36 is the lowest percentage for the children between 8 and 12 years old recruited by the pro-legitimate government forces. On the other hand, %47 of the children recruited by Al-Qaeda were between 15-13 years old. The same percentage was also for the recruited children of 16 to 17 years old. Al-Qaeda also recruited %7 of children between 8 and 12 years old according to

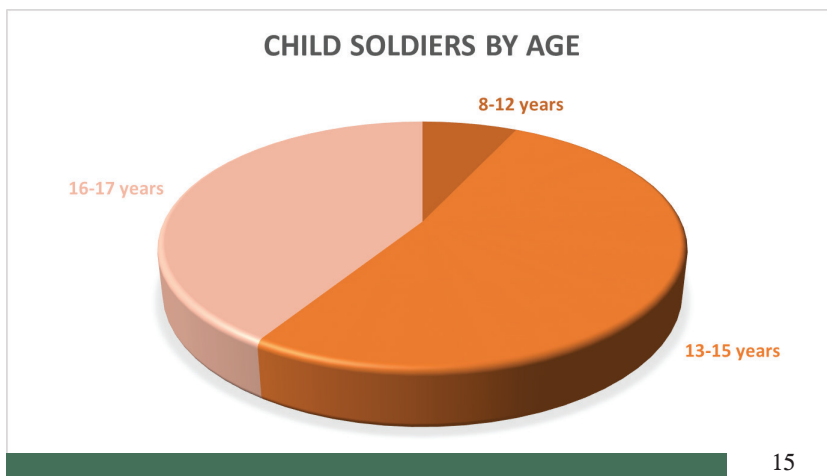
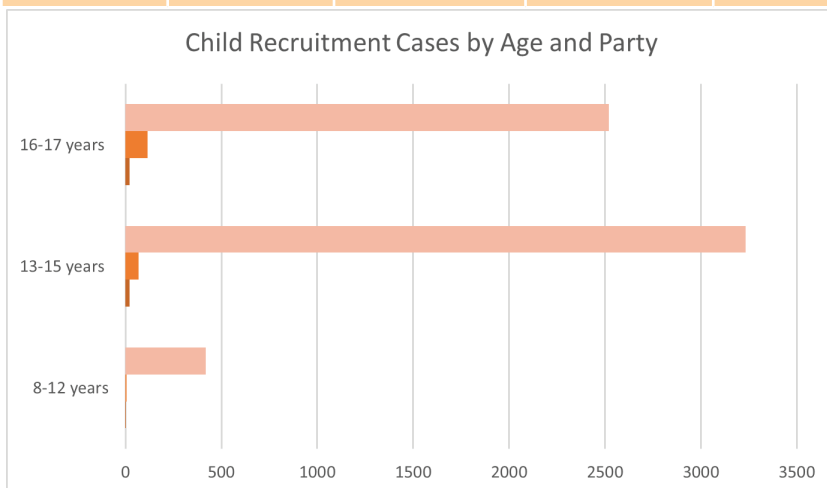
the figures presented in Table No 1.

Rasd Coalition monitoring team could not access the details of all children recruited during the specified time as they exceed threefold of the reported number herein due to many reasons, including the obscurity and uncertainty surrounding one of the most complex issues in Yemen, especially with the absence of the accurate criteria for age determination and the fear of the child's parents which prevents them to provide the media and the human rights organizations with any information fearing that anything could happen to their children.

The other reasons are related to the policy of the violating parties, whether in their way of recruiting children and involving them in the armed conflicts, surrounded with obscurity, vigilance and caution, or through their harsh treatment with any activity by a human rights activist or a media professional who attempts to expose their violations. These methods used by the Houthi militia are no less onerous than the crime of recruiting children and sending them to an inevitable death.

General table showing the total number of child recruits classified as per the age group of victims and the perpetrator

Perpetrator	Age Group of Child Recruits			Total
	From 8 to 12 years	From 13 to 15 years	From 16 to 17 years	
<b>The Houthi Militia</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>3234</b>	<b>2520</b>	<b>6172</b>
<b>Legitimate Government</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>191</b>
<b>Al-Qaeda</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Gross Total</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>3324</b>	<b>2657</b>	<b>6408</b>



### **Distribution by geographical scope**

Geographically, Taiz comes at the forefront of other Yemeni governorates covered in this report in terms of child recruitment cases. Rasd Coalition monitored 1035 child recruitment cases; 936 of which are recruited by the Houthi militia, while 513 of them came from other governorates (Dhamar, Amran, Sana'a, Sa'ada, Ibb, and Hodeidah..). In addition to that, the Rasd Coalition team documented 99 child recruitment cases by the pro-legitimate forces within the same governorate; only 3 of whom came from other governorates.

Sana'a governorate comes second after Taiz with 876 of child recruitment cases. These children were recruited by the Houthi Militia from the governorates of Amran, Dhamar, Al-Amana, Al-Mahweet, Raymah, Ibb, Hodeidah, and Taiz...). They are brought by Houthi Militia as reinforcements to the battlefronts in Nihm. The pro-legitimate government forces, on the other hand, are responsible for 29 child recruitment cases in the same governorate.

Dhamar governorate comes third in child recruitment. The Rasd Coalition Monitoring team documented 682 cases of child recruitment by the Houthi militia, 20 of whom are brought from outside the governorate. Amran governorate comes next with 680 cases of child recruitment under the legal age by the Houthi

militia including two children who came with their displaced families from the northeastern governorates of Hajjah and Al-Jawf.

The main stronghold of the armed Houthi militia, Sa'ada Governorate, comes fifth. During the past four years, the Houthi militia recruited 574 children below the age of 18, including 95 children from other governorates. Hajjah governorate comes sixth, with 390 cases of child recruitment by the Houthi militia, including 87 children from outside the governorate. In the southwestern Hodeidah governorate, 300 cases of child recruitment by the militia were documented, including 148 children recently brought from other governorates as reinforcements in the fight against the pro-legitimate government forces in the Western Coast battlefront and southern part of Hodeidah.

The Rasd Coalition Monitoring team documented 291 cases of child recruitment in Marib governorate, which comes eighth. The Houthi Militia is responsible for 276 cases of child recruitment, including 228 children brought from other governorates. In the same Governorate, the Rasd Coalition team documented 24 child recruitment cases by the pro-legitimate government forces within the same governorate.

In the governorate of Al-Bayda, which comes ninth, the Rasd

Coalition team documented the 246 child recruitment cases by the Houthi Militia, including 179 child recruits from outside the governorate. Meanwhile, the team documented two child recruitment cases of two children by al-Qaeda members within the same governorate during the reporting period.

The Rasd Coalition team also documented the child recruitment of 247 children in Al-Jawf governorate, including 234 who were recruited by the Houthi Militia, mostly from outside the governorate.

As for the pro-legitimate government forces, 12 children were recruited, while one child was recruited by elements believed to be affiliated with al-Qaeda in the governorate in the beginning of January 2015, following the imposition of full control of the governorate by the Houthi militia.

On the borderline between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, the Rasd Coalition team documented child recruitment of 223 children from several Yemeni governorates, as well as others of different nationalities, including Africans, who were captured by al-Houthi militia while sneaking into Saudi land to search for a job, then forced them to fight in their ranks.

The remaining cases of child recruitment are distributed in the governorates of (Al-Amana, Shabwa, Aden, Ibb, Dhala, Lahj, Abyan, Al-Mahweet and Raymah) as shown in Table No. 2. Other governorates have seen recruitment campaigns for children under the age of 18 during the reporting period, but Rasd Coalition» team has been unable to get access to such governorates as Raymah. However, cases of recruitment of children coming from those governorates, and who joined the ranks of the Houthi Militia, were monitored and documented in the fighting frontlines including Nihm, Sirawah, the Western Coast of Tihama and Taiz. These cases were grouped under the governorates where they were documented.

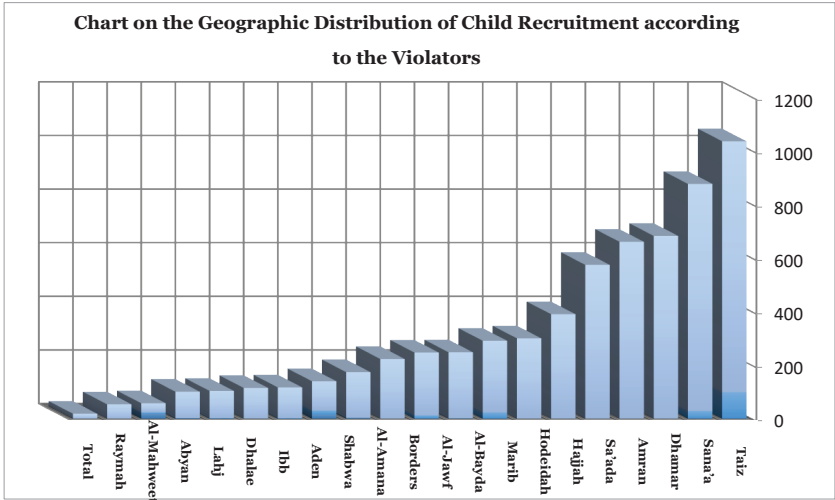
In comparison with the geographical distribution of child recruitment cases in this summary and the past reports of the Yemeni Coalition for Monitoring Human Rights Violations, it is evident that the leading governorates are the same governorates that feed the Houthi militia fighting frontlines with child recruits from the beginning of the war until the moment for several reasons. Such reasons include the imposition of the Houthi militia full control on those governorates and ruling of the people with an iron fist. The economic difficulties and the harsh living conditions under which many families live push some of them to sacrifice their own children so that other can survive. In addition to that, the religious and sectarian orientation is used

by the Houthi militia to brainwash children through the so-called cultural training courses that are offered even before weapons training courses for new recruits.

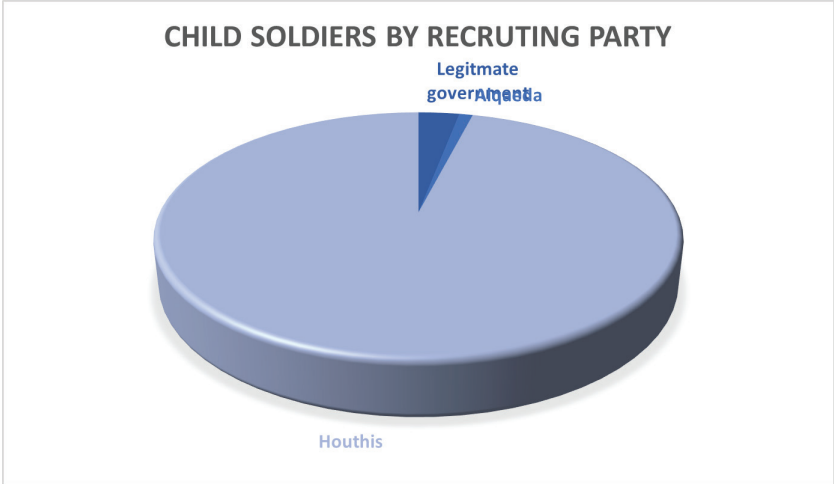
**Table No. 1 Distribution of child Recruitment according to the geographical scope and Perpetrators**

governorate	Children Recruited by the Houthis			Children Recruited by Legitimate Government			Children Recruited by Al Qaeda			Total
	From inside the governorate	From outside the governorate	total	From inside the governorate	From outside the governorate	total	From inside the governorate	From outside the governorate	total	
Taiz	423	513	936	96	3	99			0	1035
Sana'a	565	282	847	5	24	29			0	876
Dhamar	662	20	682			0			0	682
Amran	658	2	660			0			0	660
Sa'ada	479	95	574			0			0	574
Hajjah	303	87	390			0			0	390
Hodeidah	152	148	300			0			0	300
Marib	41	226	267	9	15	24			0	291
Al-Bayda	67	179	246			0	2		2	248
Al-Jawf	30	204	234	5	7	12	1		1	247
Borders		223	223			0			0	223
Al-Amama	154	16	170			0	4		4	174
Shabwa	20	89	109	16		16	13	2	15	140
Aden	48	66	114	3		3			0	117
Ibb	114		114			0		1	1	115
Dhale	20	81	101		2	2	1		1	104
Lahj	34	64	98	1		1	2		2	101
Abyan	22	12	34	5		5	17	2	19	58
Al-Mahweet	53	1	54			0			0	54
Raymah	19		19			0			0	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>3864</b>	<b>2308</b>	<b>6172</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>6408</b>

**Chart on the Geographic Distribution of Child Recruitment according to the Violators**



**CHILD SOLDIERS BY RECRUITING PARTY**



## **Distribution by Economic Level**

The difficult economic and living conditions that most Yemenis are going through have played a pivotal role in increasing and worsening the phenomenon of children being recruited to fight in Yemen, and this situation has created fertile ground for the phenomenon's growth and increase. Recently, the recruitment of child soldiers has turned into a systematic military plan followed by most of the parties to the conflict in Yemen, not worrying about national laws or even the international charters, conventions, and laws that criminalize these actions.

According to the statistics and figures that were documented by the Yemen Coalition, and after the analysis of the data and numbers that were documented by the team during the four years of accumulative monitoring and documenting, it can be seen that 3,327 of the children who were recruited during the period covered by this report are from poor families that have nothing to do with the conflict, among them 3,208 who were recruited by the Houthi armed militias, 88 children who were recruited by the forces of the legitimate government, and 31 children who were recruited by the Al Qaeda terror group. This clearly reflects how the different parties to the armed conflict in Yemen are taking advantage of these children, their families, and the difficult economic and living conditions that they are going

through because of the ongoing war.

Figures also show that 1,545 other children who were recruited during the same period were from families with a limited income and who are still in dire need of other sources of income to cover their basic needs, among them 1,478 who were recruited by the Houthi armed militias, 59 children who were recruited by the forces of the legitimate government, and 8 others who were recruited by members of Al Qaeda in Yemen.

The number of children from families with a moderate income did not exceed 949 children, among them 899 who were recruited by the Houthi armed militias, 44 children who were recruited into the ranks of the regular army of the legitimate government, and 6 children who were recruited by the Al Qaeda terror group.

The team also recorded 587 cases of children being recruited into the ranks of the Houthi armed militias based on purely ideological reasons, having nothing to do with the economic or living conditions of the family of the children who were recruited. These families are of the same sectarian lineage that the leaders of the militias are from, and they claim to have a god given right to rule. This type of recruitment is focused in the governorates that have popular support for the Houthi militias, like Saadah, Dhamar, Sana'a, and Amran. The children who are recruited

in this way are sent to the most volatile frontlines of the war, including Taiz, Midi, Nihm, Sirwah, Al Baq', Baqim, the Western Coast, Al Jawf, the border with Saudi Arabia, etc.

Things did not stop here, and they went even further than that, with the Yemeni Coalition team receiving reports that Houthi leaders, the so-called Jihadi supervisors, have been recruiting children as a way to make money. They do this by extorting the parents and guardians of the conscripted children, demanding large amounts of money, sometimes up to millions of riyals, in exchange for these supervisors returning their children from the frontlines of the fighting safe and sound, or to allow them to contact their parents so that they can check up on them.

Recently, the legitimate government's forces have been escalating their military operations in a number of governorates, the most prominent of which are Hudaydah, Saadah, Al Jawf, Al Baydha, etc. This has resulted in the retreat and withdrawal of the members of the Houthi militias, who felt that they have a dire need to increase the number of men they have fighting for them on the frontlines, especially since the supporters of their former ally, former President, Ali Abdullah Saleh, left them after the militia executed Saleh.

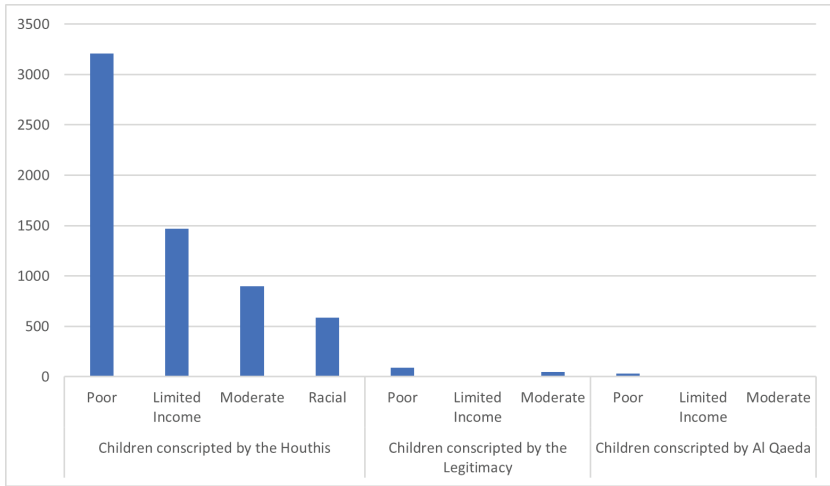
To deal with all of this, the Houthi militias have come up with

new methods and campaigns to forcibly draft fighters, and they mainly target children in the areas that they control. Among these methods is that they force families to pay money, up to 500,000 riyals, if they do not have children that they can send to fight on the frontlines. They do this without taking into account the financial conditions of the family, and they say that this money will be paid to the people fighting on behalf of these families.

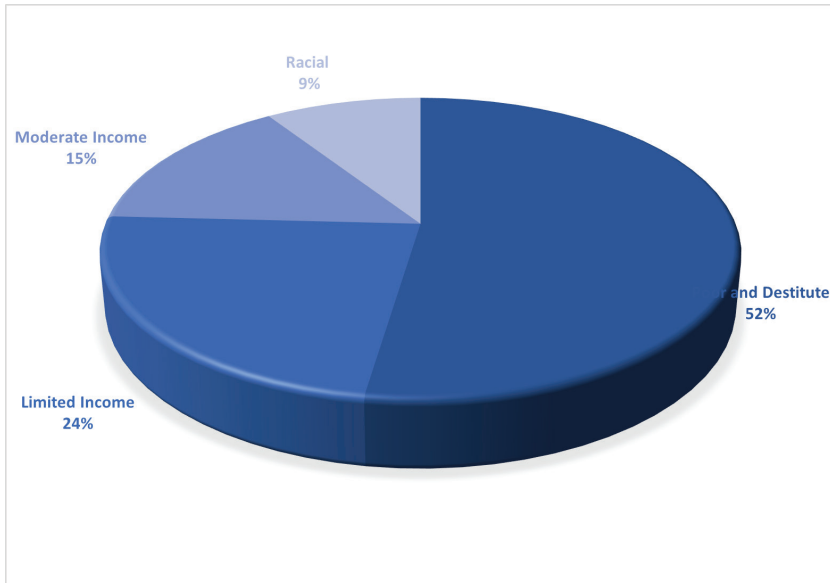
**Table No. 2: Distribution of Conscripted Children by Geographic Scope and Economic Status of the Families of the Victims**

Governorate	Children recruited by the Houthis				Children recruited by the Legitimacy			Children recruited by Al Qaeda			Total
	Poor and Destitute	Limited Income	Moderate Income	Dynasty	Poor and Destitute	Limited Income	Moderate Income	Poor and Destitute	Limited Income	Moderate Income	
Taiz	479	201	197	59	43	30	26				1035
Sana'a	469	200	102	76	19	5	5				876
Dhamar	424	171	50	37							682
Amran	368	195	47	50							660
Saadah	289	158	44	83							574
Hajjah	169	57	34	130							390
Hudaydah	133	71	71	25							300
Mareb	138	55	49	25	9	8	7				291
Baydha	119	54	55	18				2			248
Jawf	127	51	50	6	9	3		1			247
Border	92	50	62	19							223
Capital Secretariat	87	50	13	20					2	2	174
Shabwa	44	22	34	9	6	7	3	10	5		140
Aden	60	20	25	9		2	1				117
Ibb	60	36	15	3						1	115
Dhale	46	31	21	3	2					1	104
Lahj	48	23	21	6			1		1	1	101
Abyan	12	14	3	5		4	1	18		1	58
Mahwit	31	16	3	4							54
Raymah	13	4	2								19
<b>Total</b>	<b>3208</b>	<b>1479</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>88</b>		<b>44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6408</b>

**Chart Showing the Cases of Conscripted Children Distributed by the Economic Conditions of the Families of the Victims**



**Chart Showing the Percentage of Recruitment Distributed by the Economic Conditions of the Families of the Victims**



## **Distribution by Educational Level**

Some of the parties to the conflict in Yemen see children as a fuel for their war and an essential source of fighters for its frontlines. On this basis, these parties have prepared plans and programs to develop education in Yemen. They have established whole military brigades for students in school, and they have moved the exams for primary and secondary schools from schools to the battlefield. They have given students that have failed in their studies good grades because of their bravery on the field of battle.

Among these decrees, for example, is memo no. 189, which was issued on January 1st, 2018, from the former president of the so-called Supreme Political Council. In this memo, he directed Muhammad Ali Al Houthi, the president of the so-called Supreme Revolutionary Committee, to quickly start the mandatory draft of students in order to send more fighters to the frontlines and stop the collapses of what he called the heroes of the army and popular committees in the way of the constant advances made by the legitimacy forces.

After this, there was a memo from the Minister of Education in the coupist government, Yahia Badreddin al-Houthi, the brother of the head of the Houthi armed militias. This memo was issued on January 28th, 2018, and, in it, he directed the leadership of

the local authorities and the heads of the Ministry of Education offices in the areas that are under their controls to open public and community schools for the celebration of what he called annual martyr day. This is something that educators considered a dangerous indicator of the threat facing the educational process as a whole and shows that the group is continuing to recruit in schools and brainwash children to prepare them for future recruitment drives. These future recruitment drives will not exempt anyone, even the students of the early grades of primary school, according to these educators.



Some teachers who met with the Yemeni Coalition team said that there were students who were taken from their seats at the national primary and secondary school exams after the Houthi militias had promised to give them high marks and grades without them taking the exams. They said that some of these students did not remain in the fight for more than a month, and they returned as bodies that were handed over to their families in the capital, Sana'a, where they were buried, along with their

dreams and the promises that they were given.

All of these attempts and trends by the parties to the conflict in Yemen have been clearly reflected on the rights conditions, and how children have paid the price by leaving their places in the classroom, against their will or voluntarily due to brainwashing, and they went, at the wrong time, to the wrong place. They did this with their family's knowledge or without it, and the families are too late in waking up from this horrible nightmare, only to find that their young children's right to a life and an education have been taken away in exchange for memorial photos of them. In this context, the Yemeni Coalition team documented the recruitment of 5,143 Yemeni students between the ages of 8 and 17 years old. This number includes 432 primary school students, 2,913 from prep schools, which have recently been merged with the primary schools, and 1,798 students from secondary schools. There were also 1,265 children who were recruited who had not been enrolled in schools, and these figures come from 19 governorates in Yemen.

The Houthi armed militias have the highest share in this, as they have recruited, during the period covered by this report, 462 children from 4th grade until 6th grade in primary school, 2,850 children from 7th grade in primary school (first year in prep school in the past), until 9th grade (third year of prep school

in the past), and 1,716 students in secondary school. The number of children recruited to the ranks of Houthi fighters who are not enrolled in schools did not exceed 1,180 children.

After that came the forces of the legitimate government, who recruited 114 students, among them two students in 5th grade in primary school, 44 students from 7th until 9th grade of primary school, 68 students from secondary school, and 77 children who were not enrolled in schools. Al Qaeda recruited 37 students, among them 4 students in 5th and 6th grades in primary school, 19 others whose grade level ranges from 7th grade to 9th grade, 14 students in secondary school, and 8 children not enrolled in schools.

Table No. 3: Distribution of Conscripted children by Geographic Scope and Educational Level

Governorate	Children recruited by the Houthis				Children recruited by the Legitimacy				Children recruited by Al Qaeda				Total
	Primary	Prep	Secondary	Illiterate	Primary	Prep	Secondary	Illiterate	Primary	Prep	Secondary	Illiterate	
Taiz	70	369	313	184		18	41	40					1035
Sana'a	53	424	244	126	2	4	10	13					876
Dhamar	65	326	149	142									682
Amran	30	261	202	167									660
Saadah	75	257	170	72									574
Hajjah	22	239	83	46									390
Hudaydah	12	113	100	75									300
Mareb	21	138	64	44		14	9	1					291
Baydha	10	104	61	71						1	1		248
Jawf	17	117	50	50		2	2	8			1		247
Border	13	128	62	20									223
Capital Secretariat	4	83	41	42					1	1	1	1	174
Shabwa	3	36	46	24		6	2	8		6	3	6	140
Aden	10	53	35	16			3						117
Ibb	4	51	18	41					1				115
Dhale	6	55	27	13				2		1			104
Lahj	4	37	33	24			1			2			101
Abyan	4	21	9					5	2	8	8	1	58
Mahwit	3	32	7	12									54
Raymah		6	2	11									19
<b>Total</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>2850</b>	<b>1716</b>	<b>1180</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6408</b>

Chart Showing the Cases of Recruitment Distributed by the Educational Level of the Victims

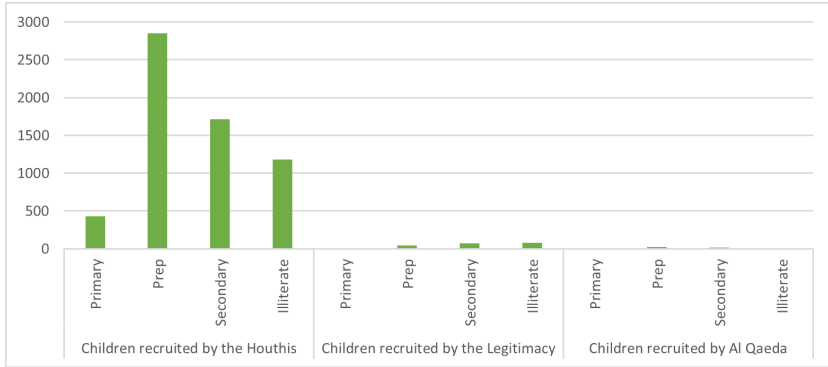
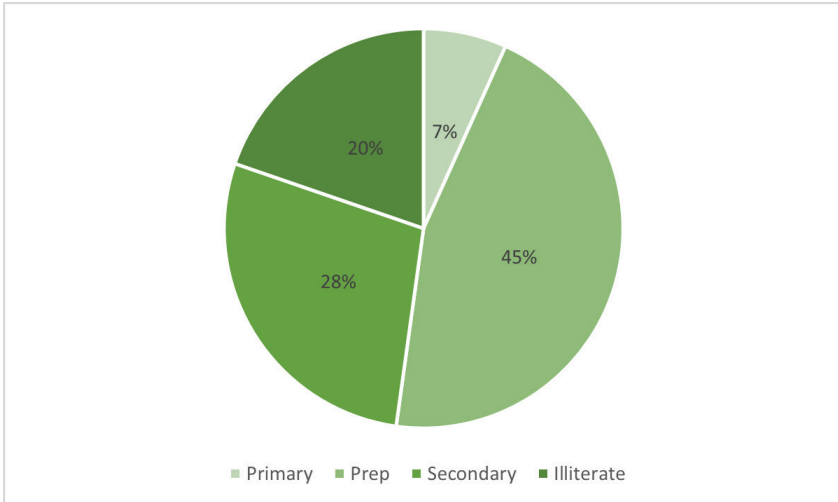


Chart Showing the Percentage of Conscripted children Distributed by Their Educational Levels



## **Distribution by Tasks**

The statute of the International Criminal Court, in Paragraphs B and E of Article 8, categorizes conscripted children based on the tasks that they are given. They are categorized as either active participants, which means that they are armed and are considered fighters, and that they use these weapons with one side against the other, or they can be considered inactive participants by doing things like transporting ammunition and supplies, transferring orders, scouting, bringing information, carrying out sabotage operations, and spying and intelligence. The statutes make the two equal as recruits under the legal age as well as with regards to the severity of the crime perpetrated, and even the punishment is the same.

It seems like the situation is completely different for Yemen, where the parties to the conflict deal with all of the conscripted children as active participants. On this basis, they send them to the frontlines of the fighting even before they get the necessary military training. They are given weapons and military and combat tasks that are not suitable at all with their physical and mental capabilities, like planting and taking apart mines and IEDs that experts and specialists who are very qualified and experienced could not deal with.

That is not all, and sometimes children under the age of 18 are given supervision and command roles. This happens in the ranks

of the Houthi militias, which have given high military ranks to children who are from the same bloodline and then promoted them to leadership positions in the military and security agencies that they have controlled since September 21st, 2014.

Some of the parents who have lost their children on the frontlines of the fighting have complained to the Yemeni Coalition team that there is a racist discrimination based on bloodline that is being carried out by the Houthi militias, even during the distribution of the conscripted soldiers among the different frontlines of the fighting. These parents accuse the Houthi militias of purposely sending the children of the families who are not from the same sect and group to the frontlines of the fighting, while they send the children who are from the same sect as the Houthis to be supervisors in checkpoints, on security patrols in the cities and towns that are under the control of the militia, as the personal bodyguards of security and military officers, or as guards for buildings and installations.

Based on the information above, and according to the facts on the ground, the conscripted soldiers in this report have been divided into the following categories:

- **Fighters:** This means the conscripted children who are sent to the frontlines of the battles and have actively participated

in the fighting.

- Supply: This includes all who were tasked with transporting ammunition and supplies to the fighters on the different frontlines of the war.
- Security: This includes the conscripted children who are distributed among the security checkpoints, whether in cities or on public roads.
- Bodyguards: This includes all of the conscripted children who are tasked with the protection of important individuals or leaders in the violating parties to the conflict.
- War media: This means the conscripted children who are tasked with photographing and providing media coverage of the battles.
- Medics: This means the conscripted children assigned to first aid medic teams who treat the injured and transport the bodies of the dead.
- Other: This includes the rest of the tasks that are assigned to the conscripted children, including scouting, spying, and intelligence tasks.
- 

The statistics and information documented by the Yemeni Coalition team show that 4,902 children who were recruited to fight by the different parties to the conflict in Yemen participate directly in the fighting, and they are sent to the frontlines of the battles, while 254 other children are responsible for supplying

the fighters with ammunition and supplies.

The statistics and information also show that the parties to the conflict in Yemen use 546 conscripted children to carry out other tasks relating to collecting intelligence information, scouting, or clearing buildings, sites, and roads to prepare for the entrance or passing of the actual fighters that the parties to the conflict are saving for the fighting.

The Yemeni Coalition team documented, during the period covered by the report, 17 conscripted children who were medics among medical teams that supported the fighters on the frontlines, in addition to 51 other children being responsible for covering the battles among the so-called war media teams.

The team also documented 495 conscripted children who were distributed among security checkpoints, in addition to 143 conscripted children who were assigned as personal bodyguards to a number of military, security, and civilian leaders, and prominent social figures and tribal sheikhs, who are affiliated with some of the different parties to the armed conflict in 19 governorates in Yemen.

The Houthi militias were at the top of the list of entities that committed these violations, with 4,705 children who were sent to fight on the frontlines of the fighting, 254 others who were assigned supply tasks, including providing ammunition and

supplies for the frontlines, and 475 others being distributed among the security checkpoints.

During the past four years, the Houthi militias have used 532 children in other spying and intelligence tasks, including collecting information, scouting, and submitting reports from the areas that are controlled by the opponents of the Houthis. They have also used 138 conscripted children as personal bodyguards for some of the military and security officers, prominent social figures, and tribal leaders that are allied with the militias, 51 conscripted children were tasked by the militias to cover the battles as a part of the war media teams, and 17 others were given the tasks of medics to provide emergency medical services to the fighters on the frontlines.

The Yemeni Coalition team has also documented the use, by regular forces belonging to the legitimate government, of 161 conscripted children as active fighters, 5 others as spies and in intelligence works, the same number as bodyguards for high government officials, in addition to distributing 20 conscripted children in the security checkpoints in the areas under their control.

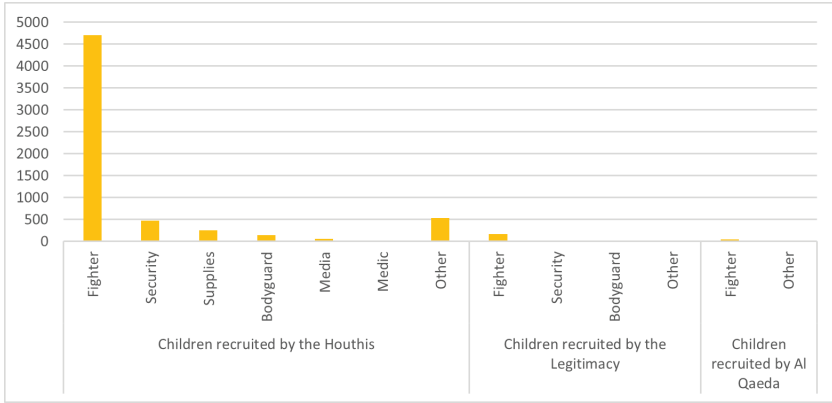
The Yemeni Coalition team investigated the involvement of members of Al Qaeda in involving 36 children in their armed conflicts, whether against the regular army of the legitimate

government or against the Houthi militias, in addition to them using 9 other children to carry out suicide attacks or spying and intelligence work.

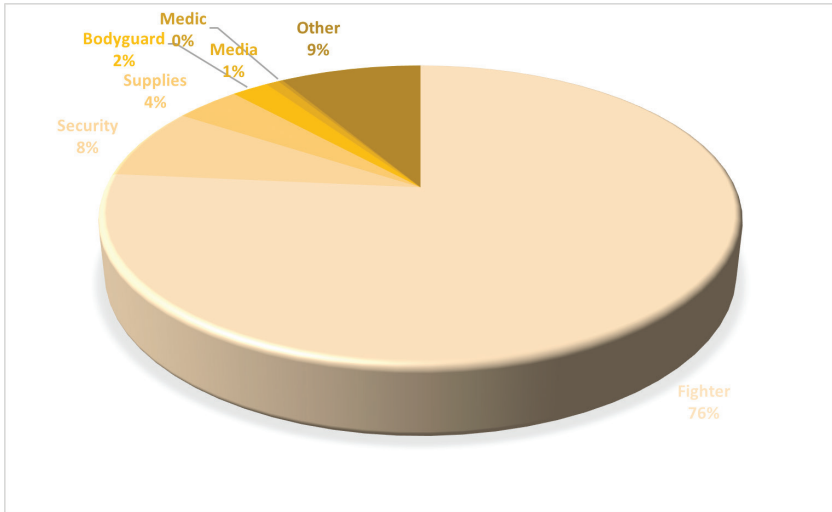
**Table No. 4: Distribution of Conscripted Children by Geographic Scope and the Tasks They Are Assigned**

Governorate	Children recruited by the Houthis							Children recruited by the Legitimacy				Children recruited by Al Qaeda		Total
	Fighter	Security	Supplies	Bodyguard	Media	Medic	Other	Fighter	Security	Bodyguard	Other	Fighter	Other	
Taiz	747	25	23	3	7	2	129	87	12					1035
Sana'a	681	56	32	14	10	2	52	29						876
Dhamar	500	78	32	8	1		63							682
Amran	424	56	72	8	2		98							660
Saadah	502	7	28	17	9	2	9							574
Hajjah	333	18	4	24	3	3	5							390
Hudaydah	218	50	5	15	3	2	7							300
Mareb	201	8	6	6	4	1	41	23		1				291
Baydha	161	38	8	6	4	2	27						2	248
Jawf	189	6	6	2	2		29	12				1		247
Border	181	2	15	7	3	1	14							223
Capital Sec- retariat	96	53	1	14			6						4	174
Shabwa	88	8		6			7	6	1	4	5	14	1	140
Aden	103	1	3	1	1		5		3					117
Ibb	63	35	1	3	1		11					1		115
Dhale	58	12	13		1		17	2				1		104
Lahj	77	6	4	2		1	8		1				2	101
Abyan	33					1		2	3			19		58
Mahwit	34	14	1	2			3							54
Raymah	16	2					1							19
<b>Total</b>	<b>4705</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6408</b>

**Chart Showing the Cases of Conscription Categorized Based on the Tasks Assigned to the Child Victims**



**Chart Showing the Cases of Conscription Categorized Based on the Tasks Assigned to the Child Victims**



## Distribution by Effect

There is nothing more painful than dealing with the cases of conscripted children because of the catastrophic effect that this crime has on the children. The crime starts with kidnapping and forcible disappearance in some cases, then the children are forced to carry out military exercises and get involved in fighting that they are not equipped to handle. They are also subject to physical and sexual abuses during the period that they are on the frontlines of the fighting or in the military bases. Finally, there is the risk of being killed, a risk that these children face when they are sent to the frontlines of the clashes by the parties that conscripted them. They return from these frontlines dead, physically disabled, mentally scarred, or as prisoners of war captured by the other side that they are fighting against.

The ones that are lucky and are able to run away from the battlefield to save themselves will be chased and threatened by the group that conscripted them to fight. There is also the risk that their family will be in danger if the conscripted child is not found and the weapons that they were given not returned. They might even be killed, along with the rest of their family members, after being charged with military treason, which happened to some of the children who were conscripted by the Houthi militias in the Hudaydah and Amran governorates.

In this regard, the Yemeni Coalition team documented the killing of 1,539 conscripted soldiers and the injuring of 1,166 others during their participating in the fighting among the ranks of some of the parties to the armed conflict in Yemen. In addition to that, 437 conscripted children were captured as prisoners of war and 345 others ran away from the frontlines of the battles and the security checkpoints that they were assigned to. Some of the children went to their families, while others are still wanted, until today, by the entities that conscripted them.

The numbers and figures that were documented by the Yemeni Coalition. Team show that 2,664 conscripted children are still carrying out the tasks and functions that they were assigned, whether on the frontlines of the fighting or in the security checkpoints that they were sent to, while 256 other children have disappeared since the date that they joined the ranks of some of the parties to the conflict, and their whereabouts have not been known as of the writing of this report.

The number of victims among the conscripted children in the ranks of the Houthi militias is 1,512 killed and 1,086 injured, in addition to 414 who were captured by the forces of the legitimate government. This happened in a number of the frontlines, the most prominent of which are the Nihm Front in the Sana'a governorate, the Sirwah Front in the Mareb governorate, the

Baqim and Al Baq' Fronts in the Saadah governorate, the Western Coast Front in the Hudaydah governorate, the different frontlines to the west, west, and south of the Taiz governorate, and the frontlines that are on the border.

The Yemeni Coalition team also noticed that a large number of these conscripted children were killed by airstrikes that were carried out by the Arab Coalition against clear military targets and operations, which is the case on the border. This confirms the fact that the Houthi militias are using conscripted soldiers as human shields against the airstrikes.

Taking into account the facts and figures on the areas and situations surrounding the killing of this large number of conscripted children, one of the reasons for this is the unprecedented escalation of military operations by all of the parties to the conflict, especially the Houthi militias, who are continuing to operate in accordance with their well-known military strategy, which is to send the highest number of conscripted soldiers possible to fight against the advances of their opponents on the different frontlines. They do this so that they can keep their actual trained fighters for the battles where they are really needed.

The facts and figures confirm that 2,620 conscripted children are continuing to fight among the ranks of the Houthi armed

militias against the forces of the legitimate government in a number of frontlines. This is after 325 of the conscripted children escaped, and 215 of the children conscripted by the group have disappeared.

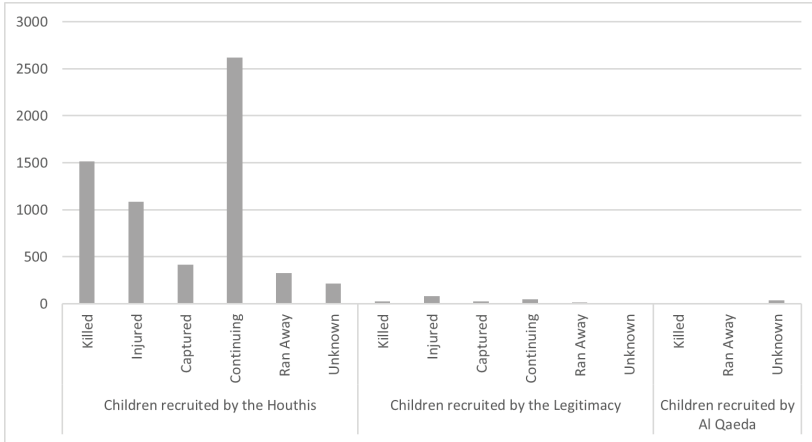
The Yemeni Coalition team has documented the killing of 25 conscripted children who fought in the ranks of the forces of the legitimate government, with 80 others being injured. 45 children are still fighting in the ranks of the forces of the legitimate government against the Houthi militias, with 16 children having escaped and 2 disappeared.

The Yemeni Coalition investigated the killing of a single child and the escape of 4 children who were conscripted by the Al Qaeda terrorist organization, while the fates of 29 other children are still unknown.

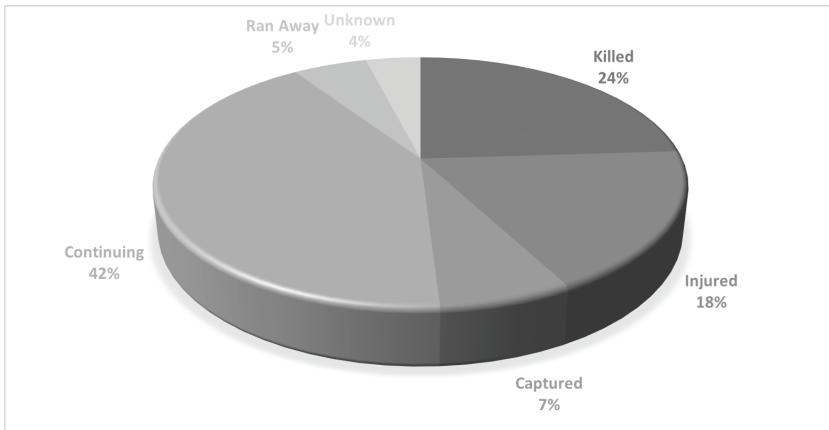
**Table No. 5: Distribution of Conscripted Children by Geographic Scope and Effects**

Governorate	Children recruited by the Houthis						Children recruited by the Legitimacy						Children recruited by Al Qaeda			Total
	Killed	Injured	Captured	Continuing	Ran Away	Unknown	Killed	Injured	Captured	Continuing	Ran Away	Unknown	Killed	Ran Away	Unknown	
Taiz	56	203	45	572	21	39	9	78		4	8					1035
Sana'a	183	134	107	359	41	23	13	2	2	12						876
Dhamar	173	41	9	396	50	13										682
Amran	236	37	24	332	20	11										660
Saadah	167	65	18	278	8	38										574
Hajjah	269	51	15	36	18	1										390
Hudaydah	114	108		35	42	1										300
Mareb	38	64	37	121	2	5	2		4	18						291
Baydha	29	85	5	80	44	3				11					2	259
Jawf	25	63	10	127	7	2	1								1	236
Border	27	74	40	80	1	1										223
Capital Secretariat	66	20	3	40	35	6							1		3	174
Shabwa	11	61	16	13	7	1			15		1			1	14	140
Aden	20	17	50	3	1	23			2		1					117
Ibb	44	12	11	26	4	17							1			115
Dhale	4	19		59	16	3					2			1		104
Lahj	14	15	2	33	6	28					1			2		101
Abyan	9	6	18	1							5				19	58
Mahwit	18	5	3	26	2											54
Raymah	9	6	1	3												19
<b>Total</b>	<b>1512</b>	<b>1086</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>2620</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>6408</b>

**Chart Showing the Conscription of Children Distributed by the Effect**



**Chart Showing the Percentage of Conscribed Children by Effect on the Victims**



## Incidents

H.A.H.A., 15 years old, is from the village of Gharyan in the Khamir district of the Amran governorate. He, along with five other boys his age, joined the ranks of the Houthi militias after they were promised that they would be given military IDs and included in the ranks of the Republican Guards that had overthrown the legitimate government. They were promised monthly salaries of up to 30,000 YER on a temporary basis, in addition to being given weapons.

Based on this, H.A.H.A. and his five peers were put through a reeducation course that was carried out by the Houthi militias in the Capital Secretariat. They were rushed through this course, and then they were sent to the frontlines in Mocha, where the fighting between the forces of the Legitimacy and the militias was at its highpoint. The militias had gotten used to sending children to fight their battles whenever they get intense and when they feel like they are retreating on the field.

A.A.S., a relative of the victim, says: “After Hussein listened to the ideas put forth by the Houthis when they participated in this reeducation course, he was convinced to go out with them to fight. They had claimed, during this reeducation course, that they would be going to fight Americans and Israelis in Mocha. His father was against this idea of him joining the ranks of the group, and he was not happy with it.

“They took my brother and a number of other children and young men who had participated in the reeducation course, and they took them to Hudaydah, then to Mocha through the coastal road. Just a week after they arrived, and before they were even given weapons, on January 1st, 2018, the planes of the Arab Coalition targeted a Houthi military vehicle that they were on. Everyone on the vehicle was killed, including Hussein and the other children that were with him.” (Statement of the relative of the victim)

M.A.S.A., 15 years old, is from the village of Al Murbik in the Khawlan Al Tiyal district in the Sana’a governorate. He left school in the beginning of January 2018, after he had been convinced to do so by members of the Houthi militias, along with a number of other children from the village. They were taken to a reeducation course in the Dhamar governorate, and their families were not informed.

The agreement between the Houthi militia and the child, M.A.S.A., as well as all of the other children from the Al Murbik village, was that they would be taken to man the security checkpoints that were in the Khawlan Al Tiyal district. This calmed their families down, who had been told that their children went to the reeducation course and were waiting for them to return, but to no avail.

A.S.R., one of the witnesses of the incident, says: “The reeducation course ended and the child, M.A.S.A., along with the other

children from the Al Murbik village, where taken to the frontlines of the battle in the Nihm Front. Their families were not asked for permission or even told about this change to the agreement between the children and the Houthi militias.”

He adds: “The family of M.A.S.A. stopped hearing news about him for more than four months, then, suddenly, they started seeing his picture on the sides of the roads and on the walls of the homes on the way to the Al Murbik village in the Khawlan Al Tiyal district. This was how the Houthi militias informed the family that their son was killed in battle in Nihm on May 19th, 2018.”

N.F.M.A., 14 years old, is from the area of Bait Qadam in the Sharsh district of the Hajjah governorate. His brother, Ammar, says that Houthi armed men, led by Khalid Al Yamani, also known as Abu Karar, and Yasser Yahya Al Qadami, also known as Abu Ammar, kidnapped his brother, Najeeb, in the beginning of the Ramadan before the last one. The date was May 29th, 2017, and they took his brother to the city of Taiz, where he went through a number of reeducation and military courses before being involved in the frontlines of the fighting against the forces of the legitimate government and the popular resistance forces. Afterwards, N.F.M.A., who was not even 15 years old yet, was taken to the Midi Front in the Hajjah governorate, where he continued

fighting in the ranks of the Houthi militias until he was killed on February 17th, 2018, or a whole year after he disappeared. The Houthi militias contacted his family and informed them that their son, Najeeb, had been killed, but they have not yet handed over his body. (According to his brother, Ammar)

M.A.A., 14 years old, from the Jiblah district in the Ibb governorate  
A supervisor in the Houthi militias in the Jiblah district in the Ibb governorate lured the child and made him join the ranks of the fighters of the group. The child was armed with a Kalashnikov rifle and was told that he would be given a military ID and employment, along with a salary from the government. He was then taken to the frontlines of the fighting in Dhale, without the knowledge or approval of his family. A month after he was taken to the frontlines, he sustained a shrapnel injury in his head, and he was immediately killed. He was buried there, and one of the members of the Houthi militias took the news of his death to his family.

K.A.A.A., 13 years old, from the Jiblah district in the Ibb governorate

A supervisor in the Houthi militias in the Jiblah district in the Ibb governorate lured the child to join the ranks of the fighters of the militias. He promised that he would put him in a number of courses and give him a weapon and a daily allowance, so the

child agreed, thinking that he would be recruited and trained in the district. The militia took him to the frontlines of the fighting in the Khashabah Pass in the Dhale governorate, where he was killed. His body was buried in the same place by the Houthi militias, and his family was not informed of his death.

M.M.M.A., 13 years old, from the Al Najd Al Ahmar village in the Sayani district of the Ibb governorate

Abu Basheer Al Wadimi and Jamil, both Houthi militia supervisors in the Sayani district, took advantage of the need of the child's family for money because of their poverty by taking the child and conscripting him in the ranks of their fighters after giving him a Kalashnikov rifle. They assigned him to man a security checkpoint in the Sayani Pass. On June 5th, the security checkpoint was targeted by an airstrike from the Arab Coalition Air Force. The child was at the checkpoint at the time, and he was injured by a number of pieces of shrapnel. He died immediately.

A.A.Y.Gh.A., 15 years old, is from the city of Raydah in the Amran governorate. He was killed while participating in the fighting in the ranks of the Houthi militias against the forces of the legitimate government in the Bait Al Faqih area in the middle of Amran city on Monday, August 26th, 2015. According to his relatives, he was forced by the Houthis to leave school. He was in the 8th grade.

A.A.Sh.A., 15 years old, from the Bait Al Faqih neighborhood in Amran city

In July 2015, the Houthi militias conscripted A.A.Sh.A., a child, and forced him to leave school. He was in the 8th grade. He was taken to fight in the ranks of the militia in a number of frontlines, including in Taiz, after which was taken to fight on the frontlines in Mareb, where he was killed on April 8th, 2016. His body was buried in Amran city four days after he was killed, and he was buried in the martyr's cemetery in Bait Al Faqih.

Z.A.Sh.A., 15 years old, from the Bait Al Faqih neighborhood in Amran city

On Wednesday, January 25th, 2017, a child named Zakaria Al Makhidhi, who was 15 years old at the time, was killed while fighting in the ranks of the Houthi militias in the Al Raboo'ah Front in Asir, on the Yemeni-Saudi border. This happened just five months after he was conscripted by the Houthi supervisor in the area. His family received his body three days after he was killed, and he was buried in the martyr's cemetery on 40 St. in Amran city.

A.S.A., 10 years old, is from the village of Al Labnat in the Al Ghail subdistrict of the Al Hazm district in the Jawf governorate. The Houthi militias conscripted the child, A.S.A., along with a number of other children from the Al Ghail village in the Al Hazm district. They were sent to the frontlines after they were given weapons. The child was killed on the frontlines.

A.Sh.A.A., 16 years old, from the village of Al Saddah in the Bani Hawr subdistrict of the Maswar district in Amran. The Houthi militias conscripted him in the beginning of 2015, after he attended a number of preparatory courses to incite them to fight. The militias took him to the different frontlines, the last of which was the Midi Front on the border. He remained there, fighting, until he was killed on September 24th, 2017. He was buried in Amran, in the Bait Al Faqih neighborhood, on September 27th, 2017.

### **Executions and Assassinations**

M.A.M.A., 14 years old, was taken, along with a large number of children under the age of 18, from his home. His home is in the Far' Al Udain district in the Ibb governorate, and he was taken during a mandatory conscription campaign that was carried out by the Houthi militias in the district. This was happening at the same time as the collapse of the militia's forces in the Baydha and Saadah governorates, as well as in the south of the Hudaydah governorate.

What is strange in this story is that the conscripted child was not killed by the legitimate government's forces or by an airstrike carried out by the Arab Coalition, as were the rest of his peers. He was killed in the field by the Houthi militias, which took advantage of his family's weakness and poverty.

According to documented statements given by witnesses of the incident, witnesses whose identities the Yemeni Coalition will not mention for their own safety and security, the child M.A.M.A., who was conscripted by the Houthi militias, was killed on Thursday, August 24th, by a fellow fighter on the Western Coast Front.

The witness said: “The killing of the child, M.A.M.A., came after a dispute between him and members of the Houthi militias. They fought over money that the child demanded, and one of the militiamen shot and killed him.”

A.Sh., 14 years old

On November 18th, 2017, a Saturday, weeks after the Houthi militias kidnapped him and sent him to the frontlines to fight, his body was returned to his mother in the Al Dayiri neighborhood in the Maeen district of the Capital Secretariat. The child, Ayman, had been a good student, and he had gotten %93 on the ninth-grade exams. The militias took advantage of family problems and his father kicking him out of the house to conscript him.

### **Injured Children**

A.M.Q.A.M., 13 years old, is from the area of Tee Qarhad in the Saqayn district of the Saadah governorate. According to his brother, Safeer, armed men from the Houthi militia, led by

Salem Ghayeb Qassim Abdan and Nabil Qassim Jabal kidnapped the child, A.M.Q.A.M., on Wednesday, August 8th, 2018, at 10 am. He was taken from in front of his home, and they took him to an unknown location. His family did not know anything about him or where he was.

Safeer, during a recorded interview that was conducted by the Yemeni Coalition team in the Saadah governorate, said that his brother, A.M.Q.A.M., made a phone call to his family around two weeks after he was forcibly disappeared, and he told them that he was with the Houthi militias. They did not hear anything for a few days, then he returned, injured due to his participation in the fighting in the ranks of the Houthi militia against the forces of the legitimate government.

Just a month after he returned from the frontlines of the fighting, and before his injuries had healed, the Houthi armed men returned to take him from his family again. His family was living in bad living conditions, and they lured him with money and were able to convince him to go back to fight with them. His fate was unknown for two years, and his family did not know anything about him, until they got the news that he had been injured again at the Baq' Front on February 28th, 2018, and he had been taken to the Al Salam Hospital in Saadah to get treatment there.

H.A.M.B., 15 years old, and M.H.B., 16 years old, are from the

Al Aqdah village in the Khabb Wa Al Shaaf district in Jawf, and armed men from the Houthi militia lured them with money and weapons and conscripted them into one of the military bases of the militia for training. This military base is in the district, and, from there, they took them to the Sabrain Front, where they remained, fighting against the forces of the legitimate government, until they were severely injured. The coupist militias then returned them to their families and they did not even pay for their treatment.

According to people close to the child, H.A.M.B., whose names are being withheld, the child was not injured due to clashes with the legitimacy forces, as is the case with his peer, Hasan. His injuries were a result of disputes between him and one of the Houthi militia supervisors in the area that they were in. The dispute escalated to the point where there was gunfire, and the child, Muhammad, sustained severe injuries in his left foot.

Kh.Y.M.M., 15 years old, is from Jabal Iyal Yazeed in the Amran governorate, and he was injured on Monday, at 4 pm, on May 29th, 2017, while he was taking part in the fighting in the ranks of the Houthi militia against the forces of the legitimate government in the Taiz governorate.

K.H.Y.A., 15 years old, is from the Al Rawi village in the Iyal Surayh district in the Amran governorate. He sustained a severe injury in his right leg on the night of Tuesday, March 14th, 2017.

He was injured while fighting in the ranks of the Houthi militia against the forces of the legitimacy and the popular resistance in the Silw Front in the Taiz governorate.

### **Children in the Hands of the Legitimate Government**

A.A.D.S., 15 years old, is from the village of Dhuwaib in the Haydan district of the Saadah governorate. He lives with his family, who is poor and has a limited income, which forced him to leave school and join the ranks of the Houthi militias after they made him an offer on May 1st, 2017. They offered to pay him a salary, no more than 20,000 YER a month, in addition to a daily allowance, just like the rest of his peers on the frontlines.

Just two days after that, a man named Abu Murtadha, the supervisor of the Houthi militias, took A.A.D.S. to the Al Baq' Front without anyone in his family knowing this. There, he was given a training course for just ten days, after which he was taken to the frontlines of the fighting. He remained there, fighting in the Houthi ranks against the forces of the legitimate government, for around four months.

After that, the legitimacy forces carried out a large-scale attack on Houthi militia positions on the Al Baq' Front, and all of the militia fighters ran away, leaving behind the child, A.A.D.S. He had been injured during the clashes. The legitimacy forces took him to one of their field hospitals for treatment.

At 4 pm, on Wednesday, February 14th, 2018, the forces of the legitimate government handed over the conscripted child, A.A.D.S., to his family, who had come to the city of Mareb to take him after they were contacted by the command of the Yemeni Army in the Saadah Theater. They had worked, during the period that the child was with them, to implement a number of programs to raise awareness and train him and the other children that they had captured in order to rehabilitate them and reintegrate them as productive members of their communities.

A.Sh.Z., 13 years old, from Manbah district in the Saadah governorate

A Houthi supervisor named Ali Yahya Zaidan came and asked the child, Asaad, to go to what he called jihad. He took him, after that, to Saadah city for training in one of the military bases. There, he was taught how to use weapons and plant mines, then he was taken to the Sirwah Front in the Mareb governorate. He continued fighting in the ranks of the Houthi militia until he was captured by the forces of the legitimate government and the popular resistance.

H.G.M.S., 15 years old, from the Razih district in the Saadah governorate

The child, H.G.M.S., was in his village in the Razih district in the Saadah governorate when a leader in the Houthi militia,

Ahmad Jaber Muhsin, came and told the child victim that it was important that he participate in fighting against what he called the aggression. He took the child to Sana'a, after which the child was taken to the frontlines of the fighting in the area of Al Ashraaf in Mareb city. He continued fighting with them until he was captured by the legitimate army and the resistance.

S.A.S.A., 14 years old

The child, S.A.S.A., is from Dhamar, and he moved to live in Saadah in the beginning of September 2016. At that time, a Houthi leader named Faris Al Ammar, who is also known as Abu Malik, raided a number of schools and took a number of the students against their will. These students were sent to the frontlines of the fighting. S.A.S.A. was one of these children, and he was taken to fight in the ranks of the group in Mareb. He continued fighting there until he was captured by the legitimate army and the resistance.

A.A.S.A., 15 years old, from the Manakhah district of the Sana'a governorate

A Houthi supervisor named Muhammad Al Ghorbani came and asked the victim to go with him, along with some other children, to the Capital Secretariat to take a reeducation course and get some training in using a rifle and an RPG. Then, the child was taken to Jawf to participate in the fighting against the forces of

the legitimate government. His field commander was Abu Khalil Al Qadhi, and he continued fighting there until he was captured. A.S.M.A., 14 years old, is from the Hajjah governorate, and he was displaced to Amran. While he was working on a bus there to support his family, the Houthi supervisor in the area, a man named Abu Muhammad, came to him and asked him to go with him to jihad. The Houthi supervisor armed him and gave him money, which he said was his first salary. When the child went to get permission from his father to go fight, his father refused to allow him to fight, but the Houthis pressured him into allowing his son to go fight.

The child, A.S.M.A., was taken to Arhab, where he was trained in the use of light and medium-sized weapons and planting mines and IEDs. After that, he was taken to the Majzar Front in the Mareb governorate. He continued fighting there, in the ranks of the Houthi militia, until he was captured by the resistance and the Yemeni Army. He was handed over to his family through an initiative from the local authorities in the Mareb governorate and the Yemeni Army, and this was done under the supervision of a number of rights organizations.

M.S.A., 14 years old, is from the Kahlan Al Sharaf district in the Hajjah governorate.

A man named Muhammad Ali Ahmad Adar, who is a leader in

the Houthi militia, came and asked the child, M.S.A., to join what he called the jihad against the aggression. He was still a student in the sixth grade, and he was forcefully taken to the Khabb Wal Shaaf Front in the Jawf governorate. There, he was given a Kalashnikov rifle and sent to fight with them. He was later captured by the legitimate army and the popular resistance, and he was handed over to his family as a part of an initiative from the local authorities in the Mareb governorate and the Yemeni Army, and this was done under the supervision of a number of rights organizations.

N.M.A.S., 15 years old, from the Al Haymah Al Kharijyah district in the Sana'a governorate

He was recruited by a Houthi supervisor named Fawaz Ahmad Al Hammadi. In the beginning, he was taken to Bani Hushaish, then he was sent to a military base for training in how to use a rifle, a machine gun, an RPG, and how to plant mines. After that, he was taken to the Mareb Front, where he was injured in the Al Ashraaf Front and captured by the resistance.

### **Unknown Fate**

K.A.A.S., 17 years old, was in the first year of secondary school in the Al Shuqaira village in the Waziyah district of the Taiz governorate. The Houthi militias who were positioned in the area forced his family to pay money as a part of the war effort.

When his family was unable to make this payment, the militias kidnapped their youngest son, K.A.A.S., and took him to an unknown location. His family still does not know what has happened to him.

His brother, A.A.A.S., says: “At 10 am on Friday, January 2nd, 2018, armed Houthi men raided our home in the Al Shuqaira village in the Waziyah district of the Taiz governorate. They took my brother, Kamal, who was not yet 17 years old. They said that they needed fighters on the frontlines, and that any family that did not have men who could fight had to pay money to cover the expenses of another person to fight in their place.”

He adds: “When my family, who is poor, could not provide any money to pay to the war efforts, the Houthi militias took my brother, K.A.A.S., using their weapons to force him to go with them. They took him and forced him to fight against the legitimate government and the popular resistance in the area. Since that time, we have not known which front he was taken to, and if he is still alive. We do not know if he has been killed in battle, and we have not been informed of anything.”

A.S.A.A., 15 years old, is from the Jabal Al Lawz village in the Khawlan Al Tiyal district of the Sana’a governorate. The Houthi militias recruited A.S.A.A., along with a large group of children,

from the Jabal Al Lawz village in the Khawlan Al Tiyal area, and. They distributed them among the frontlines of the fighting without their families knowing. Their families still do not know where the children are.

Y.S.S.A.S., 16 years old, supported his mother, who is in her seventies. The Houthi armed militias took advantage of the living conditions of the family of this child, and they recruited him and sent him to fight in the Taiz governorate. His fate is unknown.

M.A.H.Y.A., 12 years old, is from the subdistrict of Qailab in the Maswar district of Amran. He was in the sixth grade before joining the ranks of the Houthi militias on March 10th, 2017. He joined without the knowledge of his family, and he was recruited by a Houthi leader named Abdelfattah Ismael Al Haiqi, who is the Houthi supervisor in the area. Al Haiqi took the child to the frontlines of the fighting, and his family is still looking for him. A.M.A.A.A., 15 years old, and his cousin, M.M.A.S.A., 17 years old, are from the village of Jabal Al Lawz in the Khawlan Al Tiyal district of the Sana'a governorate. They were recruited by the Houthi militia supervisor in the area in the middle of March 2017, without the knowledge of their families, then they were sent to the frontlines to fight. They were forced to fight against the forces of the legitimate government.

Things did not stop there. The perpetrators of this crime refuse to reveal the fate of the two children, M.A.A.A. and M.M.A.S.A., or even allow them to contact their families. Their families have gone to all of the offices and headquarters of the Houthi militias in the Sana'a governorate and the Capital Secretariat to look for their children or any information that might lead to them because they are very worried about them, and they have yet to find anything.

This same thing happened to 7 children from the Jabal Al Lawz village and the district. Their ages range from 13 to 16. They were forced to join the ranks of the Houthi militias as one group during January of this year after they were a part of a reeducation course. Then, their families stopped hearing about them, and they never got to find out their fates. (According to reports received by the Yemeni Coalition team in the governorate)

**List of the Names of Children Recruited by the Houthi Militias Whose Fates Are Still Unknown**

#	Name of Conscripted Child	Age	Village	District	Responsible Entity
1	Akram Faisal Naji Miftah	16	Jabal Al Lawz	Khawlan	Houthi Militias
2	Bassam Muhammad Muhammad Hajar	14	Jabal Al Lawz	Khawlan	Houthi Militias
3	Abdulrahman Muhammad Naji	16	Jabal Al Lawz	Khawlan	Houthi Militias
4	Abdullah Ali Hussein Al Araj	13	Jabal Al Lawz	Khawlan	Houthi Militias
5	Muhammad Ahsan Ahmad Al Jamal	16	Jabal Al Lawz	Khawlan	Houthi Militias
6	Mutee Ali Ahmad Al Jabri	14	Jabal Al Lawz	Khawlan	Houthi Militias
7	Hayel Al Musid Al Tamm	16	Jabal Al Lawz	Khawlan	Houthi Militias

## Still on the Frontlines

O.H.M., 16 years old, is from the area of Musayk in the Azal district of the Capital Secretariat, and his father bought him a tax and a bus and did everything he could to make him comfortable so that he could remain with his family and not fall victim to the parties to the conflict, who are competing every day to recruit people around Osama's age.

O.H.M. left dropped out of class in the Abdulrahman Al Ghouli school and joined the ranks of the Houthi militia fighters in the beginning of January of this year. This happened after he was brainwashed during a reeducation course, according to his teachers at school.

A teacher, M.N.Q., told the Yemeni Coalition team in the Capital Secretariat about what happened. He said: "At the beginning of this year, Houthi armed men raided the school and they took a number of the students who were younger than 16 years old. They were taken to the frontlines of the battles. Some of them were killed, and others are still there, like O.H.M., who comes back to visit his family from time to time, then he goes back to fight in the ranks of the Houthis."

He adds: “During his last visit to his family, I saw O.H.M. on the street, and I asked him why he had been absent for such a long time. I asked him if he wanted to go back to school and continue his studies, and he told me that he had been fighting with the Houthis. He said that he really wanted to continue fighting and to take revenge for all of his peers who were killed in the fighting.” Whenever O.H.M. goes to visit his family in the Musayk neighborhood in the Capital Secretariat, he always makes sure to visit some of his teachers and schoolmates to tell them about his adventures, which are suicidal. The things he does are based on his imagination and the delusions that are sold to him by the people who are taking advantage of him and other Yemeni children to serve their own nefarious purposes. (According to some of the people that met him and listened to his stories, even if just to make him feel better)

O.H.M. also never forgets to bring his weapon with him everywhere he goes during these visits, and he always shows the people that he meets the injuries on his thin body. He sustained these injuries during the periods that he fought in the ranks of the Houthi militias against the forces of the legitimate government. His schoolmate, H.M.S., says: “I was there when O.H.M. and a number of our other classmates were taken on a Houthi militia military vehicle. They were taken from inside the school, and I

was surprised to see him after he returned from the frontlines. I never expected that he would change this much. Everything about him has changed, including the way he thinks and the way he talks. This is something that I still cannot believe.”

He adds: “We met with O.H.M. and one of our teachers was with us, and he told us many things that had happened to them on the frontlines of the fighting, including that they were given weapons and books that Osamah says are written by his master, Hussein Badreddin Al Houthi, the brother of the Prophet, who is waiting for them at the door to heaven. This is what the supervisors that are commanding them on the frontlines always tell them.”

A.A.B., 16 years old, is another example of the victims of the recruitment campaign that were carried out by the Houthi armed militias in the beginning of this year in the Abdulrahman Al Ghouli School in Musayk in the Azal district in the eastern Capital Secretariat. They targeted students under the age of 18, which is a clear violation of national laws and legislation and all international charters and conventions on the rights of children, which criminalize these kinds of actions.

Despite the similarity between this case and the one before it, whether with regards to the educational level and even the time, place, and details of the incident, there is an important difference

that is in the economic and living conditions of the two children. The family of the second child are living in difficult conditions, and this increased the likelihood of their child marching of to his death. Many of his peers had gone down this path before him, with some of them returning as bodies and some only returning as pictures after their bodies could not be found.

According to the statement of a teacher, M.N.Q., the Houthi armed militias took the child, A.B., who is a classmate of A.A.A., from the same school and the same class (the 9th grade). They brought them, along with a number of other of their schoolmates from other grades, to a number of different fronts, including the Western Coast Front, the Nihm Front, the Sirwah Front, the Taiz Front, and the Saadah Front. These are the fronts that have been the most active since the beginning of 2018.

A.A.B. returned in the first visit to his family and he was seen by the same teacher. He asked him the same question that he had asked his peer, A.A.A., about why he had been absent and what he wanted to do in the future. He got the same answer and in the same way: “I was fighting on the frontlines, in the ranks of the Houthi militias, and I will go back to continue fighting and take revenge for my classmates who were killed on the frontlines, and that their master, Hussein Badreddin Al Houthi, is the brother of the Prophet, and he is waiting for them at the door to heaven.”!!!

A.A.B. went to join the Houthi militias, as his brother had done before him, and his brother had been killed during battle. This did not change anything in their family's lives, who were still living in abject poverty, relying on whatever aid charity they got from local and international organizations, like any other poor family in their neighborhood. This is what all of his classmates and teachers that met with the Yemeni Coalition team in the Capital Secretariat said.

The same thing also happened to R.H.A., 16 years old, who was a student in the 9th grade of primary school in the Abdulrahman Al Ghouli school. His story is no different at all from the story of his classmate from the same school and class, A.A.B. They have the same worries and the same problems because of the oppression of the militias and the harsh reality they live in.

The Yemeni Coalition team got confirmed information that a man named Mahmoud Zabibah, who is the jihad supervisor for the Houthi militias in Musayk, is the man directly responsible for all of the campaigns to recruit children in the area, including A.A.A. and A.B., as well as their other schoolmates. He is the one who recruits and conscripts young children, and he has also put up posters in the Al Ghouli School and the streets around it in the neighborhood telling the children to go fight in the jihad.

W.Y.S.M., 16 years old, is from the Hajjah governorate, and he

is one of 200 students who were in the orphanage in the Capital Secretariat. They were brought in by the Houthis in the beginning of this year and involved in the fighting on the Nihm Front to the east of the Sana'a governorate. They were all sent as one group. S.A.M.L., a person close to the victim, says: "The Houthi supervisor raided the orphanage on February 13th, 2018. This orphanage is located on Taiz Street, in southern Sana'a, and the supervisor collected the students from the orphanage. He gave them a speech, calling upon them to participate in a reeducation course that will be held in the Capital Secretariat. He promised everyone that attended this course a job. More than 200 students said that they were ready to participate in the course, and W.M., an orphan, was among them."

He continues: "After completing the reeducation course, which continued for a whole month, the Houthi militias took the child, W.M., and the rest of the students from the orphanage, who were between 13 and 16 years old, to the Nihm Front. There, they were thrown into very brutal battles, during which dozens of them were killed. The rest are still fighting with the militias against the forces of the legitimate government. They are still in the same area."

Y.A.S.A., 16 years old, from the Bait Al Ashwal village in Amran city

On Tuesday, December 8th, 2015, at 10 pm, Yunus had not come home, and his family was looking for him. They kept looking for him until the next day, when they were suddenly called by the Houthi supervisor in the area. He told them that their son was with him, and that he was now a soldier in the ranks of the militias. He said that their son was in the Bilaili Center in the capital, Sana'a. His family went to the Capital Secretariat to take him, but they were not allowed to even see him except after they tried very hard. When they asked him to go back home, the child refused, and he said that he wanted to contribute to the jihad of the Houthis. Since that time, Yunus goes back to visit his family from time to time, then he goes back to fighting on the frontlines with the Houthis.

Y.M.S.A., 14 years old, is from the Qailab village in the Maswar district of the Amran governorate. He was as student in the 9th grade when a Houthi supervisor in the area came to him, lying to him and convincing him that he needed to join the ranks of the Houthi fighters to defend his country from what he called the foreign aggression.

W.A.N.A., 14 years old, is from the Al Ushah district in the Amran governorate, and he was a student in the 7th grade. He left school and was forced to join the ranks of the Houthi militias and the forces loyal to the former president. He was distributed, along

with a number of other children, to the different frontlines of the fighting. This was on January 2017 ,11, and they were sent there after being told that their country was being attacked by other countries that want to invade it, and that they were all responsible for defending it, even the children.

M.A.M.A., 12 years old, is from the Jadid village in the Bani Mahdi subdistrict of the Maswar district in Amran. He was recruited by members of the Houthis while going to the Qarat Ahmad village to get his school diploma. He was in the 7th grade, and he was starting 8th grade in the school in the area. The armed men convinced him to leave school and join them, and they lured him by saying that he will be able to carry and use weapons.

On September 2017 ,23, M.A. joined the ranks of the Houthi militia, then he was immediately taken to the battles in Taiz to fight against the forces of the legitimate government. He is still there as of the writing of this report.

## Recommendations

### To the Militias of the Houthis and the Former President:

- Immediately stopping the conscription of anyone under the age of 18 and the involvement of children directly in the fighting or in any other tasks that are prohibited by national laws and legislation and international charters, conventions, or agreements that are ratified by Yemen.
- Quickly taking the necessary steps to ensure the safety of all of the conscripted children that they have, returning them to their families, and paying them a just compensation for the harms and losses, material, human, or psychological, that they went through during the period of their conscription.
- Releasing the conscripted soldiers who were captured during their battles with the forces of the legitimate government through the prisoner exchange deals that are used or by coordinating with local or international organizations and entities.

### The Legitimate Government:

- Using modern techniques to determine the age of anyone who is suspected of being underage, even if they have documents that state that they are of age, and quickly taking steps to laying off and rehabilitating the current soldiers in the regular army or the popular resistance in accordance with the 2007 Paris Principles.

- Taking the necessary steps to release the conscripted children who were captured during battles with the “Houthi” or “Saleh” militias and working to rehabilitate them in coordination with related local and international entities and organizations.
- Working to continue previous formal steps to end the recruitment of child soldiers and their involvement in the armed conflict and taking advantage of all of the efforts that oppose this phenomenon at the local, regional, and international levels.

#### **Human Rights Organizations:**

- Increasing efforts to document and monitor the cases of conscripted children and the abuse of children by the parties to the armed conflict in Yemen and exposing their perpetrators to the public in order to put international pressure on them to stop these practices that threaten the lives and futures of the most important group in our society, children.
- Pressuring the legitimate government to give national organizations that work in protecting the rights of children a legal status so that they are able to raise and proceed with suits against anyone who commits any crimes or violations against minors, including conscripting them and using them in armed conflicts.