



Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Newsletter

August 2009

Submitted by: the International Bureau for Children's Rights (IBCR)

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1. Global Developments on Children's Rights

Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to Examine Qatar and Yemen at its 52nd Session

August 2009 - The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) will be holding its 52nd session from 14th September to 2nd October 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland, where it will examine the second periodic report of Qatar under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the initial State report of Yemen under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

[More information](#) – CRC

Working Group on the UPR to report on Yemen during Human Rights Council 12th session

August 2009 - Human Rights Council (HRC) will hold its 12th session from 14 September to 2 October 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland, during which the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) will have an opportunity to report on Yemen.

[More information](#) – Human Rights Council

UNICEF Humanitarian Action Report 2009 Mid-Year Review

August 2009 - Although the first half of 2009 has witnessed improvements in several long-standing humanitarian crises, millions of children and women continue to be affected by ongoing conflicts, protracted displacement and disasters associated with natural hazards such as earthquakes, droughts, floods, cyclones and hurricanes. Underlying vulnerabilities have been further exacerbated by a combination of global challenges related to high food and fuel prices, financial and economic crises, and the increasingly evident impacts of climate change. This report focuses on a number of countries, including a few in the MENA region, such as Iraq, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Yemen.

[More information and full report](#) - Reliefweb

2. MENA Regional Child Related Activities (events, Research on the need for safe urban spaces for children and youth in the MENA Region conferences, news, vacancies, announcements, reportages, campaigns)

UNESCO and TAG-Org sign Partnership Agreement to Build more Inclusive Knowledge Societies in the Arab Region

10 August 2009 - UNESCO and the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization (TAG-Org), the Jordanian-based international business services company, signed a partnership agreement on Sunday in Paris to work together on the building of inclusive knowledge societies and on the promotion of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to support education,

science and culture in the Arab region. The agreement reflects the commitment of both TAG-Org and UNESCO to mobilize partners to build knowledge societies, notably by increasing access to and measuring the use of ICT in different sectors of society, enhancing teacher training, and promoting multilingualism and internationalized Internet Domain Names.

[Full article](#) – UNESCO

Middle East Peace Camp for Children

10 August 2009 – Arab Center of Washington, Kadima Reconstructionist Congregation, and Kay Bullitt are launching their 2009 Middle East Peace Camp for Children. The Camp will be held in Seattle from 10 August 2009 to 14 August 2009 under the theme ‘Growing peace’. This initiative aims at building a community of Arabs and Jews based on peace, justice and compassion through recreation, education and leadership development.

[For more information](#) - Middle East Peace Camp for Children

Child Executions: New Book Argues for Abolition Child Executions Based on Islamic and International Law

18 August 2009 - The Arabic Network for Human Rights Information, ANHRI, in collaboration with The International Campaign For Human Rights In Iran have published the Arabic translation of "Child Executions, A Study of Roots and Proposed Intellectual And Jurisprudential Solutions," by the Iranian human rights defender and winner of the 2009 Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights, Emad Baghi. Baghi presents a comprehensive research on child executions, a punishment that is currently restricted to some Islamic countries. His study is based on arguments of the Islamic and international laws and concludes with the necessity of abolishing the death penalty in general, and ending execution of child offenders, persons convicted of crimes they committed under the age of 18, in specific. There are currently five Islamic countries , three of which are Arab countries whose legal codes allow for the execution of child offenders: Iran, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Yemen and Pakistan.

[Full article](#) - ANHRI

Vacancy – Middle East Regional Program Director with Relief International (RI) based in Beirut, Lebanon

Closing date: 01 September, 2009. Relief International – Schools Online (RI-SOL) is a humanitarian organization which aims to save lives, sustain livelihoods and enhance education in areas facing ongoing conflict or natural disaster worldwide. The Middle East Regional Director will provide management support to RI's Country Offices (COs) in the region; ensure quality control of all programs; work towards a cohesive regional strategy; and develop new programs. The position reports to the Senior Director of Middle East Programs in Washington DC and requires frequent travel to COs and field sites across the region.

[More information](#) – Reliefweb

Vacancy – Country Director with Relief International (RI) based in Amman, Jordan

Closing date: 01 September, 2009. The Country Director (CD) is responsible for overall management and development of Relief International's (RI) country programs in Jordan, ensuring that programming meets stated objectives, is in line with RI's philosophy and strategy and meets the needs of beneficiaries. The CD is also responsible for spotting and pursuing new program opportunities and identifying gaps in services.

[More information](#) - Reliefweb

3. Sub-Regional and Country Updates:

In the Levant:

Iraq- Future Hero Project Brings Soccer Balls, Backpacks to Thousands of Iraqi Children

01 August 2009- More than 2,000 children from the Tarmiyah area received soccer balls and school supplies, July 29, thanks to a combined effort between the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team (Independence), Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the Iraqi Ministry of Education. In the past, the Independence Brigade Soldiers and their ISF counterparts have facilitated many school drops under the Junior Hero program, but the Future Hero program took things to the next level by involving Iraqi officials and recognizing the academic achievements of the students. "We have done about 15 Junior Hero projects throughout the Tarmiyah qada, but this one is the largest," Sgt. Brian Choe, of Tustin, Calif., said. "We asked to bring in the Ministry of Education and the council members and are presenting the top students from 15 schools with a certificate of achievement today."

[Full Article](#) - Multi-National Force Iraq

Iraq – Iraqi Children Taught to Kill by Islamic Supremacists for \$80

06 August 2009 - A spokesman for the Operations Command, Major-General Qassim 'Atta, said that Al-Qaeda is currently focusing on recruiting children, single and divorced women, and the uneducated. In Kirkuk, the commander of the 12th Division announced the arrest of children and young people, including four below the age of 14, who are called the 'Birds of Paradise' [tuyoor al-jannah]. The children carried explosive devices for a payment of the equivalent of \$80.

[Full Article](#) – R.E.A.L. Organization

Iraq - For Iraq's War-Scarred Children, a Struggle to Heal the Wounds Within

9 August 2009 - Allawi Makki, five, and Imad Halas, seven, often spend their time in endless, dramatic video game challenges between Barcelona and AC Milan in a well-lit room full of toys on the sixth floor of the Qasser Jeddah Hotel in Amman.

But what seems like a charmed life for these two young Iraqi boys is merely a brief respite from childhoods marred by unimaginable horrors. Halas and Makki, whose faces were deformed by the heat of bomb blasts, are among a number of Iraqi children waiting for

surgical procedures at the Red Crescent Hospital run by the French medical charity Doctors Without Borders. Some of the children need maxillofacial operations to repair severe burns, while others require orthopaedic surgery. But for many of them, the hardest challenge is trying to overcome their psychological traumas.

[Full article](#) – The Jordan Times

Iraq - Mosul Brigade Federal Police Reach Out to Children

11 August 2009 - The Mosul Brigade Federal Police (FP) handed out school supplies and children's shoes to the citizens of the Bab Al-Toob neighborhood on 08 August 2009. The humanitarian drop was one part of a larger mission to reach out to the populace of this West Mosul neighborhood. Children and parents alike clamored for the much-needed pencils, notebooks, and other school supplies that will be used when the children return to school in September. Children formed a line in front of Brig. Gen. Majid M. Abaas, the Mosul Brigade FP commander, as he passed out hundreds of bags of school supplies. Giving out humanitarian aid has become a vital part of the FP's non-lethal mission. Handing out this humanitarian aid allows the FP to reach the citizens on a much more personal level than conducting combat patrols or raids. "Our project here is the people," said Abaas. "You want the people on your side, and if the people feel that you will protect them and keep them safe, they will help you in your operations."

[Full Article](#)- Multi-National Force Iraq

Israel/oPt –Indigenous Youth Delegation to Palestine

August 2009- The Indigenous Youth Delegation to Palestine, the first-ever delegation of its kind, is scheduled for August 2009. Youth leaders from grassroots indigenous groups in the US, namely Seventh Native American Generation (SNAG) Magazine, Huaxtec, and Native students at Haskell University, will travel to Palestine at the invitation of five Palestinian youth centres. After more than two years of communicating through the internet, these young people will have the opportunity to learn firsthand from each other by sharing tools of empowerment and education.

[For more information](#)-Middle East Children's Alliance

Israel/oPt – IRFAN Canada contributes \$1.2 million for the construction of a New Girls School in the West Bank.

04 August 2009 – The International Relief Fund for the Afflicted and Needy (IRFAN-Canada), a registered charitable organization in Canada, has donated US\$ 1,2 million to UNRWA for the construction of a new girls' school in the West Bank village of Battir. The project encompasses the construction, equipping and furnishing of a new building to replace the dilapidated rented premises currently used by Battir Girl's School. The Agency intends to construct a 2550 m² new school building, which will consist of 17 classrooms, five specialized rooms, a head teacher's room, teachers' rooms, toilet block, standard canteen, playgrounds and retaining and boundary walls. The new school will directly benefit 388 pupils currently enrolled at UNRWA's Girls' School in Battir village.

[Full article](#) - UNRWA

Israel/oPt – Israeli Troops 'ill-treat kids'

06 August 2009 - A former Israeli military commander has told the BBC that Palestinian youngsters are routinely ill-treated by Israeli soldiers while in custody, reports the BBC's Katya Adler from Jerusalem and the West Bank. Young Palestinians are mostly arrested for throwing stones at Jewish settlers or Israeli soldiers. This, they say, is their only means of venting their frustration at Israel's military occupation of their home, the West Bank. Human rights groups are calling on the international community to investigate what they say are Israel's violations of children's rights.

[Full Article](#)- BBC News

Israel/oPt - Mobile clinic launched - Bedouin communities access primary health care

10 August 2009 - On 11 August, a new mobile medical clinic was to be officially launched, to serve 26 Bedouin encampments in the district of Jericho. An integral part of the EC-funded project, Provision of Primary Health Care: a special emphasis on combating anaemia and malnutrition for Bedouin women and children in Jericho District and vicinity, this mobile clinic will be providing primary health care to thousands of individuals, particularly women and children, who would otherwise have no access to basic essential health care. The majority of project beneficiaries are women of reproductive health age and children 0 - 5 years from the 26 Bedouin encampments.

[Full article and report](#) - Reliefweb

Israel/oPt -Israeli School Apartheid: Arab Family Sues Over 'Racist Incitement'

10 August 2009 - An Arab couple whose one-year-old daughter was expelled from an Israeli day-care centre on her first day are suing a Jewish mother for damages, accusing her of racist incitement against their child. Maysa and Shua'a Zuabi, from the village of Sulam in northern Israel, launched the court action last week saying they had been "shocked and humiliated" when the centre's owner told them that six Jewish parents had demanded their daughter's removal because she is an Arab. In the first legal action of its kind in Israel, the Zuabis are claiming \$80,000 from Neta Kadshai, whom they accuse of being the ringleader. The girl, Dana, is reported to be the first Arab child ever to attend the day-care centre in the rural Jewish community of Merhavia, less than 1km from Sulam. However, human rights lawyers say that, given the narrow range of anti-racism legislation in Israel, the chance of success for the Zuabis is low.

[Full Article](#)- Jonathan Cook News

Israel/oPt - DCI Israel and Palestine submit alternative Report on Child Recruitment

13 August 2009 – Defence for Children International (Israeli and Palestinian sections) is releasing a joint report on Israeli authorities' use of Palestinian children in hostilities. The report was submitted on 17 July 2009 to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which is scheduled to review Israel's compliance with the Optional Protocol to the

Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict in January 2010.

[Full article](#) - DCI

Israel/oPt – Gaza Mothers, Newborns Affected by Israeli Blockade

20 August 2009 - Inadequate infrastructure, lack of equipment and a shortage of hospital staff are contributing to the deterioration of hospital care for mothers and newborns in Gaza, according to a July 2009 assessment by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Jerusalem. WHO attributes the dismal state of Gaza's healthcare system to the Israeli blockade since June 2007, when Hamas took over control of the territory.

"The Israeli blockade affects the supply of medical equipment and conditions in the maternity wards, and perpetuates the isolation of healthcare professionals, making it difficult to maintain international standards of practice," said Tony Laurence, head of the WHO West Bank and Gaza Office in Jerusalem.

[Full Article](#)- IRIN Middle East

Israel/oPt – New Military Order on Juveniles Issued in the West Bank

25 August 2009 – On 29 July 2009, Gadi Shamni, the Israeli military commander in the West Bank, issued Military Order 1644 relating to juveniles. For the past 42 years, Palestinian children have been tried in the same military courts as adults, even though Israel is a signatory to the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* which promotes the establishment of specialised juvenile courts (see Article 40(3)). After years of criticism, most recently by the UN Committee Against Torture, the Israeli military commander has now acknowledged the requirement for a child specific jurisdiction with the issuance of Military Order 1644.

[Full article](#) – CRIN

Jordan –On International Youth Day, Arab Bank Celebrates Youth by Feeding Them Knowledge

12 August 2009 - Arab Bank is commemorating International Youth Day (August 12), by celebrating young people (ages 16-25) and their importance to the community. This is one of many Arab Bank initiatives to support the youth in our community. With 45% of employees at the Arab Bank under the age of 30, and with Jordan's median age of 25 it is essential to invest in this demographic. Initiatives taken by the Bank include, a checking account specifically tailored to young people (Shabab), training programs for young employees and activities to promote education to the general public:

[Fore more Information](#)- Arab Bank official website

Jordan - Public Warned against Encouraging Street Peddlers, Beggars

25 august 2009 - The Ministry of Social Development on Monday warned the public against encouraging street peddlers and beggars as the majority of them are not in need.

Khalid Rawashdeh, director of the ministry's anti-vagrancy department, said the number of beggars increases in the holy month of Ramadan, and around 95 per cent of them are not impoverished. As part of the campaign to clamp down on beggars and peddlers, the ministry stepped up legal measures and financial penalties against violators in 2007.

The detention period was doubled to two months, and a JD50 fee introduced for bail guarantors who are legally liable to pay JD10,000 if the offence is repeated.

Also, families receiving monthly assistance from the National Aid Fund (NAF) whose children are found begging or peddling could have their aid cut off.

[Full article](#) – The Jordan Times

Jordan - Queen launches Hal Hilalak Tent

25 August 2009 - Her Majesty Queen Rania on Monday launched this year's Hal Hilalak tent in Irbid to provide activities for disadvantaged children across the Kingdom during the holy month. The tent, which features stilt walkers, clowns, magicians and mimes, gives different groups of underprivileged children the opportunity to enjoy special and exciting iftar evenings during Ramadan.

[Full article](#) – The Jordan Times

Jordan - Providing Hearing-Impaired Children with More than an Education

7 August 2009 - Starting off as a small school for the deaf nestled in the scenic hills of the historic city of Salt, the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf has become a major pillar and a model for the Kingdom's approach and services to persons with disabilities.

Established as the Kingdom's first educational institution for people with hearing impairments in 1964, the institute has become a centre that provides hearing-impaired children with the opportunity to take a greater role in society and learn more about themselves. Brother Andrew de Carpentier, who has overseen the institute since 1977, stressed that the children's achievements are not overcoming hardships or leading ordinary lives, but their ability to do extraordinary things and their unique contribution to society.

[Full article](#) – The Jordan Times

Lebanon – Equipping Children's Dreams in Lebanon's Public Schools

04 August 2009 – Located twelve miles east of Beirut, this sleepy mountain town swells in population from 15,000 to 60,000 when tourists from Gulf Arab nations visit during the summer months. Tourism has picked up again in Lebanon since the 2006 war, but families are still struggling to recover. Wala, 13, used to attend a private school in Brummana, but her father's restaurant wages were cut and she and her two sisters had to attend the town's public school. "When we're short for cash, I try not to be too demanding so that I can help my Dad get the basics for our family," said Wala. Most poor and lower middle class families in Lebanon are forced to send their children to the nation's public schools, which are woefully underfunded by the central government and lack basic supplies and proper facilities.

[Full article](#) - Reliefweb

Lebanon –Children of Lebanon: Happy Little Men without a Childhood

10 August 2009- For most children work is in the distant future, but that's not the case in Lebanon, the country that has the highest number of working teenagers in the world. Poverty in Palestinian refugee camps outside Tripoli pushes children as young as 10 years old to get up early in the morning and get to whatever work they could find, like in auto-repair or blacksmith's workshops. Their families simply cannot afford them not to work. Read more "My parents say: learn the trade and then you can open your own shop," says 10-year-old Abdel, already hard at work early in the morning. Abdel spends his days underneath a car and believes he is no good for school. Helping out in the car shop, he works 10 hour days, 6

days a week, making \$10 a week, and bringing home all he makes. “I get paid every Friday, so far so good,” Abdel says. Lebanon signed the International Labour Organization convention on child labour in 2001, but has been unable to implement it due to a lack of resources, leaving children like Abdel completely on their own.

[Full Article](#)- Russia Today News

Lebanon- Explosion à Tripoli : Trois Personnes, dont un Enfant Blessés

14 août 2009 - Trois personnes, dont un enfant, ont été blessées hier par une bombe à Tripoli. L'incident a eu lieu dans le quartier alaouite de Jabal Mohse et l'armée a débuté une enquête. Par ailleurs, l'organisation Mines Advisory Group a annoncé mercredi qu'elle allait devoir réduire ses activités de déminage au Liban d'ici octobre sans financement supplémentaire. Selon l'ONU, 273 civils et 57 démineurs ont été tués ou blessés par des mines depuis 2006

[Full Article](#) – Opérations Paix

Lebanon-How do Children Born in Inter-Religious Families Live in Lebanon?

11 August 2009-

[Full Article](#)- Elaph

Lebanon – Partenariat des Enfants du Liban avec le foyer de l'amitié français: Séjour de Cinq Enfants Libanais en France

24 août 2009 - Cinq enfants libanais ont passé leurs vacances d'été dans des familles d'accueil mayennaises. « Merci trop », dit Jean, 11 ans, aux familles mayennaises qui l'ont accueilli pendant deux mois. Il faisait partie des 10 enfants libanais qui ont passé deux mois en France, grâce à l'association mayennaise Les enfants du Liban. Elle offre chaque année des vacances en France à de jeunes Libanais âgés de 9 à 11 ans en partenariat avec le foyer de l'amitié, situé dans la plaine de la Bekaa. Béatrice Bordeau, présidente des Enfants du Liban depuis 2 ans, explique : « Nous avons un partenariat avec le foyer de l'amitié, un centre social où sont logés des enfants issus de familles en difficulté. Chaque année, grâce à des fonds récoltés, nous pouvons acheter des billets d'avion pour en faire venir quelques-uns en France. »

[Full Article](#)- Ouest France

Syria - Tackling Malnutrition among Syrian Children in the Northeast

30 July 2009 - The Syrian government and international and local NGOs aim to address malnutrition in the northeast by raising awareness among the local population of healthy practices. The malnutrition rates in the region are one-and-a-half times as high as in the rest of the country, according to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF). Entitled Facts for Life,

the free guide gives advice on nutrition, breastfeeding, HIV/AIDS prevention and the adverse effects of smoking, among others. "Malnutrition rates in northeastern Syria are higher than the Syrian average," Ali Adbul Hussain, nutrition consultant for UNICEF Syria, told IRIN. "This is due to poor infrastructure and is one of the major effects of the drought in the region." A three-year drought has decimated Syria's agricultural sector.

[Full Article](#)- IRIN Middle East

Syria - UNICEF provides a new Model of Health Care for Refugees in Syria

30 July 2009 - Situated only 14 km from Damascus, the Hussinaya district – home to many Iraqi refugees and other displaced people – feels a long way from the rapid development so visible elsewhere in Syria. The Hussinaya district health centre was a strong example of such neglect. But in 2007, UNICEF and local non-governmental organizations overhauled the community health centre to address this problem, bringing in specialized staff to address urgent infant and maternal health needs. The family-friendly atmosphere, the new electronic queuing systems and the introduction of home visits all partly explain why use of public health care services has increased three-fold since 2007.

[Full Article](#) – UNICEF

Syria – The first Children's Orchestra in Syria Performs International Musical pieces for Syrian Audiences

10 August 2009- The Syrian Children's Orchestra held a concert in Damascus on Monday (August 10), performing well-known pieces from different famous composers. The concert was organised for the second year running by the Rawafed project - a cultural project aimed at empowering and encouraging Syrians from all walks of life, to play an active role in building and shaping their society. The orchestra, which is made up of more than 50 youngsters aged between 11 and 18 years old, aims to allow musically gifted children to experience playing in big musical formations such as orchestras. It hopes to develop their musical passions and forward their education of music. This is the first time in Syria that a special musical formation has been created for child musicians at a national level. It provides guidance and training for the most talented children and channels their potential to go onto a musical career.

[Full Article](#) – Reuters TV London

Syria – Drought Response Plan Launched

11 August 2009 - Syria has been affected by drought since 2006. While the 2007-2008 drought was very severe and had a wider geographical reach, the current drought has again affected a population that was already suffering from the impacts of previous drought spells. According to the Government of Syria and UN assessment missions, some 1.3 million inhabitants of eastern Syria have been affected by this disaster, out of which 803,000 have lost almost all of their livelihoods and face extreme hardship. Poor nutrition, heat, and dust storms have a detrimental effect on their health status. Very high levels of school drop-outs have been registered in the area, as children have migrated with their families or are required to contribute to the family income by working.

[Executive summary and full report](#) - Reliefweb



In North Africa:

Algeria – L'Unicef Mène une Enquête sur les Enfants

11 August 2009- L'Unicef mène actuellement une enquête sur l'enfance en Algérie et les moyens mis en oeuvre par les différentes institutions en charge de cette frange pour sa protection. Intitulé «Mapping des interventions de la protection de l'enfance», le projet touche en tout six communes d'Algérie, dont celle d'Oran. L'enquête menée dans la ville d'Oran et qui est en phase de finalisation a débuté il y a presque dix jours. Elle a ciblé plusieurs institutions ayant des rapports avec les enfants relevant de différents secteurs notamment la justice, l'éducation nationale, les collectivités locales, la jeunesse et les sports, la santé, le mouvement associatif et les médias, entre autres.

[Full Article](#)- Top Actus Santé

Algeria – Des Enfants Handicapés Moteurs Privés d'École

24 August 2009- Les familles des enfants handicapés en Algérie n'en reviennent pas puisqu'elles ont appris que l'école s'apprête à fermer ses portes. L'État Algérien ne ménage aucun effort pour garantir aux handicapés l'éducation, l'enseignement et les stages de formation, afin de faire valoir leurs droits sur le marché du travail sans complexe ou sentiment d'infériorité.

[Full Article](#)- Africtrix Network

Algeria- A l'Occasion du Mois Sacré de Ramadhan - Mobilis Lance une Opération de Solidarité avec les Enfants Défavorisés

25 August 2009- Comme chaque année au Ramadhan, les opérateurs de téléphonie mobile en profitent pour lancer des opérations de solidarité avec les plus démunis. Cette année, Mobilis, le premier opérateur de téléphonie en Algérie, a choisi de destiner sa campagne de solidarité spécial Ramadhan, aux enfants défavorisés, sous le slogan : «Parce que les enfants malheureux ne font jamais des adultes heureux».

[Full Article](#) – All Africa News

Egypt- One Million Egyptian Child Exploited in Prostitution and Sex Tourism and Growing Demand for State Intervention

04 August 2009-

[Full Article](#)- Elaph

Egypt – Une ONG féminine mobilisée contre le harcèlement des enfants

10 August 2009- Le Centre égyptien pour les droits des femmes (ECWR) a lancé une nouvelle campagne utilisant une brochure de jeux pour lutter contre le harcèlement sexuel des enfants. "Cette brochure est l'un des outils novateurs et simples créés dans le cadre de la campagne ECWR pour aider à sensibiliser sur le harcèlement sexuel", a expliqué, lundi, un

communiqué de ECWR, précisant que ce document et un film d'animation aident à sensibiliser sur les questions importantes de harcèlement sexuel, tout en encourageant la créativité à travers des jeux simples et faciles tels que la peinture et le coloriage".

[Full report](#) – Afrique en ligne

Egypt - Frustrated dreams of young Egyptians

11 August 2009 – Samy shares his home with dead people; they are buried around his kitchen, 60 of them, and he does not know any of them.

It might sound macabre but there is nothing about his story that would shock Egyptians. In fact, statistics suggest that one in 18 people in Cairo now live in the City of the Dead. They have stopped asking why. It's a desperate situation for these people - but it is not only in the City of the Dead, there are tens of slums... they are everywhere around Egypt," said Dr Ibrahim El-Issawy, an economist for a government advisory body, the Institute of National Planning. "They are crying out for 'basic' needs; good public education, health services, employment opportunities. They are not there," he added. "Except for the privileged few".

[Full article](#) – BBC

Egypt- Two Children Infected with H5N1

11 August 2009- Two new human cases of bird flu have been reported in Egypt by the health ministry, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said on Tuesday. An 8-year-old girl in Kfr Elsheikh developed symptoms on July 24 and was admitted to hospital the next day, where she is now in stable condition, it said in a statement. An 18-month-old boy from Shebin Elkom developed symptoms on July 28. He too is in hospital and stable. Investigations show that both children had close contact with dead or sick poultry, the United Nations agency said. The two children bring to 83 the number of human bird flu infections in Egypt, giving it the third largest number of cases since 2003, after Indonesia and Vietnam. Twenty-seven of the infections in Egypt have been fatal.

[Full Article](#)- Reuters

Morocco- Des Orphelins de Draria à la Grande Plage

11 August 2009- Pas moins de 26 enfants de SOS village d'enfants de la ville de Draria ont séjourné depuis le 5 juillet dernier au camping de la Grande plage, à l'ouest de la ville de Skikda. Accompagnés de deux membres de la famille, les enfants ont bénéficié de tous les égards aussi bien de la part des responsables directs du camp que des campeurs

[Full Article](#) – Maroc Web

Morocco-L'Enlèvement des Enfants de Khalid Skah Devient une Affaire d'Etats

14 August 2009- Le Maroc tout entier est choqué par l'enlèvement des enfants de Khalid Skah, ex-champion sur 10 000m aux Jeux olympiques de 1992 à Barcelone. Fin juillet, l'homme qui a été également médaillé d'argent à deux reprises (1991 et 1995) aux Championnats du monde d'athlétisme sur 10 km, révélait que ses deux enfants mineurs ont été enlevés dans son domicile quelques jours plus tôt par l'ambassadeur de la Norvège en poste à Rabat. Retour sur une affaire qui ressemble à un iceberg, et qui met aux prises les Royaumes du Maroc et de la Norvège.



Yabiladi

Morocco - Le Soutien à l'Éducation pour les Familles Défavorisées du Maroc, entre Satisfaction et Critiques

21 August 2009 – Au Maroc, le programme Tayssir, destiné à aider les familles défavorisées à inscrire leurs enfants à l'école, est très apprécié des parents et suscite des réserves prudentes de la part de certains observateurs. Tayssir est l'un des programmes expérimentaux lancés par le gouvernement pour aider la population concernée par la vocation sociale de la [Caisse de Compensation](#). Lors de la phase pilote de cette année, plus de 63 millions de dirhams ont été répartis entre 131 000 familles, pour soulager la charge financière des parents qui souhaitent envoyer leurs enfants à l'école.

[Full article](#) - Magharebia

Tunisia - Les Casques Bleus Tunisiens au Secours des Enfants

18 août 2009 - Les Casques bleus de la MONUC, en dehors de leur mission première de maintien de la paix, mènent aussi régulièrement des activités sociales, notamment dans le cadre du projet CIMIC (activités civilo-militaires de la MONUC). C'est le cas du contingent tunisien qui, en rendant visite le mercredi 12 août aux enfants du Centre pédiatrique et orphelinat de Kimbondo, dans la périphérie de Kinshasa, leur a fait don d'un lot de produits pharmaceutiques.

[Full Article](#) – Vigilance RDC

Tunisia - Pampers & UNICEF se Mobilisent pour Soutenir les Enfants dans le Besoin

19 August 2009 - Pour la deuxième année consécutive, le Bureau du Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'Enfance de Tunisie (UNICEF) et Pampers sont fiers d'annoncer le lancement de l'initiative visant à collecter des dons qui serviront à l'acquisition d'instruments de mesures anthropométriques utilisés pour le diagnostic précoce du retard de croissance chez l'enfant. Aider les enfants dans le besoin à travers le monde pour vivre en meilleure santé, et leur permettre un meilleur développement et une meilleure réussite dans la vie, est une cause philanthropique et sociale que Procter & Gamble – le fabricant de Pampers - soutient à travers le monde. Un certain nombre d'initiatives de Procter & Gamble sous le thème « Vivre, Apprendre et S'épanouir », qui sont axées sur l'amélioration de la vie des enfants nécessitent, l'amélioration de leur accès à l'hygiène, l'eau potable saine, l'amélioration de l'éducation et le développement des compétences, se tiennent à travers le monde et permettent de toucher... un million d'enfants.

[Full Article](#) – Investir en Tunisie

Tunisia - L'Association Tunisienne pour les Droits de l'Enfant Appuie la Candidature du Président Ben Ali pour les Prochaines Élections

25 August 2009- Les membres du bureau exécutif de l'Association tunisienne pour les droits de l'enfant ont exprimé leur appui à la candidature du Président Zine El Abidine Ben Ali à l'élection présidentielle de 2009.

Ils soulignent, dans ce sens, l'engagement de l'Association, avec ses différentes structures nationales et régionales, à participer activement au succès des prochaines échéances politiques et, en premier lieu, les élections présidentielle et législatives. Dans un message

adressé au Chef de l'Etat, les membres du bureau exécutif de l'Association ont affirmé que la protection et la sollicitude constante dont bénéficie l'enfant tunisien, aujourd'hui, ainsi que l'éducation aux droits, à la citoyenneté et à la culture de l'excellence sont les meilleures garanties pour un avenir radieux des prochaines générations.

[Full Article](#)-Info Tunisie

In the Gulf:

Bahrain - Children Born to a Bahraini Parent to get Free Healthcare

19 August 2009 – Children born to Bahraini mothers but foreign fathers will be given special cards that will grant them free healthcare, the health ministry said. Children whose mothers are foreigners, but whose fathers are Bahrainis will also avail of the card to be issued by their local health centres. The health ministry's move comes in the aftermath of complaints by foreign wives about having to pay for medical checkups and treatment despite orders from the prime minister to include them in the category of those who should receive free healthcare. Lawmakers have put pressure on the government to grant children of a non-Bahraini parent free access to government medical and education facilities.

[Full article](#) – Gulf news

Bahrain - Anti-flu Drive Targets Bahraini Pupils

25 August 2009 - Special measures to protect students from swine flu were discussed on the 24th of August 2009 at a meeting presided over by Education Minister Dr Majid Al Noami and Health Minister Dr Faisal Al Hamer. Bahrain University president Dr Ibrahim Janahi and top ministry officials attended. They discussed remedial measures to face any possible outbreak of the disease in public and private schools. The meeting came as family medicine consultant Dr Koobra Sayyed Nasser said the number of swine flu cases in Bahrain had reached 1,999, of which 98 had fully recovered after receiving medical treatment.

[Full Article](#) – Gulf in the Media

Bahrain - Bahrain-Thai Strengthen Ties in Education and Health

27 August 2009- Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, who met Thai Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya, yesterday said his visit would help boost investments and strengthen ties in education and health. Shaikh Khalifa and Mr Piromya reviewed means of strengthening co-operation between the two countries in various sectors. The Premier also expressed appreciation for the warm welcome he received in the Asian nation.

[Full Article](#)- Gulf in the Media

Kuwait – Ex- wife of a Kuwaiti Groom Admits at Starting Fire at his Wedding: Fire Kills 43 Women and Children

17 August 2009 – A fire in a wedding party tent that killed 43 women and children in Kuwait was started deliberately by the ex-wife of the groom, a Kuwaiti newspaper reported. The 23-year-old former wife had admitted pouring gasoline on the cotton tent and setting it on fire,

furious at what she called her "bad treatment" by her former husband before their divorce, the Al-Qabbas newspaper reported. There was no official confirmation of the alleged confession. Firefighters said that the blaze took less than three minutes to rip through the marquee, in which as many as 180 women and children were celebrating the wedding party. Many of those who died were killed in the stampede for the sole exit.

[Full Article](#)- Fox News

Oman- Oman Education Ministry Announces Postponement of New Academic Year

19 August 2009- The Omani Ministry of Education announced on Wednesday 19 August 2009 that it will postpone the opening of schools in the academic year 2009-2010 to 26 September 2009. Dr. Muna bint Salim al Jardaniyah, Education Ministry's Undersecretary for Education and Curricula affirmed that the decision of postponement of the school academic year 2009-2010 has been taken in coordination between the Education Ministry and all concerned government's departments and in implementation of the Royal vision of Sultan Qaboos bin Said to safeguard health of the students, individual and society in general. According to Oman News agency, the decision was announced during a joint press conference between the Education Ministry and the Health Ministry held at the Education Ministry's General Diwan.

[Full Article](#)- Qatar News Agency

Qatar- Two Qatari Children 'Missing' in Makkah Located in Al Qaseem

30 July 2009- The two Qatari children who had gone missing in Makkah on June 7 have been found, their father said on Tuesday. The children, a seven-year-old boy (Jassem) and his sister Reem (8), were with their mother when they are said to have disappeared. However, their father called up Al Sharq daily on Tuesday saying that he had been informed by the Saudi authorities that they had traced the two children in Al Qaseem area of the country and that they were staying with their maternal aunt. The children's mother is divorced and is apparently involved in a tug of war with her former husband (the father of the children) over the issue of their custody.

[Full Article](#) - The Peninsula

Qatar- Qatari Education Minister Approves Schedule for Scholastic Year 2009-2010

10 August 2009- Minister of Education and Higher Education and Secretary General of Supreme Education Council H.E. Saad bin Ibrahim al-Mahmoud has issued decision No.(10) of the year 2009 on study, and holidays schedule for Qatari schools including Independent, semi-Independent schools in all stages for the scholastic year 2009-2010. According to the decision the scholastic year 2009/2010 will begin on Sunday, September 27, 2009 for independent schools, semi-independent and private schools.

[Full Article](#) – Supreme Education Council

Qatar- In Recognition Of Its Training and Sponsorship Efforts, Citibank Awarded By Qatar Orphan Foundation

27 August 2009- Qatar Orphan Foundation (Dhreima) recently presented a recognition award to Citibank N.A. Qatar, a member of Citi, for contributing to a summer camp for Teaching English Language held between 07 July and 03 August 2009. The bank was one of the sponsors of the closing reception which was held on August 4th 2009 at the Grand Regency Hotel in Doha. Award was received by Mr. Ehab Hafazalla, Corporate Bank Head at Citi Qatar. In September 2008, Citi sponsored the launch of the "ICDL Certificate in Computing for Qatari Orphans" - a training program for orphans, at Dhreima Foundation. The program offers 40 boys and girls quality, life-long vocational and entrepreneurship training in IT sector to meet current and future employment requirements, providing computer training under the globally-recognized International Computer Driver License (ICDL) certification program.

[Full Article](#) - Zawya

Saudi Arabia – 250 Orphaned Children in Riyadh Participate in Special Children’s Activity “Joy of Success”

08 August 2009 - The "Joy of Success" charity event, organised by the Women’s Section of the Charitable Society for the Care of Orphans (Insan), hosted around 250 children in a daylong event which included several educational and interactive activities for orphaned children. In line with its CSR program, Al Rabie Saudi Foods Co. Ltd., a leading producer of dairy products and fruit juices in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and the largest juice manufacturer in the Middle East, participated in the charity event by holding interactive and entertaining discussions about the importance a healthy lifestyle, while distributing food packages, bottles of fruit juices and various giveaways to the children.

[Full article](#) – Eye of Dubai

Saudi Arabia – Saudi Arabia Hands over 9 Children to Yemen

11 August 2009- Yemeni authorities have received nine children, aged 11-15, who were trafficked to Saudi Arabia, officials said on Tuesday. On the other hand, border guard at the Yemeni-Saudi border, Haradh crossing, foiled last month an attempt to smuggle 20 Yemeni children into the kingdom. The children were sent to a child care centre. Five persons were arrested in connection with the attempted smuggling.

[Full Article](#)- Yemen News Agency

Saudi Arabia – King Abdullah Approves 4 new Universities

25 August 2009- Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah has approved the establishment of four new universities in Dammam, Alkharj, Shaqra and Majmaa, Higher Education Minister Khaled Al-Anqari announced Monday. The minister thanked the king for his continuous support to higher education. The Higher Education Council recommended the formation of the new universities after it observed that King Saud University in Riyadh and King Faisal University in Dammam had exceeded the natural size of a university, and feared that the present situation would affect their academic and research programs, the minister said.

[Full Article](#) – Gulf in the Media



United Arab Emirates - New Permit Needed for Educational Institutions to Operate in Dubai

17 August 2009 – Educational institutions in Dubai will need an Education Services Permit to operate in Dubai from this academic year. Over 700 schools, universities, training institutions and nurseries need to acquire the permit from the Regulation and Compliance Commission at KHDA as their current licenses expire. The institutions will have to display the permit at their entrance lobby or principal's office. The permit will display details of the permitted fee structure, and the grades or programmes the institution is permitted to offer. For schools, the inspection category is stated, and for higher education establishments the approval of the Universities Quality Assurance International Board (UQAIB) is shown.

[Full article](#) – Gulf news

United Arab Emirates - Children Give a Thumbs 'up' to Ajman City Centre

30 July 2009- Forty two children from the UAE Red Crescent were invited to a special premiere of Pixar's movie 'Up' by Ajman City Centre. The screening was a part of Ajman City Centre's summer promotion that offered not just prizes galore for shoppers but also something special for orphans from the UAE Red Crescent. Each week children were invited to play at Magic Planet. In addition to having fun with the arcade games and rides, each child was also given complimentary snacks, drinks and presents. As they stepped out of the cinema, many children exchanged smiles and wows. Each took a different message from the film, though one thing was common - they loved the movie and the experience.

[Full Article](#)- Business Intelligence Middle East

United Arab Emirates - Dubai Cares focuses on primary education

15 August 2009 – Dubai Cares aims to provide children access to primary education in developing countries and is considered to be the largest NGO in the world dedicated to this cause. Reem Al Hashemi, Chairperson of Dubai Cares, said: "Limited accessibility to quality education among children in developing countries is a significant issue affecting their progress." As part of our endeavour to provide complete integrated education solutions, Dubai Cares strives to eliminate the main underlying issues that prevent access to basic primary education, which is every child's birth right and the foundation of sustained economic growth, sound governance and effective institutions." Dubai Cares works closely with its international partners to develop and implement education programmes reaching four million children in 20 countries.

[Full article](#) – Gulf news

United Arab Emirates - National School Curricula set for Overhaul

22 August 2009- overhauled with the introduction of advanced scientific and knowledge based learning to stimulate young minds, Minister of Education Humaid Mohammed Obaid Al Qutami said on Thursday. The Minister spoke about the need for the change during a ceremony acknowledging UAE students who won top honours at the Arab Chemistry Olympiad, hosted recently by Saudi Arabia. He added, "The focus would be on development of creative capacities of students through programmes and heritage activities that simulate the modern age."

[Full Article](#) – Khaleej Times

Yemen- According to The Annual Trafficking in Persons Report released by the United States Embassy in Sana'a : Yemen Transit and Destination Country for Women and Children

14 August 2009- The annual Trafficking in Persons Report released by the United States Embassy in Sana'a sheds light on the faces of sex trafficking and on new facets of this global problem. The 2009 Trafficking in Persons report recommended the Yemeni government to take steps to enforce the law against sex traffickers, and to improve the protection services. The report stated that Yemen made limited progress in protecting victims of sex trafficking during the last year, but added that Yemen had been reluctant to recognize a human trafficking for sexual exploitation. The report also stated that Yemen was a transit country for women and children who are trafficked for sexual use and business purposes. The Yemeni children are trafficked, mostly boys, across the northern border with Saudi Arabia or to the cities of Aden and Sana'a for forced labor, mainly as beggars, or as domestic servants, the report mentioned.

[Full Report](#)- Available on the US Department of State website

Yemen- SOS Children's Villages International Considers Yemen villages

19 August - Minister of Social and Labor Affairs Amat al-Razaq Humad met on Wednesday with a delegation from the Austrian-based International Peace Foundation (IPF) and discussed cooperation between the ministry and the foundation in the field of national work including anti-cancer activities. The meeting dealt with the possibility of setting up child villages with finance from SOS Children's Villages International, the umbrella organization of all SOS Children's Villages associations. The villages will contain class rooms and resident units for Yemeni orphans and homeless children.

[Full Article](#)- Saba News

Yemen - Yemen Child Trafficking to Increase in Ramadan

19 August - Ramadan is the best time for the lucrative business of child trafficking and smuggling to flourish. Muslims from all over the world trickle into the kingdom with a pious heart and a charitable mood as they perform their pilgrimage rights. That's what the smugglers are counting on. While there are no statistics that determine how many children are trafficked on an annual basis, authorities do know that during the month of Ramadan the numbers rise.

[Full article](#) – Yemen Times

Yemen – UNICEF Head Speaks out against Violence in Northern Yemen

25 August 2009 - The head of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has called for "immediate and secure" access to people uprooted by escalating clashes – mostly children and women – between Government forces and rebels in northern Yemen. "Children cannot be the innocent victims of conflict," said UNICEF Executive Director Ann M. Veneman said in a statement issued yesterday, noting that the agency stands ready to assist civilians caught up in the conflict. The humanitarian situation in camps, she said, is becoming ever more dire due to the lack of basic services, including safe water, sanitation and nutrition.

[Full article](#) – UN News Centre



Yemen – Early Marriage and its Toll on the Individual, the Family, and the Society

18 August 2009 - “I’ve become lonely in this life, and no one remains to support me and my children in order to keep on living.” This is the voice of Basma Salah, a 19-year old divorcee. “I have three children and my relatives constantly chide me, ‘Give those little children back to their father!’ She adds, ‘I cannot bear to see my children without me, as they are still very young. They need me due to the fact that they are not able to rely on themselves.” Basma is just one victim among many Yemeni children who are subject to early marriages. Basma’s tragic story resulted from early marriage due to the fact that her father, who passed away when she was around 6, was not present in her life. Basma was married when she was around 12 to a boy of around 14 under pressure from her mother. After two months of marriage, they started quarreling with each other and neither could bear to be with the other. However, because of her difficult economic circumstances, she was determined to keep living with her husband due to the fact that she had no one to resort to when in need; only her mother who lives with her step-father.

[Full article](#) – Yemen Observer

Yemen - SEYAJ Launches Pro-Children Drive

18 August 2009 - The SEYAJ organization for childhood protection has launched stage one of its “Dignity Preservation Campaign,” which includes raising funds for psychological and legal assistance for children who are victims of crimes and violence, spreading awareness of the importance of countering violence against children, and establishing networks between all those involved in this issue.

[Full article](#) – Yemen Observer