



BUREAU  
INTERNATIONAL  
DES DROITS DES ENFANTS

INTERNATIONAL  
BUREAU  
FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

OFICINA  
INTERNACIONAL DE  
LOS DERECHOS DEL NIÑO

المكتب الدولي لحقوق الطفل

# Newsletter on Children's rights in MENA

*December 2016*

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

Bureau international des droits des enfants/International Bureau for Children's Rights  
805 Villeray Street, Montreal (Québec) H2R 1J4

Tel. : +1 514 932 7656

Fax : +1 514 932 9453

Website: [www.ibcr.org](http://www.ibcr.org)

E-mail: [info@ibcr.org](mailto:info@ibcr.org)

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Global Development on Children and Human's rights.....</b>	<b>3</b>
[News] UN General Assembly Must Urgently "Unite For Peace" In Syria As Humanitarian Catastrophe Unfolds In Aleppo – Global Coalition.....	3
[News] Across the Middle East and North Africa, conflict threatens decades of progress for children ..	3
[News] UNICEF commemorates 70 years of tireless work for the world's most vulnerable children.....	3
[News] Nearly a quarter of the world's children live in conflict or disaster-stricken countries: UNICEF .	3
[News] School "as vital as food and medicine" for children caught up in conflict and other emergencies: EU & UNICEF.....	4
[News] New film featuring UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador David Beckham highlights urgent need to end violence against children .....	4
[News] New HIV infections among adolescents projected to rise by nearly 60 per cent by 2030 if progress stalls – UNICEF .....	4
[News] Where 30 Million 'Missing' Girls in China Actually Went.....	4
[Nouvelles] Singapour, un modèle pour faire réussir les élèves ? .....	4
[News] France's Le Pen Calls for Foreign Children to be Denied Free Education .....	5
[News] Ending Child Marriage Everywhere—Including in the West.....	5

[News] Lost lives: the battle of China's invisible children to recover missed years .....	5
[News] Children take the lead in cyclone early warnings in Bangladesh .....	5
<b>2. Conferences, Courses and Events.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Course – Child Rights and Development .....	6
Formation - Responsable de projets Protection de l'enfance en situation d'urgence - parcours court en Afrique .....	6
Course - Thematic Short Course: Sexual Violence in Conflict Settings and Emergencies .....	6
Course - Child Participation .....	7
Conference - World Congress on family law and children rights .....	7
<b>3. Subregional and Country updates.....</b>	<b>8</b>
[Report] Afghanistan - Assessment of Afghanistan's Juvenile Rehabilitation Center.....	8
[Report] Afghanistan - Child Marriages on the Rise in Afghan Province .....	8
[News] Afghanistan – Government of Japan commits US\$ 12.4 million to provide life-saving vaccines and prevent the spread of infectious diseases in Afghanistan .....	8
[News] Afghanistan - No Respite for Kabul's Street Children .....	9
[Report] Afghanistan - Thousands of Children Face Early Marriage and Child Labour as Education Crisis Takes Hold among Afghan Children Repatriated From Pakistan .....	9
[Report] Afghanistan - WFP & partners launch food fortification campaign to combat malnutrition in Afghanistan.....	9
[News] Egypt - Egypt brings in tougher penalties against female genital mutilation.....	9
[Report] Iraq - Freezing Temperatures in IDP Camps: UN Women Iraq Distributes High Thermal Blankets and Necessity Kits to Women and Girls in two camps Near Eastern Mosul .....	10
[Report] Iraq - UN Women Iraq and COMSEC collaborate to engage women in humanitarian response and in conflict resolution .....	10
[News] Jordan - Exploring the links between gender-based violence and radicalisation in Jordan.....	10
[News] Jordan - Providing Palestine Refugee Children in Jerash with the Tools They Need to Succeed....	11
[Nouvelle] Maroc - Le Forum du Maroc : Les Droits de l'Adolescence et de la Jeunesse comme pilotes du Développement Durable.....	11
[Nouvelle] Maroc - Maroc : le procès de jeunes filles ravive le débat sur la dépénalisation de l'homosexualité .....	11
[Nouvelle] MENA - Les pays arabes doivent accorder la priorité aux politiques favorisant la jeunesse, selon le PNUD.....	11
[News] Syria - Gavi to support immunisation of children in Syria .....	12
[Report] Yemen - Malnutrition amongst children in Yemen at an all-time high, warns UNICEF .....	12

## 1. Global Development on Children and Human's rights

### **[News] UN General Assembly Must Urgently “Unite For Peace” In Syria As Humanitarian Catastrophe Unfolds In Aleppo – Global Coalition**

1<sup>st</sup> of December 2016- As the fall of Aleppo looms amid untold humanitarian catastrophe, over 220 civil society organizations from 45 countries, including over 25 from the UK, have issued a declaration saying that the UN Security Council has “failed to uphold its responsibility to protect the Syrian people”.

[Full article](#) (Save the children)

### **[News] Across the Middle East and North Africa, conflict threatens decades of progress for children**

11<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 - Nearly one in five children across the Middle East and North Africa is in need of immediate humanitarian assistance, according to UNICEF. Over the past 70 years, countries across the region have made major strides in protecting children's rights and wellbeing. But, today, as UNICEF marks its 70th anniversary, violent conflict, poverty and displacement have created dire conditions for children, pushing almost 29 million boys and girls to the brink, and reversing decades of steady progress.

[Full article](#) (UNICEF)

### **[News] UNICEF commemorates 70 years of tireless work for the world's most vulnerable children**

11<sup>th</sup> of December – On the 70th anniversary of its founding, UNICEF celebrates the immense progress made for the world's children – and renews the urgent call to reach millions of children whose lives and futures are endangered by conflict, crisis, poverty, inequality and discrimination.

[Full article](#) (UNICEF)

### **[News] Nearly a quarter of the world's children live in conflict or disaster-stricken countries: UNICEF**

9<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 – An estimated 535 million children – nearly one in four – live in countries affected by conflict or disaster, often without access to medical care, quality education, proper nutrition and protection, UNICEF said today. Sub-Saharan Africa is home to nearly three-quarters – 393 million – of the global number of children living in countries affected by emergencies, followed by the Middle East and North Africa where 12 per cent of these children reside.

[Full article](#) (UNICEF)

## **[News] School “as vital as food and medicine” for children caught up in conflict and other emergencies: EU & UNICEF**

6 of December 2016 – Braving the consequences of war, natural disaster and other emergencies, nearly 2 million children in 20 countries around the world have been able to continue their schooling over the past four years as a result of a partnership between the European Commission's department for humanitarian aid and civil protection and UNICEF.

[Full article](#) (UNICEF)

## **[News] New film featuring UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador David Beckham highlights urgent need to end violence against children**

5th of December 2016 - A powerful new film featuring UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador David Beckham was released today to illustrate the brutal reality that physical and psychological abuse can mark children forever. During the new 60-second UNICEF film, scenes of violence against children appear as animated tattoos on David Beckham’s body.

[Full article](#) (UNICEF)

## **[News] New HIV infections among adolescents projected to rise by nearly 60 per cent by 2030 if progress stalls – UNICEF**

1<sup>st</sup> of December 2016 - New HIV infections among adolescents are projected to rise from 250,000 in 2015 to nearly 400,000 annually by 2030 if progress in reaching adolescents stalls, according to a new report released by UNICEF today.

[Full article](#) (UNICEF)

## **[News] Where 30 Million 'Missing' Girls in China Actually Went**

1<sup>st</sup> of December 2016 - A recent study "discovered" millions of missing girls lost to China's one-child policy, and the results also shine a light on China's propensity to favor sons over daughters. Over the last few years, China's problem of gender imbalance has been widely reported by media outlets. Experts determined that anywhere from 30 to 60 million girls were missing from the population, thanks to the country's one-child policy originally introduced in 1979.

[Full article](#) (Broadly)

## **[Nouvelles] Singapour, un modèle pour faire réussir les élèves ?**

13 décembre 2016 - Singapour, champion de la réussite scolaire, est-il pour autant un exemple à suivre ? La cité-État du sud-est asiatique obtient le plus haut score de la grande enquête PISA sur les acquis des élèves de 15 ans, publiée la semaine dernière, qui porte sur les sciences,

les mathématiques et la compréhension de l'écrit. Alors qu'en moyenne, dans les soixante-douze pays de l'OCDE, un élève sur dix obtient de très bons résultats en sciences, c'est le cas d'un élève sur quatre à Singapour...

[Article complet](#) (Le Monde)

### **[News] France's Le Pen Calls for Foreign Children to be Denied Free Education**

9<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 - On Thursday, Marine Le Pen took her xenophobic and discriminatory discourse a step further – espousing anti-equality and anti-rights positions that reject core values of the French constitutional and political system.

[Full article](#) (Human rights watch)

### **[News] Ending Child Marriage Everywhere—Including in the West**

7<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 - Did you know that a 14-year-old child can legally marry in New York State? Ending child marriage is urgent, because it is deeply harmful to children, wherever they live. Married children often drop out of school, and are locked in poverty as a result.

[Full article](#) (Human rights watch)

### **[News] Lost lives: the battle of China's invisible children to recover missed years**

14<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 - Ending the one-child policy has left millions scrambling to make up for lost years. Living in Beijing for 23 years, Li Xue has never attended school, not even for a day. China provides a free, nine-year education to every child but Li was not included. For the past 23 years, she has had no access to any form of social welfare. She has not been allowed to get married, find a job, or open a bank account. For Li was the second child born to her parents and, due to the nation's one-child policy that ran from around 1978 until 2015 to curtail population growth, she didn't exist in the Chinese government's database.

[Full article](#) (Thomson Reuters Foundation)

### **[News] Children take the lead in cyclone early warnings in Bangladesh**

15<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 - As Cyclone Roanu approached the coast of Bangladesh last May, 10-year-old Mohammad Hossain worried about his father, a fisherman out at sea in the Bay of Bengal. But the schoolboy, who lives in the Kutubdia Para neighbourhood of Cox's Bazar, a town on the southeast coast of Bangladesh, knew what to do. He sent his father, Ramzan Ali, a text message, asking him to return to shore and take shelter.

[Full article](#) (Thomson Reuters Foundation)

## 2. Conferences, Courses and Events

### **Course – Child Rights and Development**

This e-learning course focuses on child rights and child protection issues, which will look closely at the entire gamut of international legal framework on the rights of children and protection of children with a particular focus on child rights violations and remedies globally. The course will explore legal, humanitarian, development and other strategies for understanding and advancing the human rights of children. The course is based on a dynamic pedagogy including reading materials, video clips, case studies, and interactive webinars with the instructor.

**Location:** Online

**Date:** 12 July 2017 – 22 August 2017

[For more information](#) (Human Rights Center – University for Peace)

### **Formation - Responsable de projets Protection de l'enfance en situation d'urgence - parcours court en Afrique**

Vous avez une expérience professionnelle et une qualification en lien avec le métier : découvrez votre futur environnement professionnel, adaptez vos compétences en management et maîtrisez les compétences techniques spécifiques, tout en bénéficiant d'un accompagnement de votre projet professionnel et à votre prise de poste. Cette formation comporte 3 mois de formation et 6 mois de mission humanitaire. Elle délivre un certificat de l'Institut Bioforce.

**Location :** Dakar, Sénégal

**Date :** 27 septembre 2017 – 22 décembre 2017

[Pour plus d'information](#) (Institut Bioforce)

### **Course - Thematic Short Course: Sexual Violence in Conflict Settings and Emergencies**

While some organizations have specific projects on sexual violence, others favour an integrated approach. However, as programmatic responses are relatively recent, there is a lack of trained and experienced staff in this area. CERAH's one-week intensive course on Sexual Violence in Conflict Settings and Emergencies is designed to fill this gap. CERAH has also offered this seminar in French since September 2015. This course is organised with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). Handicap International, OHCHR, UNFPA and UNHCR are further partners collaborating in the development of the course.

**Location:** Geneva

**Date:** 20 March 2017 – 24 March 2017 or 04 September 2017 – 08 September 2017

[For more information](#) (CERAH Genève)

### **Course - Child Participation**

This e-learning course introduces staff members of (international) development agencies and NGOs to meaningful children's participation. Children have participation rights that state parties and other duty bearers should fulfill, respect and protect in families, schools, communities, and wider society.

Location: Online

Date: 1 February 2017 – 14 March 2017

[For more information](#) (European Rights Education Associates)

### **Conference - World Congress on family law and children rights**

The area of family law and children's rights remain exciting, challenging and fast moving areas of legal scholarship and practice and this Congress has established itself as the leading international forum for discussion and deliberation on these issues. The main streams that will feature at the Congress include:

- Justice and Equality (including juvenile justice, race and gender, courts administration)
- Child Protection (including abuse and neglect, violence and exploitation, immigration and separated children, children in conflict situations)
- Child Participation (including court proceedings, private family disputes, ADR)
- Changing Family Forms (including marriage equality, civil partnership, surrogacy)
- International Families (including recognition and enforcement of judgments, international adoption, international child abduction)
- Family Property

Location : Dublin, Ireland

Date : 4 to 7 June 2017

[For more information](#) (WCFLCR)

### 3. Subregional and Country updates

#### **[Report] Afghanistan - Assessment of Afghanistan's Juvenile Rehabilitation Center**

4<sup>th</sup> of December - A new United Nations report released today indicates positive trends in Afghanistan's juvenile detention and rehabilitation facilities while also outlining a critical need to improve in-detention education and post-rehabilitation care for young Afghans. Extensive research carried out by the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) into juvenile rehabilitation centres (JRCs) indicates the need for the Afghan government to focus, in particular, on helping young Afghans re-enter society.

[Full Article](#) (ReliefWeb)

#### **[Report] Afghanistan - Child Marriages on the Rise in Afghan Province**

7<sup>th</sup> of December - Laila, a 15-year-old girl from the Gozra district of Herat, was married off two years ago. She now has a six-month-old child. As she tried to soothe her fractious baby, she told IWPR how dissatisfied she was with her life. "When you get married, you can't go to school, can't play with your friends and you have to forget all your own wishes," she said. "Especially when you become a mother, then a world full of problems opens up to you and you suffer for the rest your life." Laila's mother said the family had been forced to get the young girl married off due to their poverty.

[Full Article](#) (Institute for War & Peace Reporting)

#### **[News] Afghanistan – Government of Japan commits US\$ 12.4 million to provide life-saving vaccines and prevent the spread of infectious diseases in Afghanistan**

13<sup>th</sup> of December - The Government of Japan pledged \$12.4 million today to Afghanistan to help eradicate polio and prevent the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases in the country. This is in addition to over \$75 million of funding provided since 2010 to support the Polio Eradication Initiative and Expanded Programme on Immunization. His Excellency Mitsuji Suzuka, Ambassador of Japan, and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Representative in Afghanistan, Ms. Adele Khodr, signed the 12 month agreement in the presence of His Excellency, Dr. Ferozuddin Feroz, Minister of Public Health. It will be implemented in coordination with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

[Full Article](#) (ReliefWeb)

### **[News] Afghanistan - No Respite for Kabul's Street Children**

9<sup>th</sup> of December - Eight-year-old Sohrab spends her days looking through rubbish on the streets of Kabul. "I collect [empty] cans of Pepsi and then sell them to shopkeepers who buy these old things, and I earn so little money that is hardly enough for bread for dinner," she told IWPR. Sohrab is one of tens of thousands of children trying to scrape a living on the streets of the Afghan capital. Although the reintroduction of universal education is cited as one of Afghanistan's major achievements since 2001, children selling goods or begging are still a familiar sight in towns and cities across the country.

[Full Article](#) (Institute for War & Peace Reporting)

### **[Report] Afghanistan - Thousands of Children Face Early Marriage and Child Labour as Education Crisis Takes Hold among Afghan Children Repatriated From Pakistan**

14<sup>th</sup> of December - New data from Save the Children reveals an alarming education crisis in Afghanistan, as 3,000 Afghans are repatriated daily from Pakistan, following a tightening in regulations by Pakistani authorities. More than 70 percent of returnee parents and community leaders who took part in an education survey compiled by the aid organisation said early marriage and child labour were major risks faced by repatriated children currently not in school. With lack of documentation, money and access identified as major barriers for schoolchildren, parents who are facing poverty often feel the only stable choice they can make is to arrange a marriage for their child or enter them into the workforce early.

[Full Article](#) (Save the Children)

### **[Report] Afghanistan - WFP & partners launch food fortification campaign to combat malnutrition in Afghanistan**

7<sup>th</sup> of December - After months of preparations, the media campaign on fortified nutritious foods was eventually inaugurated on 29 November 2016 at MoPH's Sohaila Sediqu Conference Hall. The event was attended by senior officials of Ministry of Public Health, WFP Deputy Country Director, Ms Naoko Fukunaga, other WFO staff and representatives from other stakeholders including the media.

[Full Article](#) (ReliefWeb)

### **[News] Egypt - Egypt brings in tougher penalties against female genital mutilation**

6<sup>th</sup> of December - An amended law that toughens penalties for female genital mutilation to up to 15 years in jail has come into effect, the health ministry announced Sunday. Health ministry

officials will monitor and oversee clinics and private hospitals to enforce the anti-FGM law that came into effect last Tuesday, the ministry said in a statement.

[Full Article](#) (Your Middle East)

**[Report] Iraq - Freezing Temperatures in IDP Camps: UN Women Iraq Distributes High Thermal Blankets and Necessity Kits to Women and Girls in two camps Near Eastern Mosul**

7th of December - The UN Women Iraq team went on mission near eastern Mosul this week to distribute 3,000 high thermal blankets to women and girls in two camps. Women and girls have mentioned freezing temperatures at night in the camps. UN Women has also distributed necessity kits for 20,000 individuals containing socks, soap, tooth brushes, toothpaste, feminine pads, vaseline, shampoo, nail clippers, laundry detergent, solar lamp/flashlight and other necessity items. One elderly woman mentioned "I am so grateful to receive the blanket so that my grandchildren and I are warm at night".

[Full Article](#) (ReliefWeb)

**[Report] Iraq - UN Women Iraq and COMSEC collaborate to engage women in humanitarian response and in conflict resolution**

6<sup>th</sup> of December - In collaboration with Iraq's Council of Ministers Secretarial (COMSEC), UN Women organized a 3-day workshop on mainstreaming gender in humanitarian response/planning and in conflict resolution targeting the Ministerial Higher Committee for Relief in recognition of the importance of engaging women in humanitarian response and planning.

[Full Article](#) (ReliefWeb)

**[News] Jordan - Exploring the links between gender-based violence and radicalisation in Jordan**

13<sup>th</sup> of December - ACTED and its local partner AWO, launched a national workshop on Saturday 10 December 2016 in the Jordanian capital Amman to present the results of a study analysing the linkages between gender-based violence and radicalisation in Jordan. The event marked the end of the "16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence" and International Human Rights Day (December 11), aiming to galvanise support to tackle violence against women as well as promote equal access to rights around the world.

[Full Article](#) (ACTED)

## **[News] Jordan - Providing Palestine Refugee Children in Jerash with the Tools They Need to Succeed**

7<sup>th</sup> of December - For the second year in a row, the Chalhoub Group of Saudi Arabia has donated school bags and kits for Palestine refugee school girls and boys in Jordan. This year, the group donated 2,500 school bags and kit to Palestine refugees' school students from grades 1 to 3 in Jerash camp and to children attending the camp's Community-Based Rehabilitation Centre (CBRC). In 2015, the Group donated 1,500 bags and stationery to Palestine refugee children registered under the Agency's Social Safety Net in the North Amman area.

[Full Article](#) (UNRWA)

## **[Nouvelle] Maroc - Le Forum du Maroc : Les Droits de l'Adolescence et de la Jeunesse comme pilotes du Développement Durable**

11 décembre - L'organisation du Forum Marocain "pour le rôle des adolescents et jeunes africains et arabe dans la mise en œuvre de l'Agenda de Développement 2030" organisé à Marrakech, s'inscrit dans le sillage des orientations de Sa Majesté le Roi Mohammed VI, et dans la continuité du plan d'action de l'ONDE relatif à la contribution dans la réalisation des Objectifs de Développement 2030, suite aux directives de Son Altesse Royale la Princesse Lalla Meryem, Présidente de l'Observatoire National des Droits de l'Enfant, pour que les enfants, adolescents et jeunes soient au cœur de la démarche mondiale de la mise en œuvre de ces Objectifs, en tant que cible et levier.

[Article complet](#) (Oujda City)

## **[Nouvelle] Maroc - Maroc : le procès de jeunes filles ravive le débat sur la dépénalisation de l'homosexualité**

9 décembre - Deux jeunes filles surprises en train de s'embrasser sur le toit d'une maison, qui risquaient entre six mois et trois ans de prison, ont été ce vendredi, relâchées. Dénoncées par un proche, puis arrêtées le 27 octobre, Sanae et Hajar, respectivement 16 ans et 17 ans, sont poursuivies pour homosexualité et risquent de six mois à trois ans de détention, selon l'article 489 du code pénal, qui punit les « actes licencieux ou contre nature avec un individu du même sexe ».

[Article complet](#) (Middle East Eye)

## **[Nouvelle] MENA - Les pays arabes doivent accorder la priorité aux politiques favorisant la jeunesse, selon le PNUD**

1<sup>er</sup> décembre - Les pays arabes peuvent réaliser des progrès significatifs en matière de développement et de stabilité, et garantir ces gains de manière durable, s'ils accordent la priorité

aux politiques assurant le bien-être, la productivité, l'autodétermination et le sens civique des jeunes, selon un rapport du Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement (PNUD) publié cette semaine. « La vague de soulèvements qui a balayé la région arabe depuis 2011 nous a montré que nous ne pouvons plus traiter les jeunes de la région comme passifs ou comme une génération en attente », déclare Sophie de Caen, Directrice par intérim du Bureau régional pour les États arabes du PNUD.

[Article complet](#) (Centre d'actualités ONU)

### **[News] Syria - Gavi to support immunisation of children in Syria**

8<sup>th</sup> of December - Gavi Board decisions also taken to strengthen emergency vaccine stockpiles and to accelerate human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine programme to protect 40 million girls against cervical cancer by 2020. Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance has announced a special commitment aligned with the Syrian Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) to help partners purchase vaccines and cold chain equipment that will protect children living in war-torn Syria from deadly infectious diseases.

[Full Article](#) (Gavi)

### **[Report] Yemen - Malnutrition amongst children in Yemen at an all-time high, warns UNICEF**

12<sup>th</sup> of December - Nearly 2.2 million children in Yemen are acutely malnourished and require urgent care. At least 462,000 children suffer from Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), a drastic increase of almost 200 per cent since 2014. An additional 1.7 million children suffer from Moderate Acute Malnutrition. The situation of severely malnourished children in Governorates such as Hodeida, Sa'ada, Taizz, Hajjah and Lahej is most critical. These five governorates put together have the highest of all SAM cases in the country.

[Full Article](#) (UNICEF)