

YEMEN

At least 55 attacks on schools and higher education facilities occurred during the 2022-2023 reporting period, many involving the use of explosive weapons, including airstrikes, shelling, and the emplacement of improvised explosive devices. Around 100 educational facilities were also used for military purposes. In addition, GCPEA identified reports of child recruitment and sexual violence at, or on the way to or from, educational institutions.

CONTEXT

Conflict continued in Yemen during the 2022-2023 reporting period, despite a six months-long truce. Houthi forces (also known as Ansar Allah) controlled much of the north and west of Yemen, including Sana'a; the Internationally Recognized Government of Yemen (IRG), supported by the Saudi- and United Arab Emirates-led Coalition (the Coalition), controlled parts of the south and much of the east; and the Southern Transitional Council (STC), an Emirati-backed group, controlled much of the rest of the south of the country.¹ In April 2022, IRG President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi resigned and transferred power to a Presidential Leadership Council, which was made up of influential leaders from across Yemen who were opposed to the Houthis, as reported by Amnesty International, International Crisis Group, and media outlets.² Fighting escalated in early 2022;³ however, in April of that year, Houthi forces and the IRG agreed to a UN-mediated truce that included the cessation of military activities.⁴ The two-month truce was extended twice and ended in October 2022, although it largely endured in practice through the end of the reporting period.⁵ Fighting, and violations against civilians, including children, decreased during the six-month truce;⁶ however, political violence and human rights abuses persisted, according to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) and a local human rights organization.⁷ In December 2023, the parties to the conflict agreed to implement a ceasefire and take steps toward resuming the peace process led by the UN.

In January 2022, the Coalition conducted three airstrikes that killed at least 80 civilians, including three children, as well as damaging civilian buildings, according to Human Rights Watch.⁸ Houthi forces conducted ground strikes across Yemen which resulted in civilian casualties and forced displacement during the reporting period;⁹ in July 2022, the non-state armed group reportedly shelled a neighborhood in Taizz city, killing one child and injuring eleven.¹⁰ Save the Children reported that the highest number of weekly child casualties over a two-year period in Yemen occurred in July 2022;¹¹ that year, landmines and unexploded ordnance were responsible for more than half of all child casualties.¹² In addition, state forces and non-state armed groups recruited or used 105 children in 2022, according to the UN.¹³

During the 2022-2023 reporting period, Yemen continued to experience an acute humanitarian crisis, with 21.6 million people in need of aid, including 11.1 million children.¹⁴ However, movement restrictions inhibited access to humanitarian support, disproportionately affecting women.¹⁵ In 2023, 4.5 million people were internally displaced, according to the UN.¹⁶ The economy further contracted in 2022 and 2023, and drought and

floods compounded the humanitarian crisis.¹⁷

Conflict and natural disasters continued to impact education during the 2022-2023 reporting period. Around 2.7 million children were out of school in 2022 and 2023, around half of whom were girls.¹⁸ Between 2015 and 2022, 2,783 schools were damaged or not used for educational purposes, and around 368 others were affected by floods in 2022 alone, further hindering access to education.¹⁹ In addition, more than 155,000 teachers continued to work without receiving salary payments in 2022 and 2023.²⁰

ATTACKS ON SCHOOLS

During the 2022-2023 reporting period, GCPEA identified at least 47 reported attacks on schools in Yemen. Attacks included airstrikes, shelling, the use of other explosive weapons, raids, and crossfire. This represents a similar number of attacks on schools as compared to the previous reporting period, when GCPEA collected 20 and 28 reports of such attacks in 2021 and 2020, respectively.²¹

In 2022, GCPEA collected at least 21 reports of attacks on schools.²² Separately, the UN verified seven attacks on schools, students, or teachers.²³ In addition, a human rights organization reported 106 attacks on schools and incidents of military use of educational facilities, primarily perpetrated by the Houthis, followed by the IRG and the Coalition.²⁴ However, the UN and rights organization-reported incidents were not included in the total for this attack category, since it was unclear how many incidents were attacks on schools, rather than attacks on protected persons or military use. Examples of incidents collected by GCPEA included:

- On January 2, 2022, an airstrike hit a school in the Sawad Asr area of Maain district, Sana'a, according to the Civilian Impact Monitoring Project (CIMP).²⁵
- Artillery shells struck Al Huda School in Maqbanah district, Taizz governorate, on January 19, 2022, killing one student and injuring six others, as reported by CIMP and *Al Masdar*.²⁶
- On February 19, 2022, a drone equipped with explosives hit Al Wahdah School in Hareb district, Mareb governorate, killing three students, according to *Arab News*, *Khabar Agency*, and ACLED.²⁷
- Unidentified gunmen raided Salah Ad Din School in Salh district, Taizz governorate, in August and September 2022, as reported by ACLED and news outlet *Al Masdar*.²⁸
- On October 26, 2022, a Houthi-made explosive device was found within 50 meters of Al-Kifah School in Hays district, Taizz governorate, according to the Panel of Experts on Yemen. A non-governmental organization safely disposed of the device. The name of the location was not detailed in the report.²⁹
- On December 28, 2022, a grenade was thrown into a school in the Musayk neighborhood of Sana'a, causing damage to the building but no casualties, according to CIMP.³⁰

In 2023, GCPEA collected at least 26 reports of attacks on schools.³¹ Separately, the UN reported 20 attacks on schools.³² A human rights organization also reported 144 attacks on schools and incidents of military use of schools, perpetrated primarily by the Houthis, followed by the IRG, STC, and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.³³ However, the UN count and rights organization-reported incidents were not included in the total to avoid double counting, and since it was unclear how many incidents were attacks on schools, rather than

military use, in the latter case. Examples of incidents collected by GCPEA included:

- On March 19, 2023, an explosive device was reportedly dropped from a drone on An Nur School in Ar Rawn village, Al Hudaydah governorate.³⁴
- Parties to conflict reportedly clashed near Muhammad Ali Uthman School in the Wadi al Qadhi area of Taizz city and governorate on March 20, 2023, according to Yemen Data Project as cited in ACLED.³⁵
- On April 21, 2023, shellfire struck a school in Hays district, Al Hudaydah governorate, injuring a boy, as reported by CIMP. GCPEA could not determine whether the child was a student at the school.³⁶
- On May 28, 2023, parties to the conflict reportedly clashed near Arwa School in Ataq city, Shabwa governorate.³⁷
- On November 1, 2023, a drone strike hit near a school in Qa'atabah district, Ad Dali, governorate, killing one boy student and injuring at least eight others, according to CIMP and ACLED.³⁸

ATTACKS ON SCHOOL STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND OTHER EDUCATION PERSONNEL

During the 2022-2023 reporting period, GCPEA collected 26 reported incidents of attacks on school students, teachers, or other education personnel. These incidents involved the killing, abduction, or injury of over 25 school students and personnel. Such attacks increased as compared to the previous reporting period, when at least seven and six incidents were collected in 2021 and 2020 respectively.³⁹

In 2022, GCPEA identified eight reports of attacks on school students and staff.⁴⁰ For example:

- Gunmen allegedly shot at a school vehicle taking students to classes on August 23, 2022, in Ibb city and governorate, as reported by international media outlet *Al Masdar*.⁴¹
- On October 10, 2022, an alleged armed group attacked several teachers in front of their students in a school in Khanabah village, Ibb governorate, after the teachers declined to participate in celebrations organized by the group, as reported by news outlet *Al Maqea Post*.⁴²
- Save the Children reported that, on October 29, 2022, a shell struck an alley in Taizz city and governorate while three students were on their way home from school. The explosion caused two of the children to lose legs while the third child was hit by shrapnel in his stomach, arm, and leg.⁴³
- In late December 2022, the principal of Ar Rawn School was reportedly abducted in Kusmah district, Raymah governorate, after the administration refused to incorporate a Houthis curriculum.⁴⁴

GCPEA collected 18 reported attacks on school students and staff in 2023.⁴⁵ Abductions and detentions were the most common forms of attack, while others involved threats, small arms fire, or the use of explosive weapons. For instance:

- On January 7, 2023, two girl students were reportedly abducted from Naimah School in Naimah village, Lahj governorate. The principal was also injured for attempting to stop the abduction.⁴⁶
- A drone reportedly dropped an explosive device on a road in Uzlat al Majanih region, Ad Dali governorate, on February 14, 2023, killing one student and injuring two others while they were on their way to school.⁴⁷

- Several teachers were allegedly detained by IRG-affiliate forces in Jajd al Bard school in Al Maqatirah district, Lahj governorate, as reported by Yemen Data Project and ACLED.⁴⁸
- On October 8, 2023, the leader of a teachers' union was abducted from his home in Sana'a after the union made demands for the payment of teachers and other public employees, as reported by international media outlet *Arab News*.⁴⁹
- On October 19, 2023, a student was reportedly injured by crossfire on his way home from school in Ibb city and governorate. The day before, a teacher was hit by a bullet and injured after leaving a different school south of the same city.⁵⁰

MILITARY USE OF SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

In the 2022-2023 reporting period, GCPEA identified at least 99 incidents of schools used for military purposes. In comparison, Education under Attack 2022, which covered 2020 and 2021, included at least 49 cases of military use.⁵¹

In 2022, the UN verified the military use of 67 schools, perpetrated by the parties to the conflict including the Houthis and the Yemen Armed Forces.⁵² Separately, a human rights organization reported 121 cases of schools used for military purposes between September 2021 and August 2022.⁵³ In addition, the same organization documented 20 incidents of military use perpetrated by the Houthis during the truce in fighting between April 2 and October 2, 2022, in governorates including Taizz, Raymah, Ibb, Amran, and Sa'ada.⁵⁴ However, these counts were not included in the total number of military use incidents for this reporting period, since it was unclear how many occurred in 2022, rather than 2021, in the first instance, and because some incidents may have overlapped with the UN count.

In 2023, the UN reported the military use of 32 schools.⁵⁵ Separately, GCPEA identified approximately seven individual reports of military use that year;⁵⁶ these reports were not included in the total since they may have overlapped with the UN count. For instance:

- In early April 2023, a school was allegedly used as a detention center in Wadi al Hasin region, Taizz governorate.⁵⁷
- Around September 2023, two schools were reportedly closed and occupied in Hubaysh Junction area and Al Ma'ayen town in Ibb governorate.⁵⁸
- In late 2023, a military checkpoint was established near a girls' school in Al Akisha district, Taizz governorate, as reported by local media outlets *Yemeni Education News Network* and *Al Ayyam*.⁵⁹
- In late 2023, several schools in Hajjah and Al Hudaydah governorates were allegedly turned into military training centers.⁶⁰

CHILD RECRUITMENT AT, OR ON THE WAY TO OR FROM, SCHOOL

During the 2022-2023 reporting period, GCPEA identified at least three reports of child recruitment at school.

Education under Attack 2022 included several reports detailing child recruitment or indoctrination at schools or along school routes.⁶¹

In mid-January 2022, two boy students, aged ten and 12, were recruited from their school in Sana'a for use as fighters, as reported by ACLED and local news outlet *Al Masdar*.⁶² In addition, the UN reported that Houthi members recruited children by threatening their teachers, in a report covering December 2021 to March 2022.⁶³

In late 2023, students were reportedly recruited from secondary schools in Hajjah and Al Hudaydah governorates, according to local media outlet *Al Mashhad Al Yemeni*.⁶⁴

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AT, OR ON THE WAY TO OR FROM, SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY

GCPEA collected one report of sexual violence at, or en route to, school and university during the 2022-2023 reporting period. In December 2022, a member of an alleged armed party abducted a girl student while she returned home from school in Sana'a with the purpose of forcing her to marry him, as reported by ACLED and news outlets *Mareb Press* and *Tihama 24*.⁶⁵

ATTACKS ON HIGHER EDUCATION

During the 2022-2023 reporting period, GCPEA identified 18 incidents of attacks on higher education. Of these, more than half were attacks on higher education facilities and the remainder included attacks on higher education students or staff. Reported attacks on higher education appear to have increased slightly in 2022 as compared to 2021, when GCPEA collected six such reports. However, the number of identified attacks declined compared to 2020, when 18 such attacks were identified.⁶⁶

In 2022, GCPEA collected ten reports of attacks on higher education.⁶⁷ The attacks on university facilities primarily involved the use of explosive weapons, while attacks on higher education students or staff included abduction and protest repression. For example:

- On January 15, 2022, an airstrike hit a vocational institute in Al-Sawma'ah district, Bayda governorate, according to the Yemen Data Project and CIMP.⁶⁸
- On January 20, 2022, Houthi forces beat and arrested students during an on-campus demonstration at Sana'a University in Sana'a, as reported by Scholars at Risk and news outlet *Al Arabiya*.⁶⁹
- On May 31, 2022, artillery shells struck the College of Literature in Taizz city and governorate, injuring one female student, according to local news outlet *Yeni Yemen* and ACLED.⁷⁰
- On June 27, 2022, Houthi forces entered the Faculty of Arts at Dhamar University, Dhamar city and governorate, assaulting personnel and damaging the university, as reported by Scholars at Risk and *Sahafaty* news outlet.⁷¹
- On December 8, 2022, members of an alleged armed party stormed a dormitory and reportedly abducted

two students from the College of Oils and Minerals in Ataq city, Shabwa governorate.⁷²

In 2023, GCPEA collected eight reports of attacks on higher education.⁷³ For instance:

- Clashes between alleged armed parties reportedly broke out near Taizz University in Taizz city and governorate on January 22, 2023.⁷⁴
- On April 4, 2023, an improvised explosive device reportedly detonated near National University in Taizz city and governorate.⁷⁵
- On May 24, 2023, a professor was reportedly shot and killed in Juban town, Ad Dali governorate.⁷⁶
- Members of a defense force affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council stormed a student dormitory in Ataq city, Shabwa governorate, where they detained students on August 30, 2023, according to Scholars at Risk and a media report.⁷⁷
- On October 4, 2023, armed men allegedly fired live bullets into the air to disperse students demonstrating at the College of Medicine at Dhamar University in Dhamar city and governorate. The students were reportedly protesting over the murder of a peer, according to media outlet *Yemen Shabab*.⁷⁸

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