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AN OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT RECOVERY FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN THE MIDDLE EAST/AFRICA THAT PROMOTES THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

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Nowadays and due to the economic situation, the social hierarchy that made the middle class disappear, the multiple revolutions, and the Covid-19 pandemic; Middle East is encountering a very critical and delicate situation reference to other countries. Children are affected the most. This deprived children who are passing through tough quarantine and experiencing a real family life; from their right to socialize, having normal life, maintaining good health, play, and get normal education. A lot of children are out of schools, a lot of children are out of homes, a lot of children have no food and no water to drink not even clean water to bathe, and some children are abused sometimes by their closest members of their families.

Education is becoming a virtue for some children and an anxiety for others. The online learning requirements are not available to many children since some families do not have computers, Internet is slow and expensive, electricity is not always available, and some families own a smart phone that can’t be used in case they have more than one child. Some schools operated normally but parents are not sending their children to school for the fear of the spread of the Corona virus among their children especially because precaution measures are not always respected in schools. A child’s education should start from home, from ensuring that they have a home, a physical address, along with adequate infrastructure, clean water, potable water, as well as non-abusive family. Not forgetting to mention eventually, the role of the government to impose sanctions on the schools that don’t install proper equipment to prevent from Covid-19 such as, hand sanitizers in each classroom on each table, masks available from all sizes to students and personnel, gloves, working digital thermometers, also having a specific staff that ensures that students are maintaining social distance. Moreover, the minimal precautions against Covid-19 should be as clear and implanted at home while quarantining as well as in school.

Health is threatening the life of children since the economic situations and lack of medicine affected the health sector who is admitting urgent cases only to hospitals and providing medications and basic treatments to cold cases.

However, the PCR is relatively expensive to some families where it is difficult for doctors to differentiate clinically between flu symptoms and symptoms of Corona, which will have to resort to conducting further analyzes and laboratory tests. Children are also encountering lack of vaccines, which is necessary for their health and was mandatory to all citizens and residence by the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health.

Children are not having access to healthy food due to the tremendous price increase of food items due to a weak purchasing power; this in turns affect the psychological status of the parents to reaching stages that are more difficult that may lead them to starvation. This situation that parents are passing through, will be affecting children where parents might become more violent towards their children in case they have typical demands they used to have before Corona.

The quarantine deprived the children from the life to play and to socialize where their main location is around their families without greater respect for their right to privacy.

In conclusion, children are experiencing a threat in their social security since most of their rights are taken from them due to the current Lebanese situations that added up to the Covid-19.

Therefore,

Arab and African countries must strive to provide the needs of the child - physical, social, economic and emotional, which are relevant to the total well being of the child. There are several sectors of a typical society involving the child especially given the scenario that the covid-19 circumstances undeniably portend challenges. The International Human Rights Council and the International Human Rights Commission have elaborated on the areas in this regard.

1. Middle East and Africa have not made the educational system child friendly. Schools do not have teachers who are well paid with good working conditions. When what is obtainable is to see teachers living in unhygienic, squalor and shabbily rated places, it is easily maintained that the school teachers who would be required to propagate the covid-19 prevention and management strategies to the child cannot do so effectively. The majority of schools in these Areas involved in this report have environments that are no modern and decent facilities and also lack the equipment for checking disease spread as required in the 21st century child friendly environment. These Countries are confronted by economic hardship and high level of poverty which keeps them unable to fund education.

2. Health facilities are generally in a bad shape. Doctors are not well paid compared to their fellow Doctors in other parts of the world. To have the high standards for testing

centers for covid-19 is not very feasible. The Isolation centers provided together with equipments such as the ventilators are not sufficient. With a high level of the population being illiterate people also have no information at their disposal for the covid-19 policies and the child is definitely the most embattled with the propensity to be infected by the covid-19. The nations do not have the ratings of a good standard of living which certainly affect most especially the child.

3. The harmful Mid-African cultural practices of female circumcision and keeping of children transiting from the childhood to adulthood in crowdedness enclaves for initiation rites is still going on. These traditional ways of life is a regular feature in most communities and the Governments have been trying to get the traditional institutions to educate the people on the need to be conscious of the covid-19 prevention protocols but the stoic attachment of the persons to their culture is a difficult task to put on hold even with the raging pandemic.

4. The needs of the child no matter the level of education and orientation on the covid-19 policies that the Governments undertakes cannot be addressed in hostile and violence filled societies. All over Middle East and Africa, conflicts or wars persist the child is guaranteed to be picking up bad habits as a result of living on the streets. In an attempt to survive, the child in a hostile environment only considers as secondary the tips on nipping in the bud the spread of diseases. They must stem this ever-increasing tide of hostility or it will witness an implosion of the covid-19.

5. A child friendly comprehensive law must be considered and enforced in countries. This policy is to cater for the welfare of the child particularly to ensure the covid-19 will not be able to spread in alarming leaps. However, the fact that beautiful policies are not enough but they must be beautifully executed as well must be noted. Policies for the children interest with the active participation of children is of the essence.