

Supplementary Contribution to the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education – June 2025

To: Farida Shaheed, *United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education*

The purpose of this submission is to provide the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education with an urgent update on how the recent escalation—following Israeli operations in Iran and ensuing missile exchanges—has sharply deepened pre-existing safety and infrastructure inequalities for Bedouin children in the Negev, further undermining their right to education. We seek the Rapporteur’s attention and support in pressing for immediate, targeted action to address these compounded risks and exclusions.

Specific objectives:

- Highlight the unequal access to protective infrastructure and the resulting disruptions to safe learning for Bedouin children.
- Request that the Special Rapporteur publicly call on Israeli authorities to ensure equitable safety measures (early-warning systems, reinforced learning spaces/shelters, safe transportation, and continuity plans) in Bedouin areas.
- Urge the inclusion of internally displaced and otherwise marginalized Bedouin students in national education safety planning.
- Seek technical guidance or engagement (e.g., fact-finding, dialogue facilitation) to help translate these concerns into policy and practice.
- Encourage the Rapporteur to reflect these developments in upcoming thematic reporting or advocacy on “safety as a precondition for the right to education.”

Bedouin children today face a dual denial of rights:

They are **not protected**, and they are **not educated**.

1. **Lack of Physical Safety in Educational Settings:** Children in unrecognized Bedouin villages in the Negev continue to live in areas with **no bomb shelters, no reinforced school buildings, and no emergency instructions**. While schools across Israel are closed during the current escalation, children in these villages - unlike their peers - have no safe space to shelter or learn. This absence of protective infrastructure not only endangers their lives but also makes any continuation of education **physically impossible**. **This situation was further reinforced during an emergency coordination meeting held on June 17, 2025, where over 80 representatives from** civil society organizations, local authorities, and members of the Knesset gathered to address the systemic lack of protection for residents of unrecognized Bedouin villages. A central concern raised was the **absence of**



fortified spaces in schools. Representatives noted that **children and teachers are learning in buildings without any shelter or protection**, if those schools have not already been demolished. As highlighted in that meeting, **education under fire is simply not possible without physical safety**, and the Home Front Command has provided no effective emergency protocols for these communities. This once again underscores the structural exclusion of Bedouin children from the most basic conditions necessary for safe, continuous, and dignified access to education.

2. **Digital Exclusion and Educational Disruption:** While Israeli students have resumed remote learning through digital platforms like Zoom, Bedouin children still have limited or no internet access, frequent power outages, and no access to learning devices. As was the case during COVID-19 and again after October 7, 2023, they are systematically excluded from digital education. Safety in education today includes digital access, and its absence creates growing disparities.
3. **Demolitions Destroying Homes and Schools:** A recent surge in the demolition of homes and schools by Israeli authorities further aggravates the situation. In the past few weeks, multiple demolitions have left children not only homeless but also without school buildings or any safe space to gather, learn, or receive support. **These actions have directly intensified the unsafe and unstable conditions in which education is expected to continue.** They represent a clear violation of children's rights to both safety and education, as protected under international human rights law.
4. **Absence of State Preparedness or Policy:** In recent joint communications with Israeli authorities, including a letter submitted to Ministers Yisrael Katz and Amichai Chikli, the Attorney General, and the Home Front Command, we — along with five other civil society organizations — urged the State to extend protective measures to unrecognized Bedouin villages. To date, **no comprehensive plan has been implemented** for the protection or education of children in these areas.

These conditions demonstrate that the right to education cannot be realized without safety and must be **universal, inclusive, and structurally guaranteed.**

We respectfully ask that you reflect on these urgent findings in your forthcoming report and recommendations. The systematic exclusion of Bedouin children from **physical safety** and **educational continuity** must be addressed as a matter of human rights, equality, and dignity.

We remain available for any follow-up. Thank you for your attention and continued work on this vital issue.

With appreciation and solidarity,

The Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality

