

# Change for young people



## How young changemakers in Palestine strengthen civic participation in their communities

### *One-Hour Talk and Read to Lead*

#### About this series

Over the last years, all regions and member associations have put a lot of energy into strengthening youth development in partnership with young people. Contextualized national youth concepts aligned with the global [Youth development user guide](#) are providing a frame for this strengthened youth work. Global projects provide additional support to member associations to improve the quality of care for young people and install support offers that respond to their needs.

The series *Change for young people* showcases examples of member associations that have successfully changed and improved their work in one or several areas of youth development. Its goal is to highlight the change to a wide audience, fostering knowledge-sharing among associations. The series is linked to the *Innovate. Impact. Inspire* campaign, which focuses on showcasing innovative changes and programmes within member associations.

#### Initial situation before the change

SOS Children's Villages Palestine supports 2800 programme participants through family strengthening and 200 through alternative care across 2 locations.

Young people get **age-specific support**: Those aged 13-14 focus on basic skills, including planning, goal setting, communication, and reflection. Young people aged 15-17 emphasize employability skills and participate in career orientation, job shadowing, and basic entrepreneurship training. Young people aged 18 and above concentrate on language skills, understanding entrepreneurial work, labour market knowledge, CV writing, and job interview skills.

SOS Children's Villages Palestine's **Youth Council ensures youth participation** in programme design and execution since 2014. It engages in annual planning and initiates various activities that foster active community involvement. In 2022, Youth Council members were invited to submit proposals for initiatives in the frame of Youth Power, a project to strengthen youth-led initiatives. Members proposed discussions with decision-makers about youth issues and concerns, with a specific focus on employment (*One-Hour talk*) and education (*Read to Lead*).



Youth Council meeting in Palestine.

#### The programme change

**Youth Power** is a changemaker programme that supports youth-led initiatives and strengthens the culture of youth participation in SOS Children's Villages programmes and communities. Young people are supported with trainings and mentorship and sparkfunding, while the member associations get financial support to implement capacity-building for staff members on youth participation.

**Youth Power in Palestine** was implemented through two youth-led initiatives, self-designed and led by young people:

The initiative **One-Hour Talk** promotes effective participation by organizing one-hour dialogues of young people with adult decision-makers. After the meetings, young people followed up on the results to make sure that the dialogue resulted in concrete actions, such as the increase of provisions for young people, a stronger attention to young people's voices and input, or better spaces for participation. Prior to the dialogues, trainings on participation skills were provided to young people. **Read to Lead** built up a community library and organized reading events and discussion rounds with children from the community.

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*After implementing our project, we started believing in ourselves - and each other - that we can truly make a change in our community. We can raise any issue we want. We have a voice.*

Haneen, Amir, Claudia, and Ahmed from Palestine

## The programme results

(as of August 2024)



Between 2021 and 2024, **Youth Power** empowered **1.510 young changemakers** across **77 countries**, supporting their 113 youth-led initiatives through skills, networks, and sparkfunding. Their efforts reached **32.378 individuals**, making a significant impact globally.

Thanks to the sparkfunding, SOS Children's Villages Palestine built their youth participation capacity through...



**15 hours of training for 20 young people** on dialogue, influence, persuasion, and presentation skills

**2 days of training for 8 youth workers** on youth development and participation

### One-Hour Talk



This initiative engaged **20 young people** in **9 discussion sessions** with decision-makers and influencers. Outcomes include:

- the establishment of a **partnership with the Chamber of Commerce** for training and employment, including free practical training and employment recommendations for programme participants,
- the formation of a **network of young people** to lead change, advocate for youth participation, and strengthen community roles, and
- a **partnership with a community youth council** to address youth issues.

### Read to Lead



The initiative found out that over **70% of Palestinian homes lack access to books and reading material**. Young people organized **400 books for their library** and **engaged 100 children and young people** in reading activities and discussion rounds.

- Youth leadership skills and active participation were strengthened, and participants got inspired and motivated through dialogues with entrepreneurs and influencers sharing their success stories.
- 150 brochures were distributed to encourage reading in the community. The library work did not end with the end of the project but is continued within the community.



Discussion round with children in the frame of Read to Lead.



Read to Lead: A community library was built up with over 400 books.



One-Hour talk with North region Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

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*We believe what we learn should be passed on to others. That is our role. We will continue and empower our youth and continue for a better future. Our future.*

Haneen, Amir, Claudia, and Ahmed from Palestine

### Success factors and recommendations

- Key success factors were the Youth Council's established role in advocating youth issues within the community, as well as the high motivation among young participants to foster transformative change, the members' self-assurance and strong interpersonal connections.
- Ensure strong backing from staff and management, including dedicated meeting spaces at programme locations for collaborative discussions and exchange of ideas.
- Foster a supportive relationship between young people and youth workers. This relationship empowers youth to take ownership of initiatives while providing access to adult support when necessary. Regular monthly meetings facilitate progress evaluation and future planning.
- Support young people to thoroughly prepare and to define roles and responsibilities prior to the implementation of the initiatives.



If you want to learn more about this practice example, please [follow the link](#)



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