



مركز
الشباب
العربي
ARAB YOUTH CENTER



مبعوثي الشباب للتنمية
في المنطقة العربية
Youth Development Delegates in the Arab Region

Inclusion of Youth in Development
Annual Progress Report of the Youth Development Delegates



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1. Introduction

The Arab Youth Center (AYC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Youth Project in the Arab States have partnered to achieve their common vision of providing wide-spread support to youth in the Arab region. The Youth Development Delegates (YDD) Programme in the Arab region was established in response to a need to encourage youth to be directly involved in youth-related development issues within a multi-lateral system. Elevating the efforts and voices of youth has been the focus of this approach.

The pilot phase was initiated in 2020, when the AYC funded and positioned 11 young people from the Arab region to work in 10 UNDP Country Offices and at the Regional Hub in Amman (in the Regional Youth Team). The pilot phase was implemented successfully as the selected 11 YDDs worked closely with UNDP personnel in the assigned countries, leading, supporting and contributing to efforts to empower young men and women in their respective countries, through UNDP activities. In parallel, the YDDs have acquired new knowledge, hands-on experience and skills that will equip them for the future.

2. Impact of COVID19 on YDD programme & UNDP's youth work

As the pandemic forced the United Nations to take the decision to move to a telecommuting modality, the UNDP Youth Regional Team, together with the YDDs, strategized a new, innovative plan to be able to implement the Youth Leadership Programme activities virtually. Also, together with AYC, a virtual induction was provided to the YDDs, that introduced them to the programme. UNDP and AYC provided the required information to enable their work in their new roles. Training and resources, including online tools, technology, and applications, were provided to enable the YDDs to continue to support youth and partners in their countries to implement activities through virtual approaches.

The swift response to move operations virtually enabled the YDDs to continue to work accordingly and carry out their responsibilities. However, as mentioned above, the new working arrangement slowed down the level of interaction with UNDP personnel, partners, and other stakeholders. The slowing down of their interaction didn't prevent them from doing the work, quite the contrary, the experience has revealed that the YDDs were, and are, very active and busy using diverse approaches to work and networking. Nevertheless, in comparison to live, face-to-face interaction, the level of exposure the YDDs had was impacted.

Despite working virtually for the majority of the pilot phase, the Youth Delegates nevertheless were exposed to UNDP's operations framework as they implemented real-time activities, trainings, analysis, policies and procedures related to procurement, project implementation and partnership building. However, even though there was a gap in experiencing the office culture of UNDP for most of the delegates, there have been a few opportunities for some to work from the office, but in most cases, colleagues telecommuted, impacting their experience of a normal office culture.

3. Overall objectives and status of the YDD programme

During the pilot phase the majority of the programme’s objectives have been fully or partially met, while delivery of some have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Those objectives are expected to be achieved during the second year of the programme, in 2021:

<p>Objectives of Youth Development Delegates Program</p>	<p>Expose Arab youth to the operational framework of UNDP.</p>	<p>Elevate Arab youth’s ability to tackle practical challenges in their nations, such as eradicating poverty, reducing inequalities, improving living standards, facilitating better education and promoting the wise usage of resources and sustainable development of the environment.</p>	<p>Deepen Arab youth’s social impact upon exposing them to hands-on experiences with international decision-makers on a range of complex issues, including international peace & security and economic & social progress.</p>	<p>Enhance Arab youth interpersonal and leadership skills by exposing them to UNDP personnel experiences in leading and managing various initiatives for their countries.</p>	<p>Work to push the youth portfolio in their countries by implementing innovative solutions.</p>	<p>Produce research papers that are based on field work and observation in order to further understand the situation of Arab youth in the respective countries where AYDP candidates will be located.</p>
<p>Results</p>	<p>Despite the hindering effect of the COVID-19 pandemic that stalled operations on the ground, the delegates were exposed every day to the operational framework of UNDP through programmatic implementation of national activities, collaboration with various UNDP colleagues on national and regional levels, following procurement procedures and reporting processes.</p> <p>After the pilot year, each delegate displayed a comprehensive understanding of processes and procedures related to UNDP’s work in each of their countries, as well as at the regional level.</p>	<p>Each of the delegates’ practical knowledge and skill sets were enhanced as they directly designed, implemented, and evaluated national and regional activities, tackling issues related to the COVID-19 response and recovery, climate change and social innovation.</p> <p>Aside of facilitating the implementation of the Youth Leadership Programme activities, each delegate was engaged in delivering youth-related projects and initiatives run by the Country Offices, focused on issues related to rights of persons with disabilities, strengthening digital capacities, storytelling for social impact, amongst many others.</p> <p>The work of the Youth Delegates has contributed to achieving the goals of Agenda 2030 in the Arab region through addressing inequalities, access to education and straightening the position of the youth in the civil society.</p>	<p>The travel restrictions and lockdowns related to COVID-19 pandemic have greatly affected delegate’s ability to meet and interact with international decision-makers in-person, however, they engaged in a number of online events, webinars and panels where they had an opportunity to meet regional experts, change-makers and inspirational figures working on issues related to peace and economic and social progress.</p> <p>Additionally, each delegate was exposed to decision-making processes on the national level, while closely working with high-level colleagues within Country Offices. Expected easing of COVID-19 restrictions in the region in the upcoming months will allow for the delegates to engage in a more hands-on experiences with the international community of change-makers, experts, and decision-makers.</p>	<p>All delegates have displayed excellent leadership skills, flexibility, adaptability, and innovative thinking while planning, implementing and evaluating national and regional activities in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Over the duration of the pilot year, each have taken an initiative in planning, supporting and tailoring activities on the ground to deliver an impactful and meaningful youth programming, while navigating the pandemic restrictions.</p> <p>The virtual modality has also created opportunities for delegates to work together on common projects such the International Youth Day, International Mental Health Day Campaign, Hope Campaign and regional Mentorship Programme, allowing them to acquire new skills in communications, project management and cross-border teamwork, all while committing to UN’s Sustainable Development Goals framework.</p>	<p>The presence of Youth Delegates in Country Offices over the last year has highlighted the importance of youth mainstreaming in UNDP programming in the Arab Region. Their engagement in implementation of various projects and initiatives showed that with extra capacity more youth from the region can be involved in creating social change and leading a narrative for the better future.</p> <p>Although the pandemic has severely impacted the ability of youth to develop and implement innovative solution in real time, the foundations and the groundwork has been laid for when the restrictions are lifted. In the upcoming year the delegates will have the opportunity to utilize the work that has been done so far to support the young people in launching their social innovative solutions.</p>	<p>Although the youth delegates were not able to participate in field work to produce research papers, their knowledge gathered during the ongoing work and interactions with youth participants were utilized during consultations related to projects lead by the Regional Youth Team.</p> <p>The youth delegates were able to contribute their insights and reflections while working in regional mentorship programme, donor mapping exercise, creation of monitoring and evaluation tools and development of new virtual platform.</p> <p>The final YLP6 reports were produced to reflect their work, achievements, and impact in their countries, thus informing UNDP’s planning process for 2021 implementation of the youth programming in the region.</p>

4. YDD country level results

The pilot of phase of the Youth Development Delegates Programme proved to be highly successful, as the 11 delegates have contributed to impactful youth programming in their countries, collaborated on cross-regional initiatives and worked on projects related to COVID-19 response and recovery. Given each country's context, capacities and pressing issues at hand, the work and activities delivered on the national level varied from country to country, with achievements and outcomes highlighted for each of the Youth Delegates below.

More than

9,000
youth engaged

More than

50
youth-serving
organizations engaged

More than

500,000
impressions
through social media



“Being part of YDD and the Youth Leadership Programme, including access to UNDP and AYC’s research and work with youth, has also given me vast insight into the current state of development in Bahrain and the Arab region towards the Sustainable Development Goals, and the role and potential of youth to be the catalysts in moving our societies to achieve the Agenda 2030”

Bahrain

Ahmed gained an in-depth experience in designing and implementing a full cycle of youth development programme through working as a YDD in Bahrain, with opportunities widening his network of change-makers, ranging from passionate Bahraini youth, dedicated change-makers, and the amazing delegates and youth-development teams in the Arab region. The experience provided exposure to a unique Pan-Arab collaboration between the YDDs and gave Ahmed a wider perspective on the experience and knowledge of other youth in the Arab region.

In Bahrain, YLP was a programme that focused on developing the global mindset, emotional intelligence, and holistic problem-solving skills of youth. The YLP6 focused on those elements primarily, and secondly on the youth coming up with social innovations and creating feasible projects that can be applied after the programme. There are many entrepreneurial programmes in Bahrain, and the support to youth could be continued by those programmes after YLP. Instead, YLP can act as a safe and experimental space where youth explore their true potential and passion and connect it to a purposeful and community-development direction through the SDGs.

Among the experiences contributing to Ahmed’s professional development were the opportunities from AYC, where he, in addition to implementing YLP in Bahrain, shared his YDD experience during the Arab Youth Talk series hosted by AYC on Instagram Live, along with two other delegates. He also joined and contributed to the Arab Youth Priorities conference hosted by AYC.

Through this programme Ahmed has come to recognize many opportunities that are open for contributing to the development of societies and empowerment of youth and has appreciated the impact of the YLP6 participants’ as they changed their mindsets and purpose to become inspired change-makers. The youth he worked with expressed their wish to continue developing their social innovations and focus on contributing to their communities through working towards the achievement of the SDGs.

YLP was initiated in Djibouti in 2020, and Mahyoub directly supported the launch through development and presentation of a partnership agreement with partners and implementation of a National Action Plan. The YLP6 UNDP Team and partner youth-serving organizations provided youth with the tools needed to face numerous challenges related to their economic, political and social integration in the society, thus ensuring that young Djiboutians can move forward to promote the inclusion of young people.

As a delegate, Mahyoub had an opportunity to work with many young people and national partners, and to discover the world of international development. He also learned how to strategize and plan projects, write reports and concept notes for projects he was involved in, as well as coordinate and organize events, workshops and webinars for the partner organizations, such as Training of Trainers on YLP pillars and for youth on YLP6 thematic areas: climate change and political participation. Mahyoub also had an opportunity to take part in various televised debates, particularly during the period of the COVID-19 health crisis, where he talked about crisis communication. During the implementation of the national strategy for YLP programming, he was invited to attend numerous workshops, project launches, and to coordinate reflection workshops as well as events for persons with disabilities.

Djibouti

“The first impression and implementation has been good despite the context. It was there that I learned a lot, about project management, crisis management, and I could see the scope and impact of youth in terms of social, innovation and inclusion in different social and community spheres during this difficult and sensitive period, it also helped even more to provide opportunities and occasions for young people to develop their potential.”



Ala has supported and contributed to the development of the National Action Plan, that was based on data from a survey conducted by the YLP team, that helped in creating a comprehensive understanding of Jordanian youth challenges and priorities. The data collected showed that the youth were interested in Sustainable Development, UN principles, as well as civic and political participation. The National Action Plan highlighted the personal, professional, and social issues of youth, and outlined activities to engage them in responding to their challenges and shaping their future.

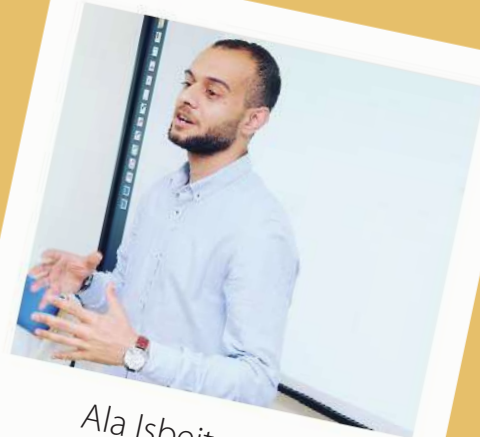
Being part of the UNDP Jordan Youth team allowed Ala to contribute to designing sustainable solutions that could be implemented on the level of country strategies and policies and not only as programmes that target individuals. One of the most important achievements for this year were the design and establishment of youth strategic work and mainstreaming youth through all the programmes and projects at the UNDP Jordan Country Office.

In total, YLP Jordan had delivered 33 training sessions with an average of 50 participants in attendance - online and offline – that covered important subjects: SDGs, UN principles, Foresight Design Thinking, National Elections and Youth Political Participation, Desk Research, Gender Equality and Sexual Harassment, Problem Solving, Framing the Challenges and Research Methods. Additionally, the youth submitted around 40 research reports targeting national development issues connected to SDGs 1,5,13 and 16.

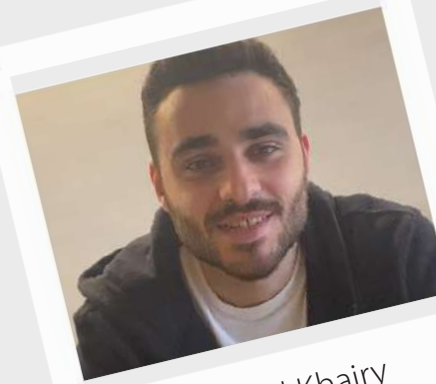
Being part of the UNDP Jordan Youth team and Accelerator Lab team gave Ala the chance to share and initiate youth-related ideas and solutions. As a youth representative at the Country Office, Ala was given the space to provide new ideas and inputs for the ongoing programmes, and to add any components that would meet the needs better and respond to the faced challenges.

Jordan

“This year taught me that as young people, we are the centre of the change that we want to see in our communities, and at the same time the development that I have witnessed in my skills encouraged me to influence the youth communities around me”



Ala Isbeitan



Ahmad Khairy

“Personally, I learned how to lead at certain times, how to manage crises and how to take responsibility and be accountable. Professionally, I learned a lot about the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Egypt, which is booming now, able to reach Egyptian youth from all Egyptian governorates for the first time in YLP. [the YDD programme] taught me a lot about the UN system, gave me a taste of working in the field of development in one of the best agencies. And it made me realize how passionate I really am about working in development”

Egypt

Ahmad led on preparation of the National Action Plan as well as YLP’s Virtual Innovation Camps, filtering through the 2500 applications Egypt received for all 16 camps conducted. Ahmad also co-authored the Virtual Innovation Camp Manual which the whole team was working on to help guide all youth-serving organizations regionally on how to conduct innovation camps.

Ahmad’s work proved that the Innovation Camps held by the UNDP Egypt Youth Team hold had a huge impact on the youth and the community because of the knowledge and necessary life and business skills the participating youth learnt about. Moreover, those youth came up with solutions to problems that they have in their communities, and many of them went ahead and try to work on implementing their solutions and benefitting their communities.

Other than the Innovation Camps and the work associated with them; Ahmad was one of the organizers of the week-long event of Egypt’s Walk for Inclusion. He was responsible for the youth presence in the walk itself and making sure of the social media presence, and setting up the webinar and workshop that took place after the walk. This event was very important in raising awareness about the difficulties that persons with disabilities face every day of their lives in Egypt, where they represent almost 10% of Egypt’s population.

Ahmad was also responsible for the technical aspect of setting up the Arab Youth Virtual Exhibition as well as preparing the application for the youth, reaching out to different entities across the region to share the opportunity with their youth network and then kind of interviewing and selecting some of the best youth to participate in the exhibition. This event encouraged cross-country collaboration as investors from across the region met and connected with youth entrepreneurs.

“Being a youth development delegate gave me the chance to represent the Lebanese youth, raise their voice high and empower them in different contexts and through multiple ways thriving for a better future for them in Lebanon. I believe that through the work I delivered this year, I was able to achieve the common vision of AYC and UNDP to support and enhance youth’s situation in the Arab Region, invest in their abilities and engage them in the sustainable development efforts that both parties are trying to achieve”



Nadine Khaouli

Lebanon

Nadine’s experience at the UNDP Country Office taught her how to develop innovative responses to emerging challenges for youth in Lebanon, contributing directly to her motivation to work more for her community and establish new initiatives supporting the Lebanese people.

Despite the pandemic restraints Nadine got to know her UNDP colleagues and fellow Youth Development Delegates due to the technological tools and the efforts of Regional Youth Team. The delegates were able work together on facilitating discussions and organizing awareness campaigns in addition to sharing their thoughts and ideas to get to know each other. Nadine also utilized this opportunity to lead and coordinate virtual SDG Training of Trainers to both YLP Palestine and Saudi Arabia team members, broadening her knowledge of YLP in other contexts and supporting implementation of activities.

Through collaboration with other UNDP Lebanon projects Nadine created new opportunities for youth in Lebanon and raised their voices by inspiring them to speak against corruption, to support people with disabilities and to become SDG advocates in their communities. YLP youth from all of Lebanon had the chance work with UNDP by volunteering after Beirut Blast, joining efforts with the Anti-Corruption team, participating in the Walk of Inclusion with UNDP’s Goodwill Ambassador Michael Haddad and supporting the Shabab Byehko COVID awareness campaign.

The selection as a Youth Development Delegate in Morocco to support UNDP Morocco Country Office with the youth portfolio and programming gave Walid, who has previously worked to tackle social, economic and political challenges from a micro level with direct actions in the field, an opportunity to gain a macro perception on how to elevate small actions, channel stakeholders’ efforts and use the power of effective & diverse network to create a systemic change.

Beside the shift in perception, Walid had the opportunity to discover the UN system from the inside and learn more about the tremendous role of international development agencies on both national and regional levels, to acquire the needed skills to support the transformation of pipelines into concrete programmes and to get inspired and empowered by the experienced and talented UNDP Morocco and RBAS teams.

For Walid, being a Youth Development Delegate in Morocco during COVID-19 crisis made the experience richer and more diverse in term of programming challenges and the need of resilient innovative approaches, such as overcoming pandemic restrictions through efficient remote work tools and strategies, and most importantly raising the voice of Moroccan youth and enabling them to spread positive impact through the power of social innovation and digital tools. The COVID-19 health crisis has forced Walid to adopt a resilient and agile way of working. This approach has allowed UNDP Morocco Youth team to reach more than 600 young people from different regions of Morocco, which inspired them to think of a hybrid model between face-to-face and virtual activities for the upcoming YLP editions to leave no one behind.

During his time as a Youth Development Delegate Walid delivered Design Thinking training to YLP Morocco and YLP Djibouti teams, mentored UNDP Youth Futures Fellowship programme participants and supported the UNDP Regional Youth Team on the development of the new youth project and project activities to promote youth’s social, political and economic empowerment in the Arab region.

Morocco



Walid Machrouh

“The biggest achievement during my experience this year is the empowerment of more than 600 young Moroccan men and women with tools, knowledge and skills for social innovation in crisis situations, particularly the Covid-19 crisis through virtual and digital platforms. This work was part of the Youth Leadership Program in its sixth edition in Morocco.”

YLP6 in the State of Palestine marked a turning point for the programme. The National Competition, which featured 10 participants from the West Bank and Gaza was broadcasted on TV for the first time in the region, reaching more than 316,304 people on social media alone. Students in 12 different universities were introduced to the YLP pillars, namely gender equality, social innovation and Sustainable Development Goals, and thematic topics of this year, such as SDG 13 and 16. Alumni and YLP6 participants presented their social innovations and engaged in live discussions and interviews.

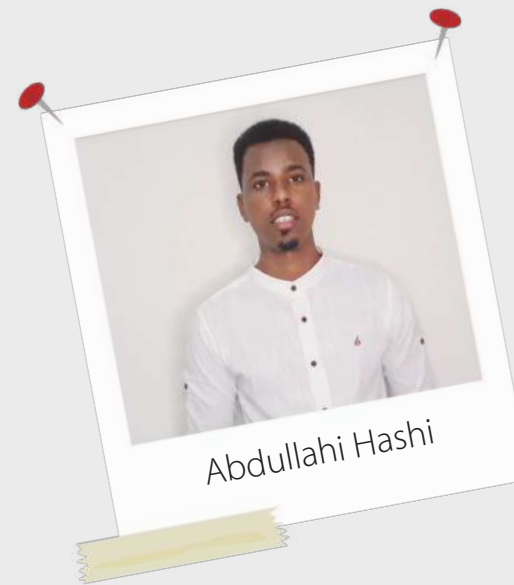
Sara coordinated activities for people from the State of Palestine, including the Gaza Strip, hindered by electricity cuts and movement restrictions. This experience provided her with the opportunity to design programmes and initiatives to address the needs of the targeted group and to allocate available funds to achieve the best possible outcomes and to plan budgets and activities.

Youth-related programming in the State of Palestine relates to youth-development ecosystem and provides tools and skills entrepreneurs need to operate in order to address social and environmental issues. Despite the challenges posed by the circumstances, Sara implemented all activities as planned and enhanced the skills of young Palestinian changemakers. The YLP activities also had a positive impact on social cohesion in the State of Palestine as they assembled youth from Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the collaborations led to the development of five different innovative solutions to support governments in their efforts in the region respond to COVID-19.

While virtual tools presented a challenge, it also was an opportunity for YLP6 participants to engage with the regional community multiple times, other than during the Regional Forum, for example, Palestinian youth were able to celebrate International Day of Youth with their peers in other countries of the region. Also, Palestinian YLPers had the chance to discuss challenges and opportunities with the Jordanian YLPers, long before the regional competition

Palestine

"As a youth development delegate working for the first time in a UN agency, this opportunity was extremely enlightening, as it enabled me to better understand the internal operations of international organizations, the design and implementation of different projects, different types of agreements used, management and procurement protocols"



"The achievement I am the most proud of is co-managing and supporting numerous projects and activities involving youth and the marginalized groups such as PWDS. As a result, I developed a strong understanding of the challenges facing youth and the other groups and the solutions invented to address these challenges in Somalia."

Somalia

YLP Programme in Somalia has been a part of the Accelerator Lab programming and all Acclab staff have been involved in the planning and implementation of the youth activities on the national level, along with partner youth-serving organizations, while the Regional Youth Team provided required technical support, training and support on online communication tools.

Despite the obstacles faced by Abdullahi and his team, several engaging activities were organised online for the Somali participants:

Covid-19 Hackathon - The Acclab in collaboration with the local innovation Hubs reached the Somali youth to come up with ideas and solutions that may help communities to prepare, respond and recover better and the Jury selected three solutions: 1) developing a local, medically approved, formula for affordable hand sanitizers; 2) Visitor-counter to help people avoid over-crowded places; 3) Transparent facemasks to help people with hearing impairments stay safe during the pandemic.

Raising awareness of Sexual and Gender Based Violence - Production of SGBV videos aiming to communicate to the public the seriousness of the issue, after situation worsened during the pandemic. The 6 videos were aired on social media for raising awareness on Sexual and Gender Based Violence, using Somali youth voices with the hope to have an impact on reducing this awful action.

Youth organizations/networks mapping - In order to engage with youth and identify their challenges, the UNDP Somalia Youth team decided to conduct mapping for the youth organizations, networks and initiatives in the country and create a database of their locations, activities and contacts. This will enable YLP/Acclab to have access to different youth organizations and networks to collaborate with them in creating engagement plans and reach young people in different locations.

As a delegate, Abdullahi had the opportunity to co-organize and co-facilitate events with the other delegates such International Mental Health day and YLP Regional Forum.

Youth programming implemented by the UNDP Youth team in Syria has become one of the important players of youth development parties in the country. The team was collaborating and building on the existing efforts of other youth-serving organizations and youth initiatives, to reach a bigger number of participants and expand its impact. This year, 5 partnerships were established with various youth-serving organizations to deliver activities. The unique value of Syria Country Office Youth Team manifested through supporting social initiatives while other parties focused more on entrepreneurs and for-profit start-ups.

Aya and her team focused and worked hard on peace-building concepts through creating safe zones for Syrian youth from diverse backgrounds to discuss, share and implement their ideas to make a real and positive change in their communities. Youth were highly active and engaged in these topics as they've been covered in different ways, once as a training (with the attendance of 25 participants from different initiatives, backgrounds and governates), and another through social media campaign that reached 7,500 people.

YLP6 supported youth response to COVID-19 and the engagement of persons with disabilities through offering medical consultations to deaf patients. This service reached 60 deaf people, 13 have successfully benefitted from it.

While Supporting UNDP Syria Accelerator Lab, Aya has carried youth perspective and voices as change-makers and vital player to her colleagues at the AccLab and served as a linkage between youth and the AccLab team to support their mission of finding sustainable development solutions.

Syria

'I had the chance to cross the borders to meet and work with creative and highly passionate youth delegates and innovators across the region, which had a major impact on my professional and personal skills and expanded my network.'

Aya Albitar

"What made me the most happy in this programme is that I was working with colleagues from different countries. We have the same goal and the same vision, but everyone was contributing with their potential and efforts to create the change in their society and try to make the other youth with their difference changemakers."

Salima Ben Sassi

Tunisia

Being part of the YDD programme allowed Salima to know great people from different Arab countries and help create solid teamwork, as the youth delegates were supporting each other and not competing, making the success of the programme a success of a whole team.

The SDG Camps experience, Tunisia's flagship national activity, allowed the youth participants to become innovative changemakers, supporting the achievement of the agenda 2030. Also, by learning about the SDGs and the major themes presented during the programme like emotional intelligence, mental health issues, Design Thinking and many more, helped the participants become more up-to-date on not only with the innovative ways of work but also carrying out the personal (human) aspect of all participants.

With a high unemployment rate in mind, UNPD Tunisia youth team focused on the need of the youth to create their own projects. To do so, they need to start with an idea, and this is what SDG Camps offer during the workshops. They worked to empower the youth to think outside the box with major focus on the SDG and the global challenges.

As it did for other delegates, this year was exceptional for Salima and her team, and they knew they had to adapt the programme delivery to the context. The programme was full of new themes for the participants joining YLP in 2020. Over the months, the different webinars and sessions were beneficial for youth either to network or to learn about new subjects. The choice of three main themes gave guidance and unified the vision on the country level.

UNDP Tunisia organized 30 workshops, from April to November, each event lasted between 6 to 8 hours online. The number of participants reached was 500 young participants and 100 facilitators were trained. For the live Session, four main themes were organized, divided into four interventions. Each live reached more than 1000 youth participants.



Being a coordinator on this programme gave me the chance to get familiar with various countries across the region and to guide and advise delegates on different matters. The most amazing part was networking with the delegates and achieving the activities that were satisfyingly made by each country and observe the success"

UNDP Regional Hub

Najeeb, as Regional Coordinator, has promoted and supported the youth through making sure all youth delegates were up to date with YLP implementation, coordinating communication, following up and sharing knowledge between the youth delegates and the Regional Youth Team and assisting in delivering activities and projects on the regional level. Najeeb learnt how to balance his work through managing his tasks between countries across the region and knowing their needs and capabilities and acting upon it.

During COVID-19, he has acquired a new skill in an online working methodology. Virtual websites and communication were something he enjoyed learning and doing. Finally, his research methods on diverse matters have vastly progressed during these months and he was able to write and share feedback on various subjects accordingly. Najeeb was also greatly involved in preparations for the YLP6 Regional Forum, supporting combining of list of participants, pitching youth and the panel judges and have facilitated the pitching sessions during the event, which was a floor for giving the space for the youth to pitch their ideas and work on all SDGs and trying to achieve the goals for the Agenda 2030.

Comments from youth participating in YLP6 across the region

"Previously I thought that I am the only one who believes and want to make social change in Lebanon, but belonging to YLP taught me that there are so many youth, who are real changemakers and led me believe more in Lebanon"

Jennifer Nammoura, YLP 6 participant, Lebanon

"I didn't know how to be involved in civic engagement or where to start in terms of making a change, even a small one. I realized from this program that there is truly an abundant of opportunities and even more exceptional people. It was a very humbling, anchoring and beautiful experience to meet everyone and grow."

Fatema Alzari, YLP6 Participant,
Bahrain

"I never thought that from a simple registration in a workshop, I will live such a remarkable experience and pitch in front of an international jury"

Amel Mohamed, YLP6 Participant and
Regional Forum finalist
Tunisia

"Engaging with our peers in the West Bank was an experience that went beyond all those restrictions on movement, borders and checkpoints, and we worked together as one team to address the issues that affect our Palestinian community"

Adam AbuRouk, YLP6 participant,
Palestine

5. Regional Interaction and Collaboration



International Youth Day commemoration

In partnership with Youth Focal Points and Youth Delegates the RBAS Youth Team organized a campaign that reached over 140,000 views through a youth call for creative submissions and two webinar panel discussions to celebrate International Youth Day 12 August. The Youth Delegates participated closely in planning the call for submissions as well as reviewing and evaluating them and selecting the youth finalists. The webinar panel discussions were anchored in the theme of “Engagement for Global Action” and included an expert panel on youth issues where Nadine Khaouli was a speaker, and a youth panel of the four finalists sharing their “actions of engagement” and perspectives. The campaign opened a discussion on the challenges and opportunities of young women and men in the Arab region related to their meaningful engagement at local, national and global levels.

“During my journey with YLP, I was chosen as a speaker to address youth in the Arab region in the panel discussion of the International Youth Day, and it was a great experience! The opportunity to speak on behalf of young people in the Arab world, and expressing their hopes and concerns, challenges and aspirations, and it was a great step towards communicating the voice of youth to the world through youth leaders, for a future where young leaders participate in policy-making and decision-making, and I believe youth, especially Palestinian youth, should be given more opportunities like this one.”

Adam AbuRok, YLP6 Participant



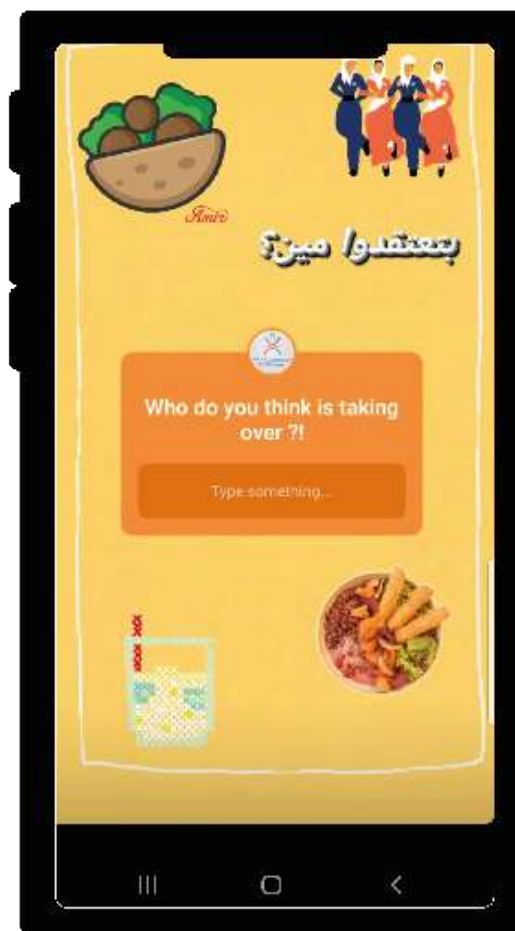
YLP Palestine – Jordan Meetup

The Youth Delegates in the State of Palestine and Jordan facilitated a virtual meeting for 65 YLP6 participants on October 10th that discussed the challenges and opportunities facing youth in both contexts. The meetup focused on discussing how to address common challenges and how to make the most of the opportunities and addressed an important part of YLP's vision; to build a dynamic network within the region that contributes actively to youth innovation and sustainable development.

Eight participants were given the opportunity to present the challenges they encounter and search for opportunities, with the aim of shedding light on the similarities and differences in the Jordanian and Palestinian contexts. Thereafter the youth participants conducted a SWOT analysis to investigate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that youth are currently facing while paying particular attention to youth employment, climate action, civic and political engagement, and gender equality.

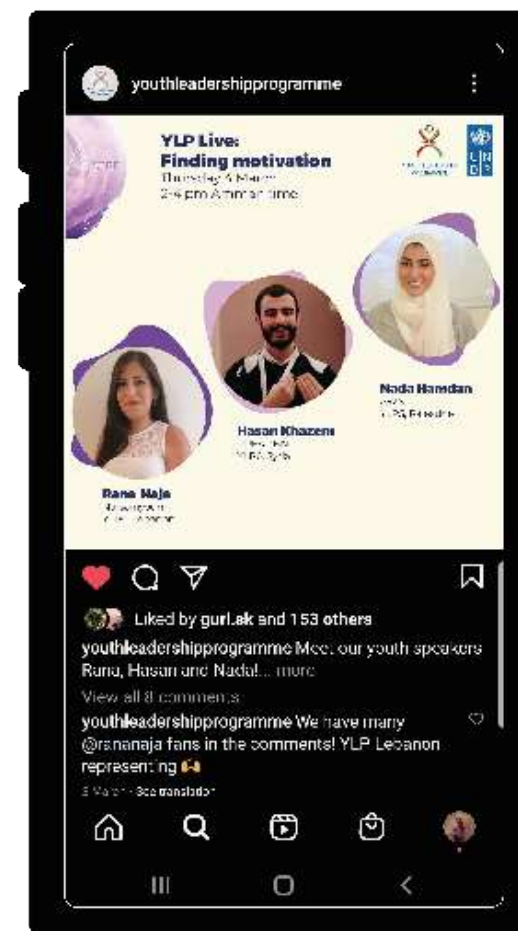
YLP6 Regional Forum

In the preparation and implementation of the YLP6 Regional Forum the Youth Delegates supported the coordination of their respective national participants, ensuring their registration and follow-up. In the cases of Jordan and Djibouti the delegates also supported the arrangements for youth to meet in-person at the Country Office. In addition to this all delegates supported facilitation of interactive elements in breakout rooms, including the youth feedback and civic engagement sessions. Ahmad, Ala, Nadine, Salima, Sara and Walid smoothly facilitated the pitching sessions in English, Arabic and French and approached the judges for their respective sessions. A volunteer team consisting of Ala, Aya and Nadine together with alumni led the development and facilitation of the social and energizing elements of the forum, with icebreakers, SDG challenges and country presentations.



YLP Instagram take-overs

During 2020, each country participating in YLP took over the regional YLP social media accounts for a day and shared content to showcase activities in their countries. The Youth Delegates coordinated with the communications units at their Country Offices, and created content, often in collaboration with the youth alumni of their programmes.



Hope campaign

Together with the youth communications specialist, the Youth Delegates designed and implemented a campaign discussing motivation, hope and mental health. The campaign was led by Aya Albitar, with close support from other delegates. The campaign opened a much-needed discussion on youth and mental health, as the COVID-19 pandemic and various economic crises and conflicts in the region have put a strain on youth's resilience.

The campaign was planned during the last half of 2020 and launched in February 2021, and consisted of a series of social media posts and videos, culminating in a live webinar gathering more than 130 participants across the region. In the session, three YLP alumni youth shared their stories of challenges and finding motivation to keep going. In addition, the youth were joined by an emotional intelligence expert sharing reflections and recommendations.

6. Work Planned for 2021

The work planned by the Regional Youth Team for upcoming year will open new avenues for the Youth Delegates to solidify the skills and knowledge gained during the pilot, as well as offer many opportunities to learn new skills and engage in a variety exciting projects and initiatives:

- Testing, reviewing, and providing feedback on the new Next Gen Youth Platform
- Assisting in implementation of a new approach during YLP7 implementation stage
- Organizing virtual events, webinars, and panels for the youth in the Region
- Engaging with partners, stakeholders, and decision-makers on regional and national levels

Youth Delegates in the 5 pilot countries will have an opportunity to support implementation of UNDP's new youth project, currently at a final stage of being developed

Additionally, many recommendations have been made by the Youth Delegates for activities, projects, and initiatives on the ground in their respective countries:

Bahrain	Mapping and creating an ecosystem in Bahrain that support YLP participants in all aspects, based the role of YLP in the social innovation ecosystem in Bahrain. This can be done by having a database of mentors, facilitators, speakers, funders, etc., that the YLP team can tap into to support the different stages of the programme and beyond.
Djibouti	Reinforce and build on training delivered online this year in a face-to-face modality. Emphasize the participation of people with disabilities, refugees, and other vulnerable groups of people.
Egypt	Create national mechanisms to support youth wanting to implement their social innovations Training programme with more focus on real-life and business skills
Jordan	YLP7 can focus more on creating a communication channels for youth around the region with aim of initiating ideas that could be implemented on the regional levels. Establish a database to collect all the learning material and develop a unified curriculum that is related to the general capacity building for youth. Support youth to grow and sustain their projects post the Regional Forum, by creating something like incubator to connect youth with partners and donors.
Lebanon	Organize frequent campaigns on YLP success stories in coordination with UNDP Lebanon communication team. Reaching out to youth in rural areas and encouraging them to apply for the Youth Leadership Programme 7th edition. Engage youth alumni with UNDP Lebanon Projects and programmes and emphasize the different portfolios in the Country Office to include youth in their agendas.
Morocco	Equip the delegates with the needed knowledge and skills to use digital platforms smoothly. Develop a common structure for YLP programming in the different countries and leave empty spaces for Country Offices creativity.
Palestine	Delegates should engage with Universities in particular, as well as vocational training centres, to further promote YLP and its pillars on campuses throughout the Arab world would provide incentive to motivating a new breed of changemakers in the region.
Somalia	Innovation Boot Camps to be held face-to-face whenever possible, while abiding and following COVID-19 prevention and control measures and procedures.
Syria	Starting the YLP7 with Sign Language training course that aims to equip YLP team with 5 Sign Language interpreters who can serve in delivering the activities to more beneficiaries of the deaf community. YLP Syria are aiming to run a hybrid set of (physical/virtual) activities and reach more persons with disabilities.
Tunisia	Offer additional internal training and induction to familiarise youth delegated with the UN system Build in more communication between the youth delegates to build a strong relationship for more effective work

7. Conclusion

The partnership between Arab Youth Center and UNDP Regional Youth Team has delivered a highly successful pilot of the Youth Development Delegates programme in the Arab region. The work of 11 Youth Delegates has resulted in many on-the-ground achievements, highlighting the importance of youth inclusion and mainstreaming of youth through UNDP programming both on national and regional levels.

Despite the severe impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on the overall delivery of the programme in 2020, the youth delegates have displayed high levels of resilience, adaptability, and innovative thinking, not only contributing to the pandemic response and recover efforts but also working towards a greater social impact.

Now that the foundations have been laid, another year of the YDD programme will help the Youth Delegates to solidify and utilize the new skill sets and knowledge acquired during the pilot to work towards enabling the young men and women from the region to become active members of their societies.

مركز
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العربي
ARAB YOUTH CENTER



مبعوثي الشباب للتنمية
في المنطقة العربية
Youth Development Delegates in the Arab Region

Annex: Photo gallery



YLP takeovers 2 17W

MEET OUR TEAM
نعرفو على فريقنا

CHAFIKA AFFAQ
DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE ANALYST

WALID MACHROUH
YOUTH PROJECTS ASSOCIATE

SANA ELOUAZI
INFORMATION & KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT OFFICER

HOUDA BOUKBA
DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE ASSISTANT

JHIYUN HWANG
FORMER INNOVATION & YOUTH EMPOWERMENT ASSISTANT

Send message

MSC

YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME UNDP

We supported our Youth by organizing

Motivational Talks with

Micheal Haddad
UNDP Regional Goodwill Ambassador for Climate Action

Ms. Sarah Poole
Regional Director a.i. for Arab States

Mental Health support session

YLPers Let's talk
with Rouba Matta, Stress Counselor

تجربة برنامج القيادات الشابة ٦
YLP6 Experience

الجلسة الافتتاحية لبرنامج القيادات الشابة ٦
YLP6 Opening Session

١٦ من يوليو
16th of July

@undpbahrain @mysbhr

Annex: Photo gallery



Annex: Photo gallery



@CTID_DJIBOUTI
#GOODPLANETAFFRICA

