

Youth
can!



YouthCan!

Facts and
Figures 2021

Partnering for opportunities
that work



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES

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Foreword

Sneha Bhuyan, 21 years old

YouthCan! participant from India and Youth Advisory Board member

The lack of education and training among young people means that for many, the only chances of work are in unstable or low-income jobs, which rarely pay enough to enable them to escape intergenerational cycles of poverty they are trapped in. YouthCan! provides a platform for skills training, which increases our chances of getting a job."

I decided to join YouthCan! 2 years ago, because I always wanted a mentor to guide me in my professional life, and now I am part of different activities. Through my mentorship, I learned effective business communication, how to look professional in an interview, and how to lead a good work life, but my personal favourite was how to deal with rejection. I used to overthink it and often felt ashamed to talk about it. My mentor then said, "rejection means you still have something to learn". Mentorship gave me courage. As a result, I applied for an internship programme and got selected.

In 2021, I applied to be part of the Youth Advisory Board, to represent young people in YouthCan!. It is important that young people contribute to the improvement of YouthCan! because all these activities are happening for us, and we know exactly what we want to learn.

Looking back to my contribution as a Youth Advisory Board member in 2021, what makes me most proud is having a platform where I can speak for thousands of young people who can't raise their voice or don't know who to connect with. One event where I got the chance to do that was the NetHope Global Summit together with the DHL Sustainability Expert, where I talked about internet access and the various things young people need for connecting virtually.



"I can see myself growing every single day. And we too should set examples for our next generation."

My wish for the future of YouthCan! would be to increase job opportunities, as well as activities around career development, financial management, entrepreneurship, and how to lead a happy life. I wish more and more young people would join and have a platform to raise their own voice and concerns. Also, YouthCan! should offer more counselling related to mental health in every country, especially for young people leaving care, because that is very important to survive in the outside world.

Through YouthCan! and my involvement as a Youth Advisory Board member, I gained leadership qualities, became more responsible and learned about team spirit and time management.

I can see myself growing every single day. And we too should set examples for our next generation who are watching us grow.

Roger Aoun

YouthCan! Volunteer, Patient Engagement & Advocacy Manager, Johnson&Johnson Lebanon

My journey with YouthCan! started 2 years ago in Lebanon. I joined the programme because youth are the future of our society and I grabbed the opportunity to contribute to their socioeconomic well-being with both hands. Even though we – as mentors – have a professional career, we should never forget that we all have been young, and that this was a period with many unanswered questions. This specific memory motivated and triggered me to become a mentor.

In the past two years, I had the honour to work with several young people and with the local and regional colleagues from SOS Children's Villages. There is great professionalism within the team and a clear keenness to always evolve, test and push the boundaries.

Due to the pandemic, I witnessed the shift from a face-to-face mentoring programme to a virtual one and I saw the rise of the fully virtual YouthLinks Community. I took part in the testing of a new cross-border mentoring pilot, which was a nice opportunity for us (future mentors) to exchange experiences, provide feedback and even take part in the co-creation of the concept itself.

The cross-border mentoring has been a great experience, because this is where I met with my mentee, Paballo from South Africa. I was lucky to have a mentee like him, keen to learn new skills, full of energy and positivity. It was amazing how he joyfully interacted during the sessions. One key learning I will take with me is to always remain optimistic and to believe in the future generation.

My latest participation in YouthCan! was reviewing and testing the contents of the new eLearning



"I joined the programme because youth are the future of our society and I grabbed the opportunity to contribute to their socioeconomic well-being with both hands."

course for volunteers. I believe this will be a valuable guiding tool, preparing the volunteers to be on top of what is asked of them and thus make the best out of their mentoring sessions.

Through YouthCan!, my company gave me the opportunity to improve young people's chances of becoming healthy and independent adults, but this experience really enriched me as a person as well. I learned many new skills, to be more empathetic and understanding and to always convey optimism. I would – without hesitation – recommend other employees to join YouthCan!, because it gives you the chance to inspire, but most of all, to be inspired by the youth!

2021 in a nutshell

About YouthCan!

Young people who lack adequate parental care often need a helping hand to successfully transition from school to decent work and independent life –that's where the YouthCan! global partnership comes in.

In a joint effort between SOS Children's Villages and private sector partners, employees are mobilised to share their time, skills, expertise, and own career stories, both online and face-to-face, with young people around the world. These corporate volunteers support young people during their first work experience as well as offer employability training and mentorship. Through one-to-one and group trainings and mentorship, employees and young people can connect either in-person or through the YouthLinks Community, our new digital platform that can overcome geographical barriers and facilitate worldwide collaborative learning.

Growing stronger, together

In 2020 and 2021, young people faced the unprecedented consequences of COVID-19 on their lives. The second year of the pandemic remained a challenge, as **young people around the world continued to experience a worsening youth employment situation and a decrease in their independence**¹. These difficult and complex circumstances continue to risk a “lock-down generation” where restrictions on education, training, and access to the labour market, past and present, increase barriers to work in the future.² This dire situation demonstrates **the increasing need for interventions that bridge the gaps vulnerable young people need to overcome when entering the job market.**

The power of YouthCan! is embodied in the **relationships created between volunteers and young people**, relationships that over the past years had to **leverage on technology** to continue across distance and throughout lockdowns. In 2021, **YouthCan! celebrated its fifth year** and with that milestone, our co-developed strategy was focused on **improving programme quality**. In practice, this meant **digital evolving into an integral part of the programme and more young people being reached in countries where YouthCan! is already established**. In particular, digitalization unlocked access for a greater number of young people in rural areas beyond the cities where corporate partners are often based. As a result, more than double the number of young people received practical support, training, or mentorship in YouthCan! compared to the previous year³: 14,485 participants from 41 countries were supported on their journey to decent work⁴.

Strategic priorities 2024



Reach 20,000 young people safely by leveraging digitalization



Nurture a multi-stakeholder network that contributes to programme sustainability.



Strengthen programme quality through:

- ★ Involvement of youth at all levels of YouthCan!
- ★ Improved preparation for young people and volunteers
- ★ Addressing the greatest needs for entrepreneurship and work experience

Importantly, **YouthCan! is shaped with and for young people** : we work with them and listen to their feedback, adapting the programme accordingly. For example, in 2020, **young people asked for more entrepreneurship training, which we piloted in 18 countries in 2021**. To further strengthen the spirit of co-creation, **in 2021 the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) was launched**, which established a group of **10 young people to advise on the programme** at both a global and local level. During their first year, the young people have taken a role in the development of the new YouthLinks digital platform and mentoring activities.

Partnerships leverage the strengths of all parties to deliver the best outcome; for YouthCan! that means **giving young people access to a wealth of knowledge**, and especially the **experiences of our volunteers**. In 2021, we were joined by more **partners and volunteers**, and we particularly welcomed more local partnerships, embodying our principle of local ownership. **Locally led programmes enable each country to adapt activities to the needs of local young people**, through national and international collaborations with a diverse range of companies, institutions, and NGOs. Importantly, local volunteers offer young people positive role models with relevant knowledge and experience to where they are.

YouthCan! Colombia



Colombia was one of the first countries to join YouthCan! in 2017. Fast-forward 5-years and we have an enhanced programme with strong national partnerships nurturing qualitative growth of the programme. Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (ICBF) is one of those partners - a governmental institute, affiliated with the Colombian child protection system. Seeing eye-to-eye on addressing the employability needs of vulnerable young people, SOS Children's Villages Colombia joined the nation-wide Sacúdete programme, providing employability activities through YouthCan!.

During 2021, the initiative helped young people build digital, social and leadership skills. In total, 3,596 young people in 4 locations took part in small group, face-to-face activities. They learned how to interact with technology, build networks, and be positive and empathetic leaders. The workshops also included a mentoring component to encourage development of an entrepreneurial mindset.

Notably, this initiative reached more young people from a wider community, meaning that vulnerable young people who were not already part of an SOS Children's Villages care programme, were encouraged to take part. This demonstrates how YouthCan! is leading the way in making quality programmes more accessible for all young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

1 International Labor Organization, World Employment and Social Outlook (2022) https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_834081.pdf
 2 Vinicius Pinheiro, The lockdown generation: Disarming the time bomb (August 2021) https://www.ilo.org/caribbean/newsroom/WCMS_816641/lang--en/index.htm
 3 Out of the 42 countries part of YouthCan! in 2021, activities took place in 41 countries
 4 <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal8>

Leveraging change for young people

Looking to the future

The second year of the pandemic exemplified the **vulnerability of young people** around the world as they continued to face **unemployment, income loss and fewer workplace opportunities**^{5 6 7}. The long-term consequences of education and training programme interruptions of COVID-19 risk creating a **“lock-down generation”**, who may be considered less competitive in the labour market and struggle to catch up with the rise in demand for digital skills⁸. **In particular, young people without adequate parental care, or recent care leavers, are disproportionately disadvantaged** as they shoulder additional burdens to become economically independent earlier than their peers. In addition, they often also **miss support, guidance, and resources for gaining their first work experiences placements**^{9 10}. Uniting partners around the world, **YouthCan! bridges the gap between young people and their employment by facilitating access to relevant mentorship, training, and practice**, so they may face the new realities of labour markets.

However, the world of work is changing, and youth employment and employability initiatives need to adapt accordingly. Firstly, **traditional career paths are becoming increasingly uncertain**. Considering this, it is unsurprising that approximately **half of young people aspire to run their own business** in the future¹¹. But, with lower levels of employment experience, business skills, and training, as well as smaller professional networks, **young people face a growing youth entrepreneurship gap**. Through partners, **YouthCan! increases access to comprehensive entrepreneurship training and support** for young people, as well as **creates space for them to build professional networks and establish meaningful relationships**, that they can lean on as they seek to establish their own businesses.

A second way that the world is changing is through a **heavy focus on our digital interactions**. Bolstered in the context of COVID-19, the ICT industry has grown rapidly, as has the demand for digital skills. Over the next decade, it is likely that **50% of jobs will change due to automation, with 9 out of 10 jobs requiring relevant digital skills**¹². Despite a soaring demand for this expertise in the job market, job-readiness among young people is poor, with **low-skilled and vulnerable young people urgently needing support to upskill in relevant fields**. Through our new digital platform, the **YouthLinks Community, young people get first-hand experience in practicing their digital skills**. To further respond to this rising demand, YouthCan! aims to cultivate more partnerships with tech-focused companies and training partners.

5 International Labor Organization, Youth Employment in Times of COVID (2021), [wcms_823751.pdf \(ilo.org\)](#)

6 CIPD, COVID-19 and the Youth Labour Market (December 2020), [COVID-19 and the youth labour market | COID \(cipd.co.uk\)](#)

7 International Labor Organization, Youth employment and COVID-19: Some lessons from the crisis (October 2021), [Employment Seminar Series: Youth employment and COVID-19: Some lessons from the crisis \(ilo.org\)](#)

8 International Labor Organization, World Employment and Social Outlook (2022) https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_834081.pdf

9 SOS Children's Villages International, World Youth Skills Day (July 2020), [World Youth Skills Day 2020 - SOS Children's Villages International \(sos-childrensvillages.org\)](#)

10 [COVID-19 and the SDGs | UNDP](#)

11 [How business and education can help Gen Z reframe the future | EY - Global](#)

12 [Jobs will be very different in 10 years. Here's how to prepare | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](#)

Thirdly, **employees now expect more from their employment**; they want fulfilment, pride, meaning, connectedness, and to give back^{13 14}.

The perception of today's corporate world, and of society, is that employers need to consider their organization's impact on society, the public and the environment. **Volunteering among employees increases their engagement in the workplace, retaining staff, increasing work satisfaction, and improving performance**^{15 16}. When it comes to supporting young people as they transition into the world of work, an important opportunity lies in initiatives like YouthCan! that **prioritize cooperation with industry partners, enabling both jobseekers and employers to benefit from each other**, in both the short- and long-term.

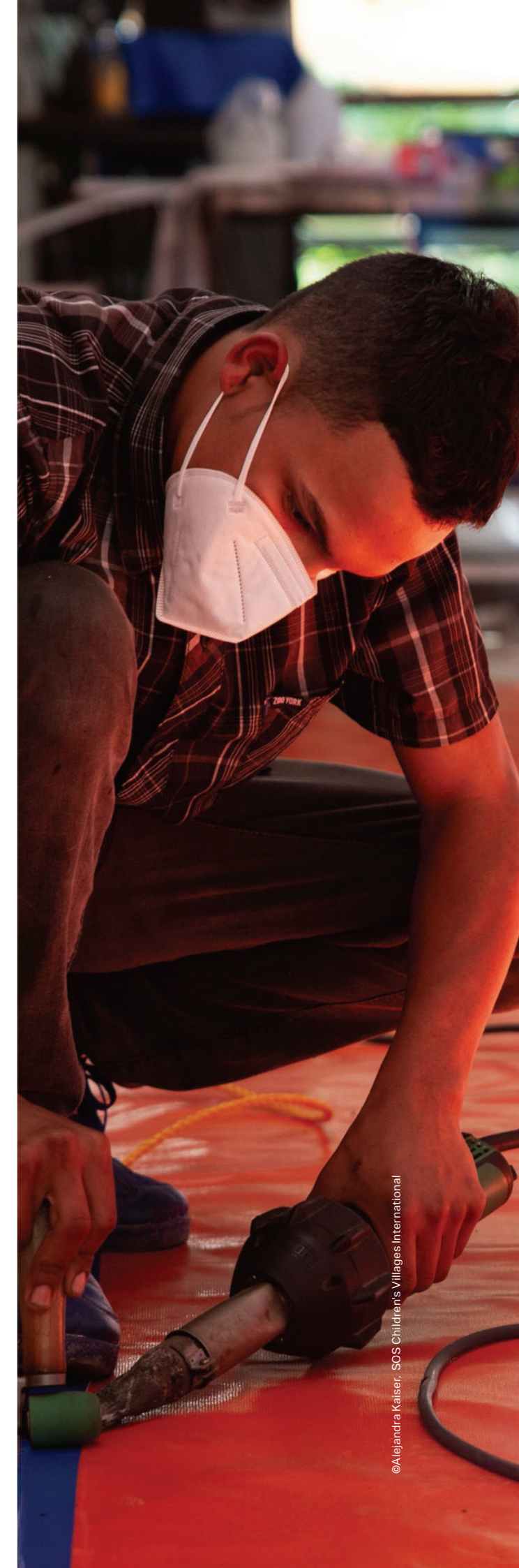
As the impacts of COVID-19 continue to highlight the vulnerability of young people, and especially those who lack adequate parental care, **YouthCan! is increasingly important in helping them overcome barriers to employment on their path to self-reliance**.

13 [7 business benefits of employee volunteering - Sage Advice United Kingdom](#)

14 [Frontiers | Corporate Volunteering: Relationship to Job Resources and Work Engagement | Psychology \(frontiersin.org\)](#)

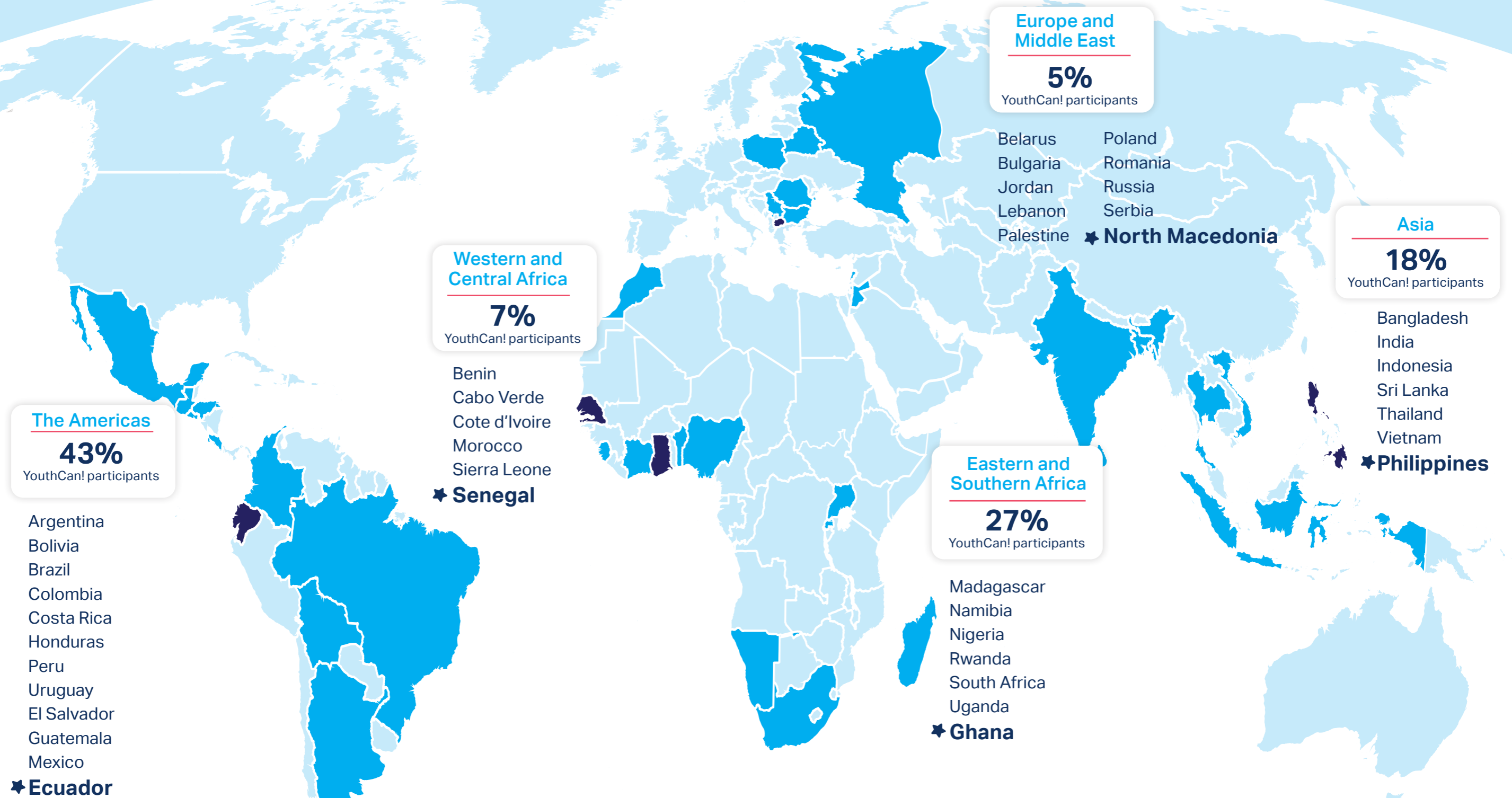
15 Role of Self-efficacy, Optimism and Job Engagement in Positive Change: Evidence from the Middle East, Raina Chhajer, Elizabeth L. Rose, and Thomas Joseph, 2018

16 (Schaufeli 2013; Bakker, 2008) (Harter et al., 2013), (Kim et al., 2017), (Karanika-Murray et al., 2014)



Global reach: a worldwide network and a local response

14485 *young people*
and 1846 *volunteers*
shaped YouthCan! in 42 countries



Please note: Countries in dark blue joined YouthCan! programme in 2021.

♥ At the heart: young people

Gender



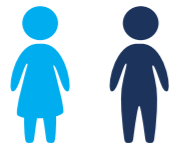
Average age range



Family situation



1 in 2 of all participants are lacking parental care and currently live in SOS Children's Villages alternative care programmes



1 in 2 of all participants are from vulnerable families



1 in 3 of these families is also supported through SOS Children's Villages family strengthening programmes

Education



15% completed university education



17% completed post-secondary technical training



35% completed secondary education



26% completed primary education

... and volunteers

Gender



Origin

4 in 10 came from the Americas



3 in 10 came from Africa

2 in 10 came from Europe and Middle East



1 in 10 came from Asia

Employer

5 in 10 are employees of local corporate partners

4 in 10 are employees of global partners

1 in 10 are from local support partners (ie. other NGOs or government institution)

“ I really liked the project, there was a lot of useful content from which a lot could be learned. I am also very pleased with the choice of volunteers, who were extremely dedicated, and it was seen that they have a strong desire and will to pass on their knowledge and skills. ”

- female, YouthCan! Participant, Serbia (22-24 years old)

YouthCan! goes digital

“ In our time, digitization is almost inevitable; young people must be trained to better master technologies (hardware and software), on how to use computers correctly, and how to use existing software to communicate better. ”

- male, volunteer from DHL Madagascar

From challenges to opportunities

As a result of COVID-19-related social distancing measures, globally, YouthCan! quickly adapted from a predominantly face-to-face programme to delivering a substantial increase in online activities in 2020. While this was a significant upheaval for many young people, moving to digital allowed many more to take part in the programme¹⁷.

This year **digital evolved from a crisis response to the pandemic into an integral part of the programme, providing scalability** that makes YouthCan! more accessible to young people around the world. Out of the total number of activities in 2021, 44% of activities were fully online, with an additional 10% conducted in hybrid or partially virtual setting. This means that **more than 50% of all activities included a virtual component.**

While the COVID-19 situation stabilized (albeit in waves) around the world, we collectively adjusted to the new normal, with young people able to engage in some face-to-face activities again. In 2021, **46% of activities were delivered in-person**, compared to 37% in 2020, offering more young people the opportunity to learn essential interpersonal skills and gain hands-on experience.

17. SOS Children's Villages International, YouthCan! Facts and Figures Report (2021). <https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/getmedia/1c9b89b2-e643-42ab-8a43-1a7632f5e8a3/SOSCV-YouthCan-Facts-and-Figures-2020-LR.pdf>

A new digital platform

Taking all that we learnt from 2020, **digital was solidified as a central initiative of YouthCan!** Working with software partner Graduway, we have developed an online platform that meets the needs of the growing digital pillar of YouthCan!

The **YouthLinks Community platform** professionalizes our virtual programmes and has already been **piloted in 8 countries across all regions** - showing very positive results. Leveraging **automated processes**, the platform facilitates the **management of communities and mentoring programmes**, as well as **promotes learning and development opportunities** in a digital space.

Importantly, the **YouthLinks Community overcomes geographical barriers within countries, as well as between them**. An evaluation of cross-border mentorship experiences of young people between 2018-2021 found them to be overwhelmingly positive, with a greater than **80% rate of satisfaction**. With the new platform, we take **cross-border engagement opportunities** to a next stage, scaling the availability of global opportunities while improving and automating processes, as well as ICT infrastructure in the engaged countries. As a result, where some countries lack volunteers and others have an abundance, cross-border interventions can overcome this imbalance, enabling global online mentoring opportunities, and creating engagement possibilities for partners and volunteers in countries where YouthCan! might not yet have a presence.

Although **national connectivity infrastructure remains a challenge** in some countries, the YouthLinks Community platform means that YouthCan! is able to **expand support and become a powerful tool in reaching more young people wherever they are**.

Online activities



42% of participants participated in online activities

The number of young people who took part in online activities **increased by 23% compared to 2020** due to the digital offer



95% volunteers felt well prepared and supported in fulfilling their role as a virtual mentor

46% of the activities were face to face



44% of the activities were held online

10% of the activities were blended (online and in person)

Overcoming Geographical Limitations



SOS Children's Villages Philippines faces unique challenges as the country consists of more than 7,600 islands, with eight SOS Children's Villages programme locations across the territory. By strengthening the digital component of YouthCan! we are able to address the geographical difficulties in reaching young people and provide more equal access to training, mentoring and practice opportunities

In 2021, SOS Children's Villages Philippines was one of the countries piloting the YouthLinks Community platform. Quickly, young people from all eight programme locations across the country were participating in online activities with volunteers connecting from across the Philippines. Going online, young people that would normally not have been reached due to geographical distance to volunteers and country geography, could get access to opportunities.

Further, young people from the community, who are part of SOS Children's Villages Family Strengthening programmes, were able to access and join sessions remotely: "Moving forward, we aim to scale up our efforts in communities by ensuring that digitalization initiatives are extended to our target groups there", says Dianne Ricafranca, coordinating digital YouthCan! activities in the country.

For 2022, online activities with multiple partners, including, 3M, Allianz, FactSet, PayPal, Standard Chartered and UPS are already in the pipeline.

“ I have seen youth participation during the development of YouthLinks 2.0 platform. Young people were part of developing this platform by testing it and providing feedback to the creators ”

– Paballo Mailula, Youth Advisory Board Member, 21 years old, South Africa

Strength in diversity:

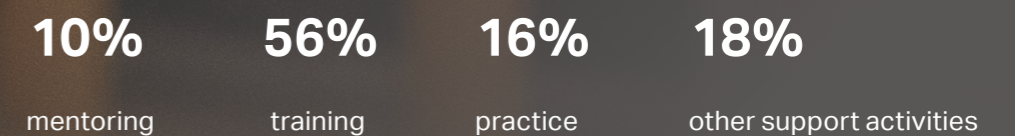
mentoring, training, and practice

Shaping YouthCan! with young people, for young people

Young people around the world, grow up with different experiences and develop different strengths; as such, they each have their own **unique needs**. This is why YouthCan! takes on board the **feedback of young people and offers all participants a diverse range of activities**. In addition, young people can access **locally adapted programmes** that bring together the crucial elements they need to progress towards employment and self-reliance: **mentorship** that builds self-confidence and a professional network; **life and technical skills training** that develops specific skills and abilities; and **first work experiences** that provides practical know-how.

In 2021, a total of **486 activities** took place, 30% more than 2020. To address the needs of young people, **more entrepreneurship and practice opportunities** were provided, empowering them with knowledge and experience, as well as self-confidence and a chance to build a professional network. Further, young people **benefited from twice the number of interactions**, with an average of 31 interactions per participant - demonstrating that young people had more opportunities to engage with volunteers and build meaningful relationships.

Activity types split in YouthCan! 2021



Youth Advisory Board



The Youth Advisory Board (YAB) is a group of 10 young people from 5 different countries¹⁸, renewing every two years. They advocate for stronger and equal youth participation in the development of YouthCan! and have shaped a more meaningful programme.

Their input on how to best prepare young people and volunteers for their participation in YouthCan! resulted in clear communications on accountability on both sides of a mentoring relationship as well as safeguarding in the digital space. In addition, the group suggested that the preparation process should be more interactive. We have subsequently worked on this together, and the resulting materials for 2022 will therefore carry the YAB trademark.

YAB members, with corporate volunteers, also piloted cross-border mentorship through the YouthLinks Community platform, and shared feedback for improvement. Finally, the group were involved in re-thinking how practice activities could take place virtually, as online job-shadowing: "During my participation, I was given an opportunity to have a say, and everything was taken into consideration and heard" says Paballo, South Africa.

Importantly, the benefits of youth participation work both ways. These young people have developed skills and self-confidence: "we know more about empowerment, leadership, problem solving and active listening" says Moises, Peru.

¹⁸ India, Morocco, Palestine, Peru, South Africa

Mentoring

While the world attempted to adjust to a "new normal", there was a partial return of face-to-face interactions with large parts still taking place virtually. In 2021, **one-to-one or group mentoring represented 10% of all YouthCan! activities** offered, with **1,638 young people receiving guidance and support from a mentor.**



Overcoming borders through virtual mentoring

In October 2021, young people from seven different countries piloted the new mentoring functionalities and content materials on the new YouthLinks Community platform, together with international mentors from Deutsche Post DHL Group, Johnson & Johnson, Siegwark and TK Elevator – overall connecting 10 different countries.



The results show that 100% of participants would recommend the programme, with an average rating of 4.4 out of 5 stars. In addition, the mentoring materials were rated with 4.6 out of 5 stars, with all mentors agreeing that the resources are clear and sufficient. "Knowledge shared during this mentoring program has exposed us to vital information and experience to help adapt to different environments and situations.", says one of the mentees. One of the mentors adds: "It was a great way to not only teach someone else and help them prosper, but also a good chance to learn more about myself."

Training

Structured educational **training constituted 56% of all YouthCan! activities** delivered in 2021. Professional skills training, in particular, was increased by over 200% this year. These experiences allow young people to develop and strengthen skills crucial to navigating the path to employment as well as the workplace.

In addition, many young people in YouthCan! requested more training in entrepreneurship. In response, we put a focus on this subject: starting from 2021, 18 countries initiated diverse pilot programmes on this topic. As a result, the amount of **entrepreneurship training offered in 2021 doubled** compared to 2020.



Entrepreneurship in Belarus

Young entrepreneurs in Belarus are faced with an increased demand to digitalize their businesses, but often lack the necessary IT skills. YouthCan! Belarus stepped in and, with their partner, Business Incubator, and other experts, provided training and mentorship on business idea development, business registration, online business promotion and marketing strategies. In total 26 young entrepreneurs were supported in 2021.



YouthCan! Belarus also offered support to a group of 15 young entrepreneurs, navigating a difficult economic crisis in Belarus. They met in peer support groups, to motivate each other and share coping mechanisms, and at networking events with business experts and successful entrepreneurs. "The training was an excellent knowledge base for creating and maintaining a business. We were also given tasks, and after completing them we received high-quality feedback. We were helped individually to resolve all emerging issues and always received support when it seemed that we did not understand something," says Natalia, 19 years old.

Practice

Settling into the new normal allowed for **78 activities that support young people to gain work experience**, making up **16% of all YouthCan! activities**. Alongside a significant increase in participants, this relative rise in practice activities goes hand-in-hand with the greater number of local partnerships and volunteers, confirming the importance of our strategic focus on expanding in-country activities and building a local network of partners.



© Sébastien Taylor, SOS Children's Villages Côte d'Ivoire

"My First Job" programme by DHL in the Americas

Getting exposure to one's first professional work experience remains one of the central challenges for young people participating in YouthCan! Our long-standing corporate partner, DHL, proactively decided to take up the challenge with their Mi Primer Empleo (My First Job) initiative.

Young people participating in "My First Job" receive a one-year, full time contract with DHL, during which they go through a standard onboarding, mentoring and evaluation. Setting a strong focus on training, participants are encouraged to develop technical and life skills, and participate in English

lessons – closely accompanied by a mentor already working for DHL. The final goal: empowering young people to become "superstars of logistics" and enabling them to remain within the company with a permanent contract.



© Deutsche Post DHL Group

Currently, the programme is being piloted by 19 young people in 8 countries in Latin America. By the end of the year, the aim is to enrol 25 young people across 10 countries. First successes are already visible: Felipe, a participant from Chile, has already been hired at DHL in the country, while Marcelo from Uruguay has been nominated as the employee of the quarter.



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES



A game-changer in young people's lives

Before the pandemic, young people were already facing a worsening youth employment trend. Then, **the impacts of COVID-19 resulted in a decrease in self-reliance among young people** in 2021. In this context, **YouthCan! shows strong positive results for young people**, proving to be a highly relevant intervention in the battle to give young people a strong start in their careers.

Strong results for participants and partners

One of the programme participants that was able to secure a job after the programme is 24-year-old Mahendra, who grew up in a SOS Children's Village in Sri Lanka and joined YouthCan! in 2021. Mahendra participated in several trainings, including painter training from our global partner AkzoNobel. He is now a Technical Sales Executive at AkzoNobel Sri Lanka and is sharing his knowledge with professional painters and customers. "I've learned many skills during the training, such as professional painting skills, but also other skills like how to face an interview, how to run a business and how to manage time efficiently. Thanks to YouthCan! and AkzoNobel I've been able to achieve so many goals in my life and I've already enrolled myself in professional qualifications to further broaden my knowledge."

YouthCan! works

Results for young people

As a consequence of COVID-19, young people in YouthCan! report **a slight decrease in both their motivation and confidence in their ability to find work** (compared to 74% confidence and 78% motivation in 2020). Despite these challenges, there is, in fact, a slight increase in the number of **participants who are already employed**, 24% compared to 22% in 2020, with 74% of young workers agreeing that YouthCan! helped them in finding their job.

Building on the successes of 2020, **young people also feel that the programme was helpful in developing professional skills**. However, and perhaps more importantly, 82% felt that being in **the programme helped them better cope with the impacts of the pandemic**.

Young people feel inspired



feel **more positive** about their future and have a plan for the next steps in their life



are more confident in their ability to find a job



feel more motivated to find a job

Young people develop skills for employment



say they have gained necessary skills to succeed in life



think YouthCan! helped them to develop professional skills

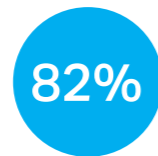


of young people who participated in YouthCan! in 2021 already got a job

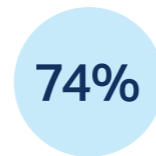
YouthCan! is a positive influence



of participants would take part in YouthCan! again



agree that YouthCan! helped them to cope during the coronavirus pandemic



agree that YouthCan! supported them to find work

Results for volunteers

Year-on-year, the YouthCan! programme has improved, preparing, engaging, and retaining more volunteers willing to support young people, with **95% feeling they were well prepared and supported in fulfilling their role as a virtual mentor**.

Proving their commitment, in 2021, 75% of volunteers dedicated multiple days to interact with young people. In addition, volunteers report that they would like to participate in YouthCan! again and would recommend it to their colleagues (97%). When asked why, 88% of volunteers report that YouthCan! **improves their interactions and collaboration at work**. In addition, 94% say they **gained new skills relevant to their daily work**, and report **improved job satisfaction**.

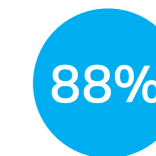
Volunteering strengthens relevant skills



report improved relevant skills (eg. presenting; teamwork; leadership and communication)



report using the skills gained in their daily work

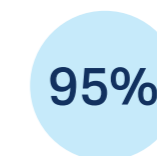


report increased interaction and collaboration at work

Volunteering increases satisfaction and commitment



report improved job satisfaction



feel prouder to work for their companies and see them as a socially responsible brand



feel more committed to their employer

Social Responsibility



report an **increased level of awareness** towards the challenges faced by the participants



would like to **participate again in the future** and would recommend it to other colleagues

“ YouthCan was a very beneficial project for me because it allowed me to obtain my first professional internship. I wish that the project continues with many more partners. ”

- male, YouthCan! Participant, Cote d'Ivoire, (22-24 years old) .

“ I strongly believe that volunteering is a good practice to share knowledge and what we have experienced in life. This small action can have a huge impact on someone else's life that hasn't had the same opportunities we have had. So, if I'm able to positively change the life of at least one young person, it makes me feel very happy and fulfilled ”

-Giulia Alves Garcia, TK Elevator

The power of partnerships

This year, YouthCan! demonstrated how it is leading the way in delivering a globally supported yet locally led youth employability support programme, that is guided by the needs and voices of young people. We work with each partner to find unique ways in which they can contribute to the YouthCan! initiative, from providing resources and sharing knowledge to corporate volunteering, internships, or job shadowing opportunities.

In our fifth year, **YouthCan! was powered by 1,846 volunteers, representing 289 partnerships**, with our strategic focus on building in-country capacities. Overall, YouthCan! worked with 25% more partners this year, an increase largely driven by local organizations joining YouthCan!. These local partnerships are crucial to delivering SOS Children's Villages' key objective: **local ownership that allows programmes to be adapted to local needs**. This takes place through **collaborations with a variety of different companies, institutions, and other NGOs; each bringing their own expertise** to the table and **offering young people positive role models** with relevant knowledge and shared experiences to where young people are. Focusing on developing more local partnerships ensures the adaptability, resiliency, and sustainability of the programme, which are important goals YouthCan! solidified in the first 5 years of implementation.

“ Siegwirk has partnered with SOS Children's Villages for more than 10 years and our employees are proud of their company's social engagement-helping disadvantaged young people to better their lives, said Dr. Nikole Peters, Manager Corporate Communications & Corporate Social Responsibility for Siegwirk. As part of the YouthCan! initiative, our employees are volunteering their time and resources to mentor young people by passing on their knowledge while providing unique business perspectives. This better prepares them for entering the competitive job market. Siegwirk is proud to be a positive influence on the lives of many young people, while giving back to the communities where we operate around the world. ”

Internationally six global partners take an active role in shaping and supporting YouthCan!



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YouthCan! contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals:



Learn more about international corporate partnerships
www.sos-childrensvillages.org/our-international-corporate-partners



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