

Youth
Can!

YouthCan!

Facts and
Figures 2022

Partnering for opportunities
that work



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES

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Foreword

Paballo Mailula, 24 years old

**YouthCan! participant from
South Africa and Youth Advisory
Board member (2021-2022)**

I joined YouthCan! back in 2017, to learn new skills and further develop my confidence, so I can face the world with ease and trust that I can achieve anything. I also joined to learn from others, and with the hope that they will learn from me too.

Since then, I have been involved in quite a number of YouthCan! activities, I can't even remember how many! My first activity was about the corporate world, where we learned, among many other things, how to conduct ourselves in an interview. These workshops were facilitated by a corporate volunteer from DHL Group in Johannesburg. Another time, we got the chance to visit different companies in South Africa, such as DHL Group's divisions and warehouses, and General Electric (GE).

When I joined as a Youth Advisory Board member in 2021, I took part in the global online cross-border mentoring pilot, where I was mentored by Roger, a Johnson & Johnson volunteer.

Then I contributed to the development of the YouthCan! digital platform, YouthLinks Community, where we were testing and sharing what we like but also how the team should develop it further.

Above all, I was part of the YouthCan! entrepreneurship bootcamp pilot in South Africa in 2022, together with my Youth Advisory Board colleague, Emma. During this activity, we were researching entrepreneurship and young people's perceptions, as this is one of the topics that YouthCan! would like to integrate more, since young people ranked it high in the YouthCan! survey in 2021.



"YouthCan! has proven to me that with the right guidance and information, young people can reach the unthinkable."

Honestly, I learned many skills during my experience with the programme, like communication and interpersonal, teamwork, management, and leadership skills. Ever since I became part of it, I have experienced many positive changes in my life. I was able to get an opportunity to work as an assistant teacher for 2 years, all thanks to the skills I acquired through YouthCan!. After the entrepreneurship bootcamp in 2022, I was inspired to open tutoring classes for math and physics, together with two other partners. YouthCan! has proven to me that with the right guidance and information, young people can reach the unthinkable.

In the future, I wish for a better and stronger YouthCan!, with many more activities that show consideration for young people's needs. This will allow the programme to catch the attention of more young people who'd wish to be part of it, thus YouthCan! will also grow. Young people are enthusiastic and innovative, they just need to be given a chance to participate in decision making. Since YouthCan! is for youth, there's "nothing for us, without us!"

Ria Marfiana, YouthCan! Volunteer

**AkzoNobel Decorative
Paints Indonesia - Professional
Brand and Sustainability Manager**

Being a volunteer is one of my passions. Since the launch of YouthCan! in 2017 in Indonesia, I have been actively involved in mentoring and training activities in different cities across the country. Together with other AkzoNobel employees, we have been able to empower over 1,000 young people in Indonesia, by helping them develop their personal, professional and entrepreneurship skills.

The positive impact of the programme on young people's lives has kept me committed throughout the years. I have seen young people grow and finally get decent work and employment. Listening to them explain how the training and mentoring they received has influenced, motivated, and inspired their mindset really makes me proud and gives me the energy to keep going.

I also learned important life lessons from the young people I interacted with, such as to be resilient and to never give up. My volunteer experience has contributed significantly to my personal growth, fostering maturity, wisdom, gratitude, and patience within me. I developed new skills, especially around active listening. Through my interactions with the young people, I learned to listen more and better instead of talking, to stay positive while digging through the kind of obstacles they face, and to have interactive discussions to find winning solutions. Another skill I have acquired is the ability to serve as a motivator and source of inspiration. I strive to convince young people that they can be anything they want to be, encouraging them to dream big and reminding them that the sky is the limit.



"My volunteer experience has contributed significantly to my personal growth, fostering maturity, wisdom, gratitude, and patience within me."

Over the years, I have seen the YouthCan! programme improve through leveraging technology, which has helped to expand the programme's reach and ensure young people have continued access to training and mentoring, as well as personal and professional networks. This expansion has given young people more opportunities to spread their networks, not only locally but also globally.

I hope many more companies will join YouthCan! so we can accelerate, become bigger and faster, and have a positive impact on many more young people across the world who need and deserve it. In the next 10 to 20 years, these young people will become our leaders, and it is our responsibility to care for them and give them the opportunity to reach their full potential.



Executive summary

About YouthCan!

YouthCan! supports young people who have lost parental care or are at risk of losing it, on their journey to self-reliance.

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 programme 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 digital platform that can overcome geographical barriers and facilitate worldwide collaborative learning.

Learn, grow and build a brighter future

The polycrisis of 2022 meant people all over the world felt that it was a difficult year¹. Although still struggling to overcome the impacts of COVID-19 on education, training, and employment², young people were confronted with yet more challenges in light of further economic and labour market deterioration. **Young people from vulnerable backgrounds face further barriers**, which highlights the need for initiatives, like YouthCan!, that not only **address training gaps for young people entering the job market**, but also provide space for them to **develop strong trusted relationships that help build confidence in themselves** and others.

This year, with the support of **1,869 volunteers**, YouthCan! reached **14,253 young people in 47 countries** around the world. Listening and adapting to the needs of participants, YouthCan! continued to progress with **digitalization**, through the **YouthLinks Community**. As the world of work accelerates through a digital transformation, YouthLinks Community leveraged technology to overcome geographical constraints, launching in 32 of the 47 YouthCan! countries. This meant that YouthCan! reached a **more globally diverse group of participants** than the previous year. In addition, the platform delivered a **safe online space** and unlocked **access to mentorship and digital training** for more than **1,300 young people** across the globe, facilitating **hybrid training** and **supporting face-to-face activities**.

In 2022 we continued to receive **positive feedback** with most participants reporting that they're feeling **positive about their future** and **have a plan for their next steps in life (80%)**, and **over three quarters saying that they are now more motivated to find work (76%)**. In fact, more than a quarter of participants, and **over a third of 22-24-year-olds, have already done paid work**. While young participants benefit from the time, knowledge, skills, and encouragement of volunteers, so too do volunteers. **YouthCan! volunteers** report on the positive impacts that the programme has on their lives, **strengthening their skills**, and **increasing their job satisfaction**. Of our volunteers, **almost all say that they have gained new skills (96%)** through YouthCan! and have used those skills in their daily tasks, while **most report an increase in workplace interaction and collaboration (86%)**.

Youth unemployment is a global challenge that requires a collective effort to overcome. Our **unique partnerships** are established with a **mutual objective and a shared responsibility** to offer quality education and training opportunities for young people as they prepare to enter the job market. **Cooperation with and between our wide range of partners** - local and global companies, institutions, and NGOs - is essential to building synergies, where **each partner brings their own expertise** and works together to deliver a **programme that meets the needs of young people**, wherever they are. This locally led, globally supported approach, offers young people access to a wealth of knowledge and experience that is not only relevant to the rapidly changing world of work, but also to the local reality in which they live.



in 2022

14,253



young people

engaged, developing confidence, skills and networks

1,869



volunteers

sharing time, knowledge, skills, encouragement

47

countries with

32

unlocking access to digital mentorship and training through



overcoming geographical barriers for more more than

1,300

young people

80%



young people

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

96%



volunteers

use the skills they developed in their daily tasks

35%



young people

have done paid work since joining (22-24 old)

86%



volunteers

report increase in workplace interaction and collaboration

While 2022 showed considerable steps forward, there are still improvements to be made, in alignment with the 2021-2024 YouthCan! priority areas defined in consultation with our stakeholders:



1

Increase the number of YouthCan! participants

In particular engaging more young people from the communities where we operate



2

Ensure digitalization of the programme

Making full use of the power of technology, and doing so in a safe and protective way



3

Strengthen programme quality through youth participation

and increasing activities that young people request most (entrepreneurship and practical work experience)



4

Enhance the programme

with partnerships with stakeholders from different sectors.

1 Helliwell, J. F., Layard, R., Sachs, J. D., De Neve, J.-E., Aknin, L. B., & Wang, S. (Eds.). (2022). World Happiness Report 2022. New York: Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

2 International Labor Organization, Vinicius Pinheiro: The lockdown generation: Disarming the time bomb (2021)

Global reach: a worldwide network with a local response

14253 young people and
1869 volunteers shaped YouthCan!
in **47** countries

Europe and Middle East

9%
YouthCan!
participants

Belarus
Bulgaria
Jordan
Lebanon
North Macedonia
Palestine
Poland
Romania
Russia
Serbia
★ Azerbaijan

Asia

23%
YouthCan!
participants

Bangladesh
India
Indonesia
Philippines
Sri Lanka
Thailand
Vietnam

Western and Central Africa

14%
YouthCan!
participants

Benin
Cabo Verde
Cote d'Ivoire
Morocco
Senegal
Sierra Leone
★ Burkina Faso

Eastern and Southern Africa

29%
YouthCan!
participants

Ghana
Madagascar
Namibia
Nigeria
Rwanda
South Africa
Tanzania
Uganda
★ Kenya

Latin America and the Caribbean

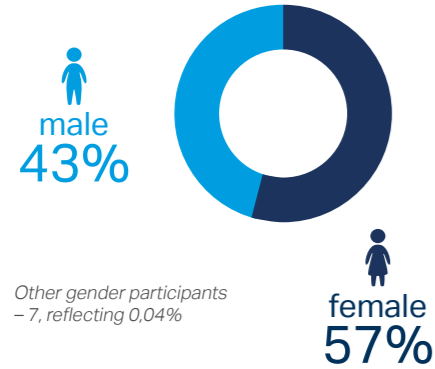
25%
YouthCan!
participants

Argentina
Bolivia
Brazil
Colombia
Costa Rica
Ecuador
Honduras
Peru
Uruguay
El Salvador
Guatemala
Mexico
★ Dominican Republic

Please note: Countries in dark blue joined YouthCan! programme in 2022.

♥ At the heart: young people...

Gender



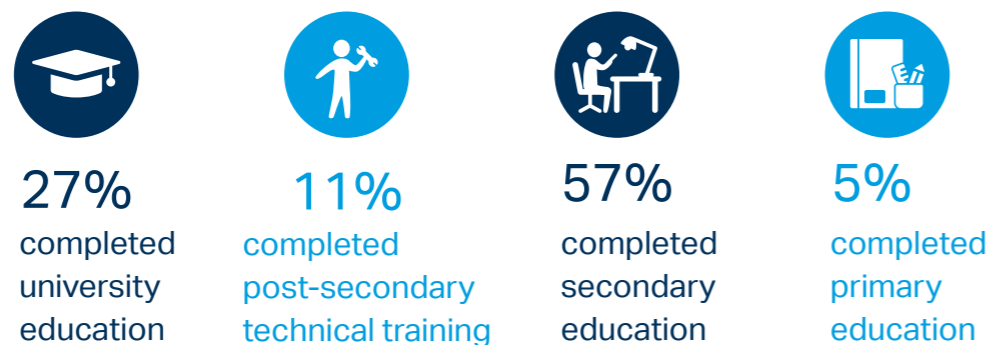
Family situation



Average age range*



Education*

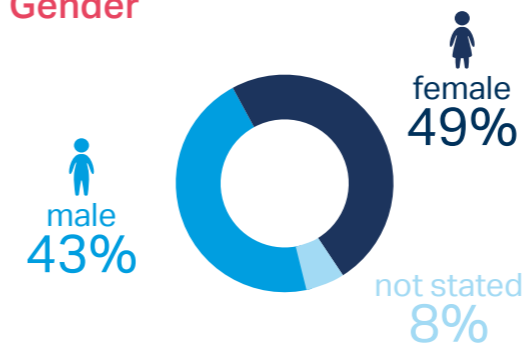


“ This experience was fantastic and shaped me in a way that I did not expect, it gave me the motivation and instruction that I needed in the job market. ”

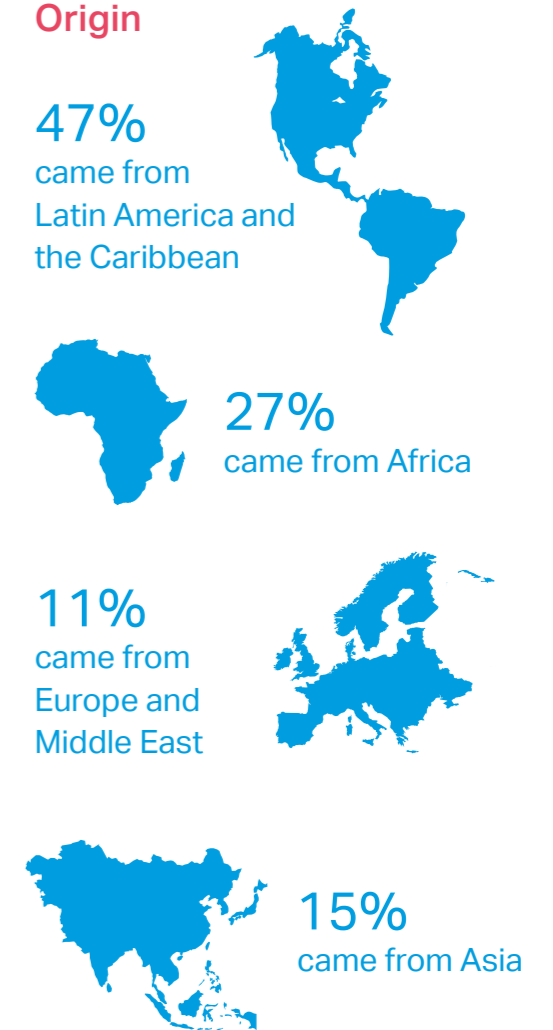
- YouthCan! participant, Brazil

... and volunteers

Gender*



Origin



Employer



“ I am proud to support the YouthCan program as I recognize how important it is to shape young minds. In the teaching sessions we organize, we emphasize the significance of sharing our experiences and insights on different topics such as public speaking, time management, and career development. I'm happy to have contributed to the success of the youth in the program, and I strongly believe that investing in their potential today will pave the way for a brighter future for them. ”

- YouthCan! volunteer, FactSet

* Data from youth survey conducted in 2022, in which 3294 young people from 42 countries provided their feedback

* Data from volunteer survey conducted in 2022, in which 417 volunteers from 41 countries provided their feedback

Adapting to a changing world

As 2022 was rocked by numerous, near simultaneous shocks, young people became ever more vulnerable in the face of a global polycrisis³. Alongside the scars of COVID-19, we witnessed a significant **deterioration in global labour markets and a major deficit in decent work**^{4,5}, as well as a continued rise in informal (and insecure) work and working poverty⁶. Young people (aged 15-24) are now **three times more likely to face unemployment than adults** (aged 25+), and more than one in five were not in education, employment, or training (NEET)⁷. In addition, around two thirds of the global youth labour force lack relevant skills, restricting their access to the job market. Insecure work, inactivity and unemployment have **negative consequences for young people for years to come**. The intersectional impact for young people who are also care leavers or lack adequate parental care, means they face additional barriers and burdens on their journey to work and independence. Together with our partners, **YouthCan! breaks down these barriers** by empowering young people with a variety of **skills they need to access and be job creators in the labour markets of tomorrow**.

A digital revolution

With the world continuing to become more digital, there are significant impacts to both how and what work is done. In 2022, there was a dramatic shift towards hybrid and remote working, further contributing to the **growing need for digital skilling and upskilling** that is already being driven by a rapidly changing labour market, which will see at least one in ten jobs require up-to-date digital skills by the end of the decade⁸. Despite demand, **job-readiness among young people is low**; it is essential that they are equipped with more than basic computer literacy. Attaining **digital skills opens up a world of employment opportunities** across almost all economic sectors, as well as enabling young people to work online⁹. However, employers are facing a scarcity of talent through a mismatch of skills for available jobs¹⁰. Ensuring that young people are digitally equipped to fill these positions of tomorrow, **secures their employment future** and supports them on the path to success. The digitalisation of **YouthCan! has overcome geographical constraints** and enabled young people to **rise to the demands of the digital world**, building essential skills and networks.

Overcoming barriers to business

Over 45% of young people in OECD countries hold aspirations of entrepreneurship¹¹, however the impact of recent years has resulted in fewer people starting new businesses and many feeling that it is becoming more difficult to do so. Although **entrepreneurship is essential for job creation**, there is a trend of 'low growth' activity where new businesses are set up for individual survival, without the expectation of employing others, as a means to overcome a lack of income opportunities¹². In addition, **young people are increasingly attracted to socially conscious businesses**, with over 40% prioritising careers with positive societal and environmental impacts^{13,14}. As a result, those wishing to start a business, increasingly pursue social entrepreneurship¹⁵. However, **young people struggle to start their own businesses** and overcome current challenges when **education is failing to equip them with the relevant knowledge and skills**¹⁶. In addition, young people from vulnerable backgrounds face further barriers, missing out on crucial adult guidance and support networks¹⁷, lack self-confidence^{18,19} and are more fearful of taking risks, while those wishing to start their own business also struggle to access funding due to a lack of collateral^{20,21}. The inclusion of **entrepreneurship support is one of the most requested activities from YouthCan! participants** and continuing to strengthen this part of the programme is one of our strategic priorities.

More than a job

The accelerated digital transformation has prompted many to reconsider their employment. Reports in 2022 reflected on 'The Great Resignation', which has been followed by 'quiet quitting' as **employees re-evaluated their relationship to work**, seeking greater fulfilment and the space to be themselves²². Doing good through work, promotes employee fulfilment, supports health and wellbeing, contributes to learning and skills development, and enhances employee engagement²³. Our volunteers tell us that **being a part of YouthCan! gives them greater job satisfaction and motivation**, increasing their pride and commitment to their place of work.

While the crises of 2022 remind us of **vulnerability of young people**, especially those who lack adequate parental care, the same crises can reveal a path for positive change. But change will not happen on its own, it requires collective action. **United with our partners around the world**, and with young people themselves, **YouthCan! prioritizes young people**, invests in interventions that open up prospects, and helps them integrate into the labour market, illuminating their path to self-reliance.



- 3 UNICEF Innocenti (2023). Prospects for Children in the Polycrisis: A 2023 Global Outlook
- 4 International Labor Organization Monitor on the world of work. Tenth edition, 31 October 2022
- 5 International Labor Organization Flagship Report: Global Wage Report 2022-23, November 2022
- 6 International Labor Organization. World Employment and Social Outlook (2023)
- 7 SOS Children's Villages. More than 280 million youth are not employed, in training nor in education
- 8 World Economic Forum: Jobs will be very different in 10 years. Here's how to prepare (2020)
- 9 International Labor Organization. The Future of Work and Lifelong Learning: The digital transformation of apprenticeships: Emerging opportunities and barriers
- 10 UNICEF: Empowering the workforce of tomorrow (2021)
- 11 OECD: The Missing Entrepreneurs 2021: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment
- 12 World Economic Forum: 6 trends in global entrepreneurship, 3 March 2022
- 13 The Global Shapers Community, Annual Survey (2017)
- 14 Cogito: Daring to do: Young Social Entrepreneurs doubling down on business with impact, 9 November 2022
- 15 OECD: Unlocking the potential of youth-led social enterprises (2022)
- 16 World Economic Forum: 6 trends in global entrepreneurship, 3 March 2022
- 17 Fallender, C., & Brooks, R. (2022). Young Changemaking as the New Norm in Growing Up: The Role of Adult Allies. Social Innovations Journal, 11(1)
- 18 Eldridge, J. et al. (2020) "Confiding in others: exploring the experiences of young people who have been in care". Adoption & Fostering, 44(2), p.156-172.
- 19 Iriss: Sanders (2020) "Care experienced children and young people's mental health" 2/9 Guidance YC! FnF21
- 20 Youth Business International (2022). Entrepreneurship within reach: Connecting young people to opportunity
- 21 Reported by YAB Members following interviews and informal conversations with care-experienced young people
- 22 PWC: Global Workforce Hopes and Fears Survey (2022)
- 23 Forbes: Employer Sponsored Volunteerism: Doing Good For Business, Mental Health, and The World (2022)



Empowering the future: digital ready and entrepreneurship focused

Digital entrepreneurship training in Benin

When there are not enough jobs nearby to apply for, starting your own business and working virtually is one way to find employment. SOS Children's Villages in Benin joined forces with an implementation partner, Learnio: a social enterprise that provides accessible and affordable IT education (digital skills, web development and graphic design) enhanced by online mentorship.

Through hybrid teaching, 98 young people have graduated (success rate of 83%) to pursue a path of online entrepreneurship. Since undertaking their digital freelancer training, participants have collectively generated \$14,000 in earnings. One of the 98 graduates is Hack, 28 years old, who now not only runs his own web design business but has also become a trainer with Learnio, giving back to the programme.

Leveraging digitalization

While COVID-19 physical distancing measures continued to ease throughout 2022, and YouthCan! was able to further revitalise face-to-face activities, online activities remain a core component of the programme. The programme's digital platform, the YouthLinks Community, was rolled out globally, and implemented in 32 out of 47 YouthCan! countries. As user numbers increased day-by-day, exceeding 1,300 registrations by the end of the year, with 81% being returning users, YouthLinks Community was not only established as a safe digital tool for online learning, but also as one that facilitates hybrid and supports face-to-face activities. Currently, the top 10 jobs around the world all require digital capabilities, with reports predicting that there will be 150 million new technology jobs by 2025²⁴, and by 2030, at least 90% of jobs will require up-to-date digital skills²⁵. As a result, there is a growing need for more advanced digital skills to foster professional success, whether through employment or entrepreneurship. YouthCan! is committed to meeting the needs of young people in building the necessary digital skills to enter this digital job market.

As we move into 2023, our focus is on leveraging the vast potential of the YouthLinks Community platform to increase user engagement and interactions. With the launch of a Learn & Grow section, learning materials will be made centrally available to all users. In addition, topic Focus Weeks (e.g., on Entrepreneurship) will encourage participation and make additional skills training opportunities available for young people. While YouthCan! continues to grow and improve in both reach and activities that use digitalization to their advantage, the leading challenges for young people remain access to digital devices and connection to the internet. While just over 60% of the global population are able to be active online, only around a third of youth under 25 years have access to the internet^{26,27}. Overcoming such barriers requires significant investment in quality digital infrastructure, including devices, as well as affordable and reliable internet access for young people around the world.

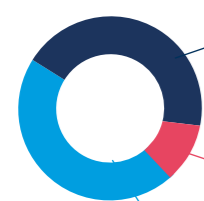
Online activities



43% young people participated in online activities



80% of volunteers felt well prepared and supported in fulfilling their role as a virtual mentor



31% of activities fully online
12% of activities blended (online and in person)
57% of activities face to face



1359 registered users
222 mentoring relations set-up
81% returning users

²⁴ World Economic Forum, The Future of Work, The most in-demand jobs for 2021, Feb 2021
²⁵ World Economic Forum: Jobs will be very different in 10 years. Here's how to prepare (2020)
²⁶ DataPortal, Digital 2020: Global overview report, Jan 2022
²⁷ UNICEF, How many children and young people have internet access at home? Dec, 2020

Skilling the entrepreneurs of tomorrow

As the world of work continues to change, traditional career paths are becoming increasingly uncertain. Consequently, approximately half of young people hold the ambition to manage their own business in the future²⁸. However, with low levels of employment experience, business skills, and training, as well as smaller professional networks, young people face a growing entrepreneurship gap. These barriers are even greater for young people from vulnerable backgrounds.

Through partners, YouthCan! has been able to adapt and increase access to comprehensive entrepreneurship training and support for young people, creating space for them to build professional networks and establish meaningful relationships. This year, 9% of participants engaged in entrepreneurship activities, which ranged from creating business plans and financial management, to executing a pitch for funding and accessing start-up incubators. Activities also included volunteers mentoring on the journey from entrepreneurship to successfully opening one's own businesses. As these young people seek to establish their own businesses, they now have solid connections and networks on their path to independence.

Key data 2022



73% increase in entrepreneurship activities in 2022, compared to 2021



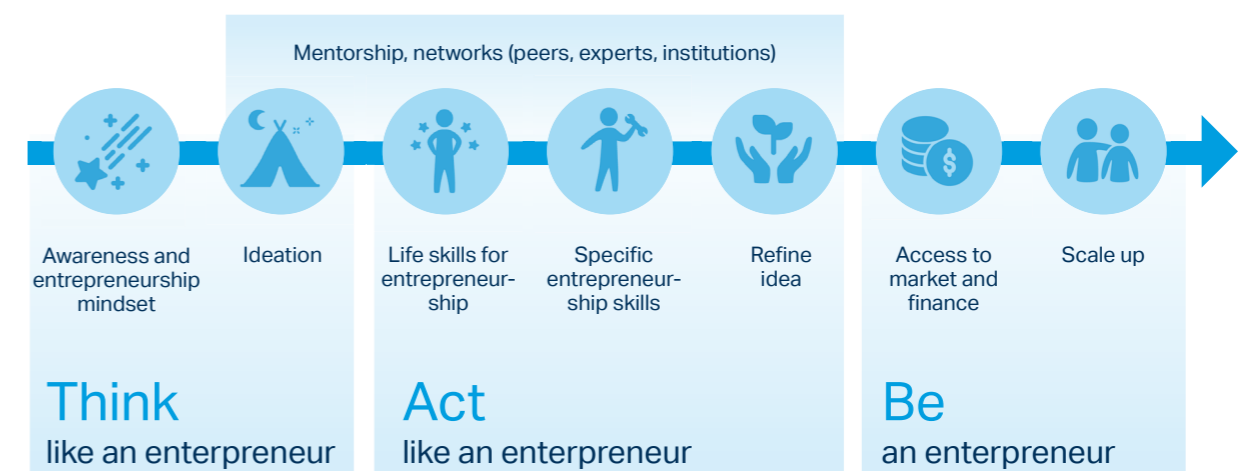
Approximately 9% of young people in YouthCan! have been supported with entrepreneurship activities



From first cohorts/pilots, already 277 young people have started a business within the same year

During 2022, YouthCan! defined a clear entrepreneurship path to support young people to succeed in starting an own business. The process starts with awareness and the right mindset, followed by skills building before creating a business idea, accessing funding and the markets, and lastly receiving support to scale up. In 2023 and beyond, YouthCan! will work with existing and new expert partners to support young people on this path.

YouthCan! entrepreneurship path



²⁸ EY: How business and education can help Gen Z reframe the future, Apr 2021



Strength in diversity: mentoring, training, and practice

Each young person is unique. Depending on their experiences and challenges, they develop different strengths, skills, and interest. For this reason, YouthCan! provides a range of activities that allow young people to tailor their learning and training to their individual goals. Within our diverse approach, the programme facilitates adaptation to local needs, whilst combining core elements that young people need on their journey to employment and self-reliance: mentorship that builds self-confidence and a professional network; life and technical skills training that develops specific abilities; and work experiences that provides practical know-how.

This year, YouthCan! volunteers and youth workers organized over 730 activities, a 51% increase from 2021. In particular, life and technical skills training doubled compared to the previous year. These opportunities allow young people to develop and strengthen skills crucial to navigating the path to employment as well as within the workplace. Out of the available activities, a third of participants ranked "learning new skills through training" as one of the top features of the programme.

Even though YouthCan! has focused on providing practice opportunities, such as internships and job shadowing, year-on-year, young people tell us that this is something they need and want more of. In 2022, only 10% of all YouthCan! activities gave young people the opportunity to gain their first practical work experience. While this is an advancement on last year, there is still room for improvement. With the support of existing and new partners, these opportunities can further grow in 2023.

10%
mentoring

65%
training

10%
practice

15% other
support activities

Case studies

Mentoring facilitated by YouthLinks Community in El Salvador

In collaboration with corporate partners, DHL Group and Dollarcity, SOS Children's Villages El Salvador utilized the YouthLinks Community platform to empower 59 adolescent girls and young women through mentoring. Organizing an online programme enabled participants from 6 different locations to improve their skills and competencies, with guidance from 41 committed volunteers, regardless of their location within the country.

The major strength of this programme is that it utilized the full functionality of the YouthLinks Community platform: providing a curriculum, setting up locally adapted mentoring, tracking the progress of mentorship relations via an automated process, and offering guidance and support when challenges occurred.



© SOS Children's Villages El Salvador

YouthCan! training camp in Romania

In Romania, 22 young people from three programme locations came together with 13 corporate volunteers and six local entrepreneurs for a YouthCan! Camp.

The activity lasted four days and included career orientation and personal development workshops, a factory visit, and an exciting 'living library' session, where young people could "read" the living books - the stories of six local entrepreneurs.

As well as getting inspiration for future career opportunities, young people built their self-confidence and created further networks to support their growth. "The financial education workshop led by AkzoNobel mentors offered us a wider view on how we can better manage our budget in everyday life", says Alin, a 19-year-old engineering student who took part.



© SOS Children's Villages Romania

First work experience in Thailand

Six young people from different SOS Children's Villages' locations in Thailand completed a 1.5-month internship at TK Elevator. They were matched with ten dedicated volunteers and joined various departments. The primary objective of this programme was to provide participants with invaluable real-world work experience directly related to their chosen fields of study. By doing so, they had the opportunity to refine and enhance their skills, equipping them with the necessary tools for a successful transition into the professional world after their graduation.

At the same time, the volunteers who were actively engaged with the participants shared their own insights and evaluated their working abilities. This collaborative approach ensured that both the young people and the volunteers continuously updated their knowledge and acquired fresh perspectives.



© SOS Children's Villages Thailand / TK Elevator



A game-changer in young people's lives

Despite many countries around the world struggling in the post-COVID-19 economic environment, exacerbated by the global polycrisis, most young people in YouthCan! report feeling more positive about their future and have a plan for their personal next steps in life.

In 2022, around 70% of YouthCan! participants have been engaged in the programme for 1-2 years. Notably, older participants and those that have spent more years in the programme, report a higher rate of satisfaction in the programme. This indicates a cumulative learning effect, whereby participants can build stronger and deeper skills over time, within the programme.

YouthCan! participants report having gained a variety of skills necessary to succeed in life (80%), as well as the confidence, motivation and skills to start their own business (66%). 28% of those engaged this year already involved in paid work (e.g., through internships, limited or unlimited work, part-time work, or opening their own business). This number increases to 35% for young people aged 22-24 years.



© DHL Group

Case study – Ripple effect in the community

My entrepreneurship story started after finishing university. I was not able to get a job, because this is very difficult in Kenya.

One of these days, I was looking through my community, which is in Kibera, one of the largest slums in Africa. There was this one teen mom, who was drying a disposable diaper outside, so that she may reuse it. I felt like this could be exposing the child to diseases and bacterial infections.

Also, this teen mom was drying it at night, because of stigmatization that comes with drying out something meant for single use. Restoring their dignity and giving them a healthy solution that is just, sustainable and long lasting was where I started from.

Kenya is one of seven countries that conducted a social entrepreneurship programme organized by GoTeach, the partnership between DHL Group and SOS Children's Villages

Whilst taking part in the DHL Group's entrepreneurship pilot, Violet was introduced to the GoTeach programme that provides mentoring and training on entrepreneurship competences. In her journey, she was not alone. "The thing I loved most about my involvement in the GoTeach programme was being paired with a mentor. For me that was a game changer and also a life changer" says Violet, referring to her cross-border mentor from DHL Express Ghana.

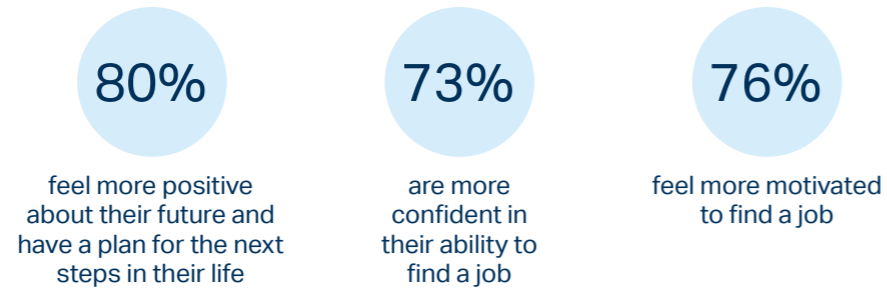
Through her mentorship, Violet transformed her passion into a successful business venture, Veeulture Social Enterprise, employing teenage mothers to make reusable diapers and sanitary towels.

With the training she received and the funding to kickstart her business from the GoTeach Programme, Violet now works to provide safe and affordable options for reducing single-use plastic waste, combating the stigma of poverty, and giving back to her community in Kibera, Kenya. "We all have challenges. But with Violet's story, and seeing how far she came, seeing her drive to help other people, it inspired me to look beyond myself. For Violet, sky is the limit." says Joshua, Violet's mentor.

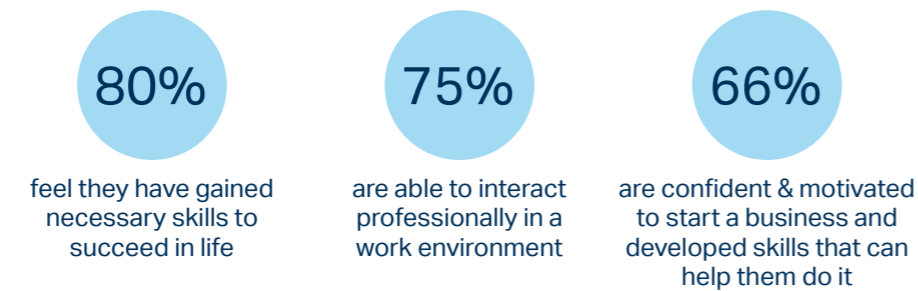
YouthCan! works

Results for young people

Young people feel inspired



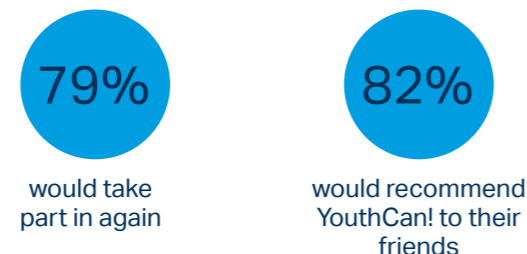
Young people develop skills for employment and entrepreneurship



Young people are self-reliant



YouthCan! is a positive influence



“ Being part of YouthCan! has been truly remarkable, providing me with the opportunity to connect with a mentor from M&G who has played a pivotal role in developing my soft skills. I am immensely grateful for the positive impact it has had on my personal and professional growth. ”

- YouthCan! Participant, India

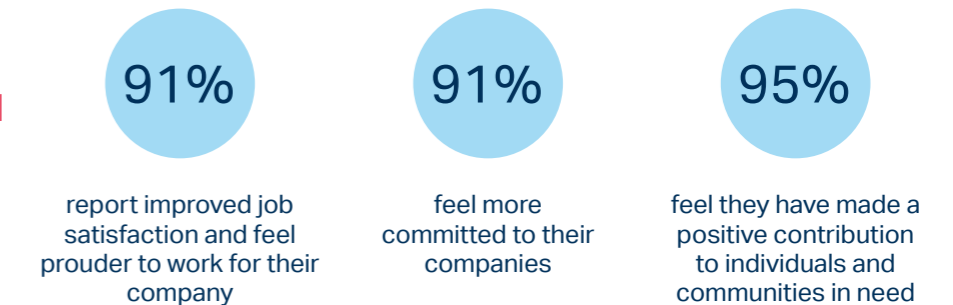
Results for volunteers

The positive impact of YouthCan! spreads beyond young people. While young participants benefit from the time, knowledge, skills, and encouragement of volunteers, so too, do volunteers benefit from participating in the programme. Each year, volunteers tell us how YouthCan! is positively impacting their lives, strengthening their skills, and increasing their job satisfaction. For partners, their involvement in YouthCan results in employees feeling more committed to, and having a greater sense of pride for, the company they work for. In addition, 96% of volunteers report that they use the new skills they acquired during their time with YouthCan!, in their daily tasks. Furthermore, volunteers report that their experience in YouthCan! increases their interaction and collaboration with colleagues in their workplace.

Volunteering strengthens relevant skills



Volunteering increases satisfaction and commitment



Social responsibility



“ Thanks to my participation in YouthCan! I have developed and improved skills such as planning, mentoring and communication. This experience not only allowed me to recognize my own value but also enabled me to make a greater impact beyond my daily work. I personally also struggled in navigating my own career, but empowering and guiding young people on their way towards finding a job, is such a powerful encounter. Although the contribution from the team and myself may only be small, I am very proud and happy with what I have done. ”

- Dung Nguyen Thi Thanh (Liz), YouthCan! volunteer, Siegwirk Vietnam



The power of partnerships

Facing the challenges of youth employment and employability is not something we can, nor should, do alone. Young people need multi-level support, as well as input and guidance that is relevant in both local and global contexts. Therefore, we work with a wide variety of companies, institutions, and other NGOs.

In 2022, YouthCan! delivered activities together with 204* partners, each bringing in their own expertise and focus, and collectively providing support through 1,869 volunteers. More than half of our partnerships were developed locally with corporate partners and the remaining were with support partners (e.g., NGOs) or developed globally while being implemented locally. Local partners are most aware of the needs, challenges, and opportunities in their countries, and are therefore essential to ensuring the adaptability, resilience, and sustainability of the programme.

To leverage synergies among participating partner activities, and to develop and strengthen cooperation between YouthCan! partners, several countries organized joint activity planning workshops. During these workshops, partners exchanged experiences, learned more about the varying needs of young people in their country, and they collectively created a strong and multi-angle national plan to support young people on their path to independence.

In YouthCan!, we put children and young people at the centre of all our actions, forming unique strategic partnerships that contribute to the sustainability strategies of our collaborators, actively promote the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, and empower young people to be leaders of their own lives. Our multi-stakeholder approach means that partners join forces, share the burdens of responsibility, and create a collective positive impact on a scale that can only be achieved together.

* In 2022, we changed to a new reporting platform where we are only including the partners with whom we organized joint partnership activities. All partners that supported us financially or in another way are not included in the number of 204.

1869
volunteers

204
partnerships

The power of partnerships

“ Johnson & Johnson decided to join the YouthCan! movement five years ago, because it allows us to contribute to the socioeconomic well-being of young people from vulnerable backgrounds. By investing in their development, we can improve their chances of becoming healthy and independent adults. At the same time, YouthCan! gives Johnson & Johnson’s employees the opportunity to actively live the Johnson & Johnson credo, which challenges us to put the needs and well-being of the people we serve first. By mentoring and training young people, we take responsibility for the communities in which we live and work, and help young people feel healthier.

Also, the relationship with other YouthCan! partners should not be forgotten! Being part of this global practitioner’s network of corporate partners is a huge asset for Johnson & Johnson. Every meeting with other partners, is a benchmark and a chance for us not only to improve the YouthCan! initiative, but also to strengthen our own practices.”

- Antonio Delgado, Programme Director Janssen GCI EMEA Fund – Johnson & Johnson (retired in April 2023)

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



YouthCan! has been financially supported by:



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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





SOS CHILDREN'S
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