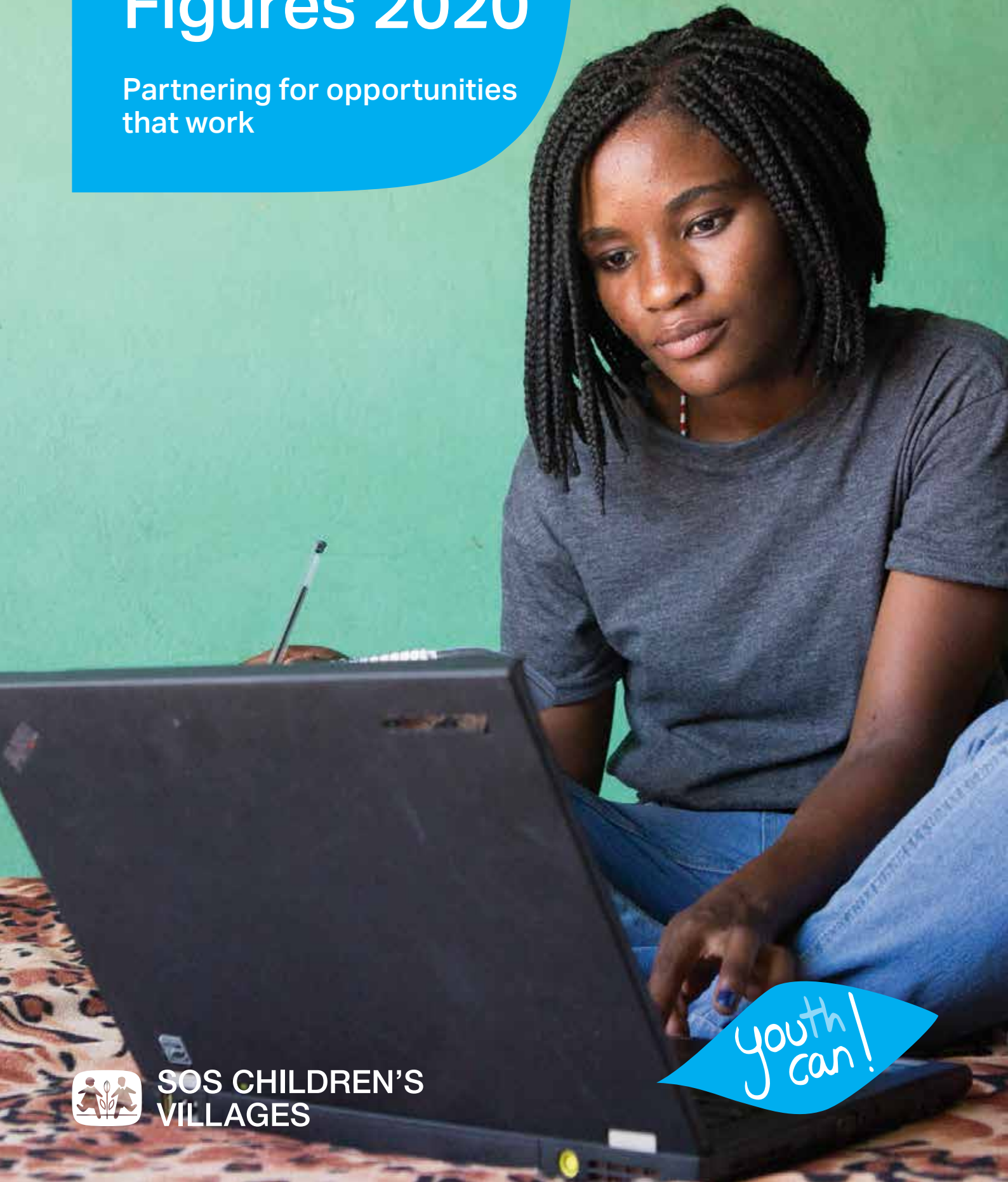


YouthCan! Facts and Figures 2020

Partnering for opportunities
that work



youth
can!



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES



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Foreword



Rania Ameerah

21 years old,
YouthCan! participant from Palestine

"Job-specific, technological and language skills are needed in the job market nowadays and a young job seeker has to be great at these skills. YouthCan! offers support when it comes to these skills and reinforces the social and human networks. Without networking with people, success becomes default. For this purpose, we use a virtual platform called YouthLinks. This platform provides a space for young people to learn more about their courses with volunteers who provide their expertise in their field.

I met my mentor virtually on YouthLinks and I attended several important sessions about requirements on the labour market, self-confidence, and other topics which increased my awareness about my dream goals. My mentor made me believe in my abilities and supported me in finding a training opportunity. It is possible for me to be employed within their company, which is one of YouthCan! Project partners.

It is thus one thing to help someone, but it is a completely different thing to help someone learn something valuable. YouthCan! and its partners are working hard to make this a reality on a large scale, and I believe that not only can I benefit YouthCan! to achieve this, but also help others reach these programmes and reap the benefits.

We can't shy away from the fact that young people are the future. I want to be a voice for those who struggled and be held responsible for ensuring their struggles are met with not only what they want, but also what they need.

I can't wait to work with YouthCan! and all their partners, to give the voiceless a voice*."

"My mentor made me believe in my abilities and supported me in finding a training opportunity."

*as of February 2021, Rania was selected to represent her region in the first YouthCan! Youth Advisory Board, along with other 9 young people from Palestine, Morocco, India, Peru and South Africa.



Ravo Rakotondramanga

Management Assistant, Allianz Madagascar

"I volunteered for the YouthCan! programme because I wanted to help my community and leave something for future generations. Especially after meeting young people who are so willing to learn and succeed, I think they deserve help more than ever.

In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Malagasy economic situation, the local context was harsh for job seekers and therefore for young people in the programme, as job opportunities were rare. However, I guided my mentee through the job market. I helped her review and write her CV and cover letter first, then we looked for job opportunities on social media, newspapers, and on specialized websites to find every interesting job vacancy she could apply to.

I encourage young people to join the programme, to dare and work for the changes they want to see in their lives. Once they want to improve their lives, they ought to do what it takes to reach their goals.

Ultimately, it makes me proud to know that I have helped someone reach their goal so they can be on their own two feet. And to future volunteers, I can say that there is nothing comparable to the feeling of knowing that you have led someone to a brighter future. That is inspiring."

"Ultimately, it makes me proud to know that I have helped someone reach their goal, so they can be on their own two feet."

2020 in a nutshell



Growth through difficult times

The COVID-19 pandemic, on top of worsening global youth unemployment trends, gave young people across the globe a rocky start to their careers in 2020. The International Labour Organization warns of a real risk of a lost generation of young people, citing an employment loss among young people more than double that for adults. This year, 6,499 young people across 37 countries received holistic support on their transition into the world of work. This represents a 14% increase in the reach of YouthCan! programmes since 2019, made possible through the commitment and engagement of 1,473 volunteers, 232 partners worldwide and a focus on the development of online activities. Moving from a mostly face-to-face employability programme to one that was largely online, ensured young people had continued access to training, mentoring and personal and professional networks.

The 2020 results demonstrate that **YouthCan! provides crucial support to one of the most at-risk groups across the globe** and is the right type of investment for young people, society and generations to come.

The programme continues to prove its effectiveness in supporting young people in finding work or job opportunities and enabling them to leave care with confidence in the next steps ahead for their professional lives. Adapting the YouthCan! offer towards more digital and virtual based activities had both an impact on continuing to improve employability skills but also, helping with young people's mental health.

The feedback from volunteers demonstrates the **high return on investment for companies and partners** allowing their employees to mentor young people, with 85% declaring an increase in job satisfaction following their experience in YouthCan! Young people have also reaped the benefits from developing relationships with working adults outside of their family care setting, who have supported them on their journey into the working world.

Our programme provides evidence that young people need employability and soft skills to enter the job market and be competitive, that mentors are a successful vector for moving towards independent adulthood and self-reliance, and that multi sector partners need to be brought on board to sustainably promote and fund these initiatives.

"Even though we are facing the challenges of this pandemic, mentoring can still be conducted online. COVID-19 will not stop our enthusiasm to participate in mentoring activities."

– Ni Nengah Kartika, girl participating in YouthCan! Bali, Indonesia

About YouthCan!

YouthCan! supports young people who have lost parental care or are at risk of losing it on their journey to decent work and independent life.



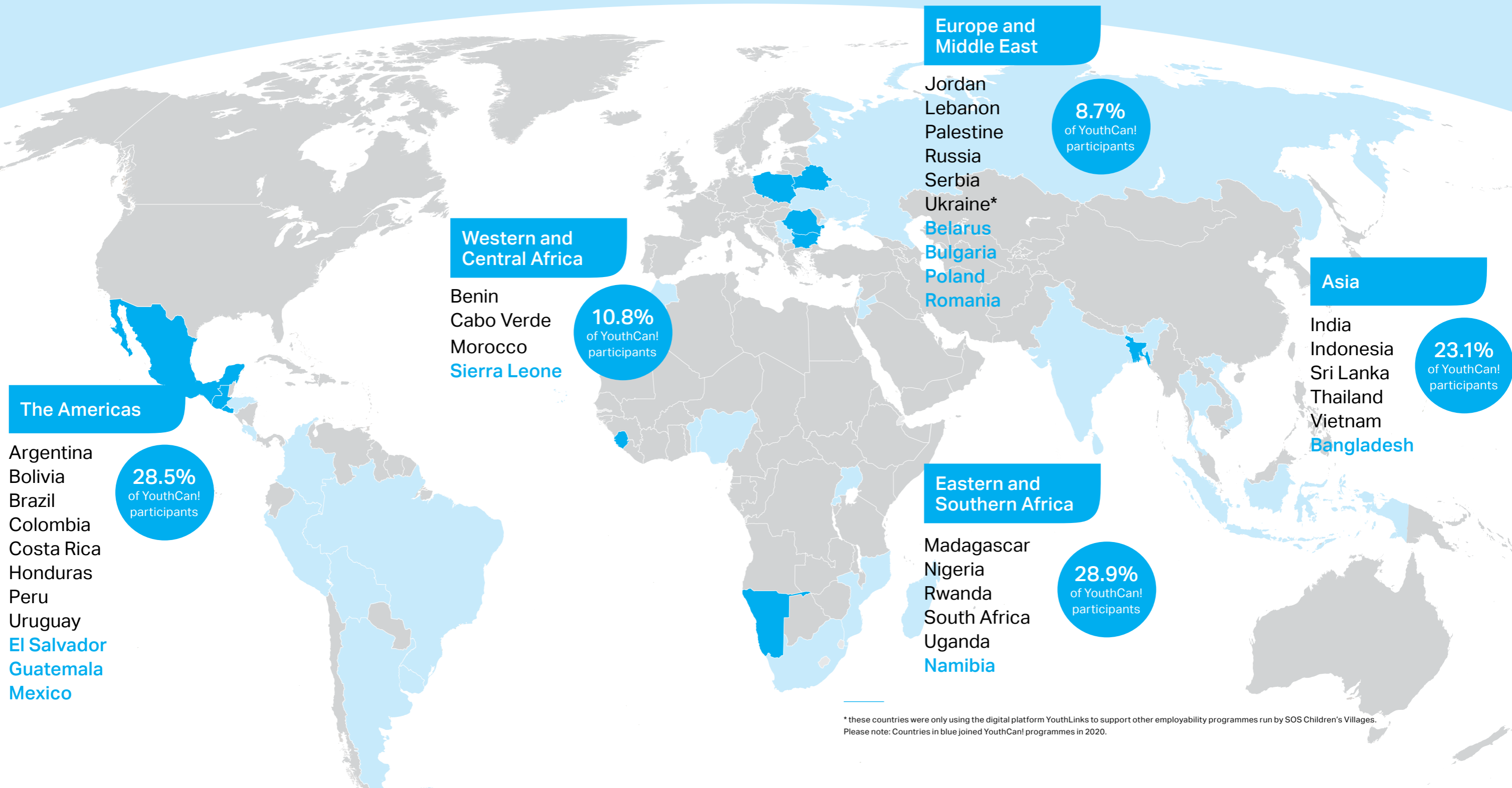
YouthCan! is a global partnership that supports young people who have lost parental care or are at risk of losing it to successfully transition from school to decent work and independent life.

In this 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 offline. These corporate volunteers plan workshops, facilitate exposure to professional environments and act as professional mentors. Employees and young people can connect face to face or through the digital platform YouthLinks, enabling worldwide collaborative learning through online mentoring, breaking geographical barriers.



Global reach: a worldwide network and a local response

6500 young people
and 1473 volunteers
shaped YouthCan! in 2020 in **37 countries**



* these countries were only using the digital platform YouthLinks to support other employability programmes run by SOS Children's Villages. Please note: Countries in blue joined YouthCan! programmes in 2020.

At the heart: young people

Gender



Average age range



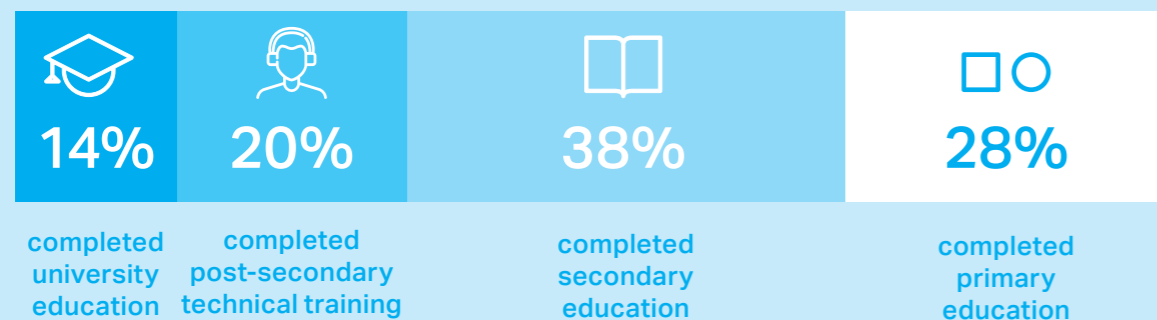
Family situation



2 in 3 of all participants are lacking parental care and currently live in SOS Children's Villages alternative care programmes

1 in 3 of all participants are from vulnerable families → **1 in 2** of these families is also supported through SOS Children's Villages family strengthening programmes

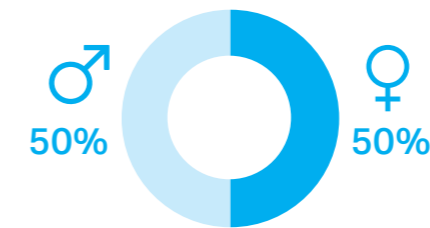
Education*



*Data from youth survey conducted in 2020, in which 2273 young people from 30 countries provided their feedback.

... and volunteers

Gender*



Origin

4 in 10 came from South and Central America



2 in 10 came from Asia



2 in 10 came from Africa



2 in 10 came from Eastern Europe



Employer



4 in 10 are employees of local corporate partners

4 in 10 are employees of global partners

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

"A while ago I got connected to my mentor from DHL Peru. Every session with him was a highlight for me, as he supports me with great enthusiasm and experiences he had lived through. I now feel prepared to take the best decisions when facing challenging situations, and I am ready to start into the future!"
 – Juan Manuel Curitima Morales, YouthCan! participant from Peru

*Data from volunteer survey conducted in 2020, in which 275 volunteers from 32 countries provided their feedback.

Youth unemployment and COVID-19

Compounding an uncertain future

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on unemployment figures with young people affected the most.¹ Young workers are more likely to work part time or in precarious positions, and have often been the first to lose their jobs. Young adults, ready to transition into the world of work, have become stuck as employment opportunities fizzled out or they accepted work with unstable conditions. Not surprisingly, **economic challenges were highlighted as a main challenge by young people** in a YouthCan! survey: 52% named unemployment, the economy or difficulty in running their business as the main consequences of COVID-19 on their life.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) declared that 60% of children around the world are not receiving an adequate education due to lockdowns and a lack of digital access to educational materials.² **Disrupted education and the lack of social networks disproportionately penalises young people who have lost or are at risk of losing parental care** even further. Finding a job is a challenge for most young people, but understanding what careers are available, what skills you have or need to develop, or how and where to find job opportunities without having supporting members of your family network, is especially hard.

The impact of **the pandemic and the latest economic developments have revealed a greater need for digital skills**. These will no longer be a prerequisite only for young people entering the information technology sector, but also a necessary skill for non-technical roles, such as customer service, health and social care. SOS Children's Villages will continue to advocate that in order to build flourishing and inclusive societies, investment in the empowerment of young people and equipping them with the skills, is essential to supporting them in gaining employment and decent work.



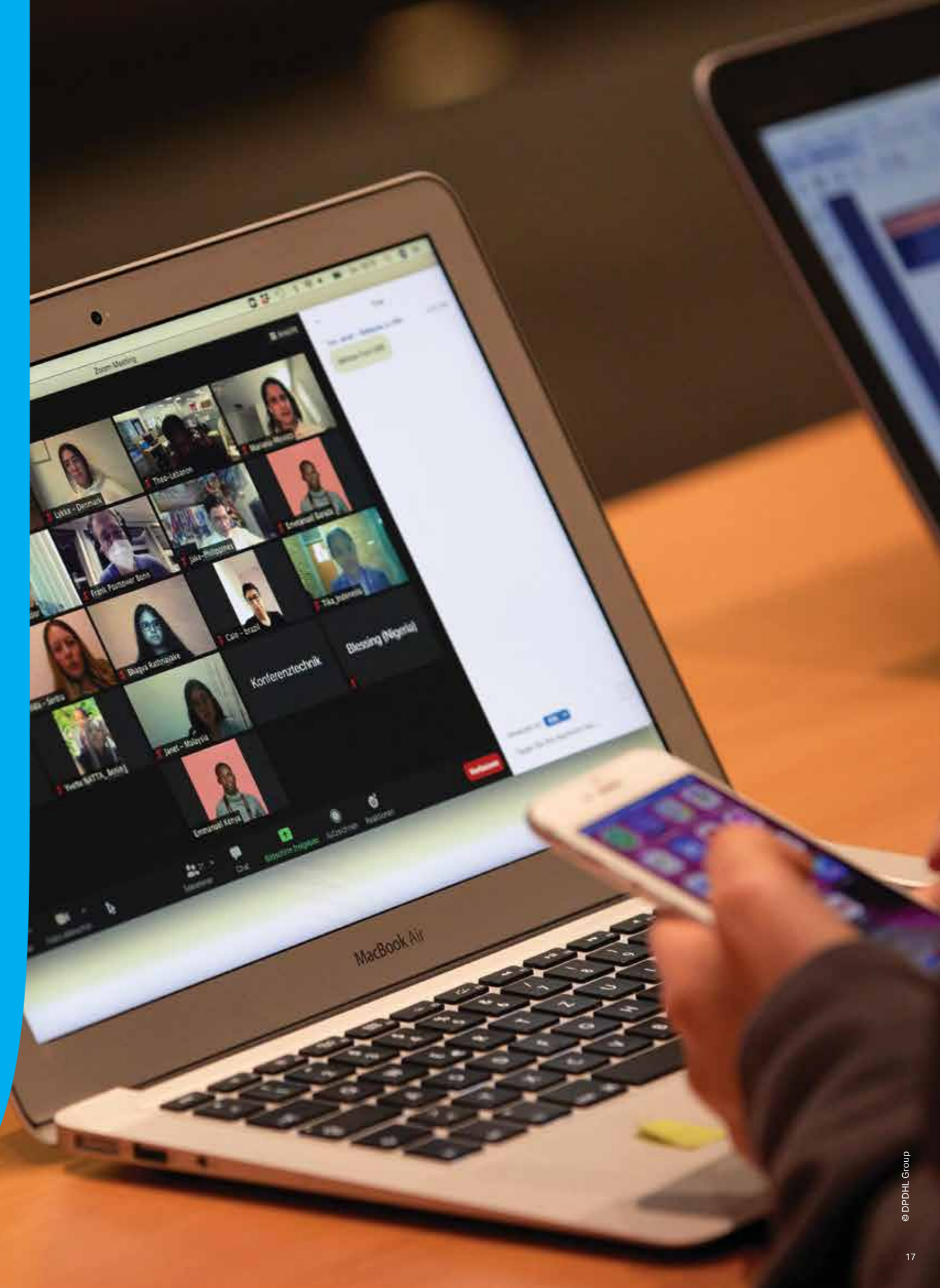
YouthCan! Cabo Verde

Recession is jeopardizing decades of development gains in Cabo Verde, hitting the most vulnerable the hardest. "Many young people, who had already left our programmes and successfully transitioned into independent life, turned back to us for help, after losing their job in tourism", explains Marco Paulo, Youth leader in SOS Cabo Verde. "We could only give them very little financial support. But we started to support them with coaching, advising them how to access public support schemes and just were there for them." Last December, SOS Cabo Verde employed one additional person to help young people reinforce their skills and organize YouthCan! activities according to their needs. "We all hope for them to re-enter the labor market soon", closes Marco.

¹ https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/publications/WCMS_753026/lang--en/index.htm

² https://feature.undp.org/covid-19-and-the-sdgs/?utm_source=social&utm_medium=undp&utm_campaign=covid19-sdgs

An agile, relevant and upgraded programme





Shifting to digital

Shifting to digital meant that our mentorship networks moved to video and virtual conferencing technologies, while other training opportunities were offered online instead of in-person. This allowed YouthCan! to successfully expand in 2020 and ensured **young people had continued access to training and mentoring** resources, as well as personal and professional networks. Facing up to the needs of our target group, and recognizing their capacity to engage online better than any previous generation, 211 of the 334 YouthCan! activities in 2020 took place online or partially online compared to 2019. In fact, we saw six times as many young people taking part in virtual YouthCan! activities in 2020.

75% of young people rated virtual sessions as effective, with those over 19-year-olds engaging better with virtual activities than those 18 years or younger. In 2020, the use of our digital platform Workplace (YouthLinks) increased by 350% among young people and 242% with volunteers due to the digital shift of YouthCan! programmes.

Investment in infrastructure and devices in years to come is essential to ensure access to online education and employability opportunities. In 2020, not all countries had the IT or data infrastructure to make use of our digital platform, and 50% of online mentors mentioned connectivity as the main challenge they faced.

Online activities



68% of participants participated in online activities

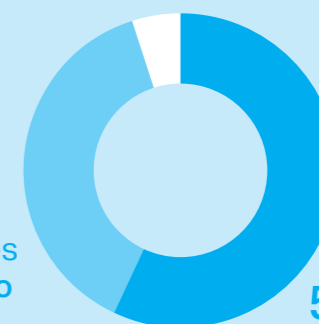
74% of volunteers participated in online activities



The number of young people who took part in online activities **increased by 600%** compared to 2019 due to the digital offer

5% of the activities were blended (online and in person)

37% of the activities were face to face



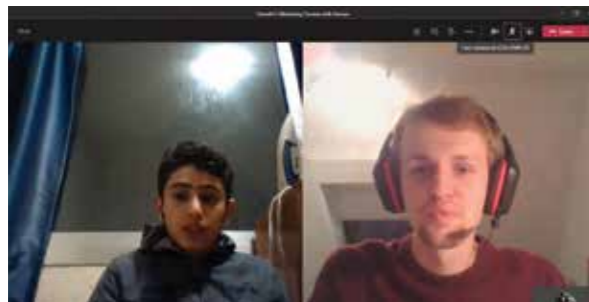
58% of the activities were held online

Unmuting potential: mentoring, training and practice

YouthCan! combines mentoring, first work experience, and soft/technical skill trainings into one comprehensive approach. The local activities offered are structured around the needs expressed by young people. Skilled youth workers set up individual career paths and support activities in partnership with young people according to their skillset and interests. As a result of the increased needs of young people and volunteers, **the ratio of volunteers to participants grew to 1 volunteer for every 4.5 participants in 2020**, compared to 1 volunteer for every 3 participants in 2019. Young people engaged regularly in YouthCan! as individuals, participating on average in 14 encounters per year.

Mentoring

Strong and safe relations between young people and mentors are at the heart of YouthCan! In 2020, at least 1,050 young people were part of a YouthCan! mentoring programme. Mentoring and coaching activities represented 15% of all YouthCan! activities offered. The focus of mentoring sessions is defined and shaped together between mentor and mentee, looking at the individual needs of the young people. Support ranges from the job application process, to coaching around setting individual goals and career plans, to strengthening presentations or language skills and many more. Virtual group mentoring, where one mentor engages with 3-4 young people from a similar location at the same time, also became a popular format in many countries. This allowed us to offer a mentoring relationship to a wider number of youth who could also benefit from deeper peer relationships. **83% of participants perceive their mentor as a positive role model in their lives** and feel accepted and respected during their interaction.



Cross-border mentoring in YouthCan! Lebanon

Youth in Lebanon face various employability challenges related to the deteriorating economic situation, the Beirut explosion and the outbreak of the pandemic. Deutsche Post DHL Group engaged international mentors from Germany and Kenya in a jointly organized, online, cross-border mentoring programme. Each mentor supported their young mentee, according to their needs, over a period of 4 months: while some introduced their mentees to career opportunities, others supported young people to search and apply for a job, to build networks, set goals or practice their English skills. "I recently got virtually connected to my mentor Mayyada, working for DPDHL in Bonn, Germany. She is of such great help and inspiration for me, especially during these challenging and hard times" summarized Theo Ibrahim, young participant from Lebanon.





Training

More than 50% of all YouthCan! activities were training-based – offering support for young people to strengthen skills in different areas. **Soft skills are critical to navigate your environment, build relations and are also increasingly requested by employers.** Half of the YouthCan! training activities focused on building soft and life skills, including topics such as conflict resolution and building self-confidence. In other training activities young people were supported to strengthen their professional skills or their skills to start their own business. Through the virtual interactions, 68% of young people developed their digital skills.



COVID-19 Resilience training in YouthCan! Indonesia

AkzoNobel and SOS Children's Villages Indonesia organized two online sessions with the theme "Youth resilience in dealing with the new normal after COVID-19". The two sessions consisted of passing on knowledge about disruption in this new business era, encouraging the 150 young people participating to continuously learn, adapt and embrace failure. These sessions were preceded by another soft skills session delivered by AkzoNobel volunteers, on the nine competencies related to being a good AkzoNobel employee: initiative, flexibility, learning, honesty, good communication, endurance, self-management and self-appearance.

Practice

Work experience is very important in order to demonstrate one's competencies to any employer and help decide upon a career path. In YouthCan!, young people continue to advocate for the need to "practice activities". In 2020 lockdowns and curfews saw young people lose opportunities to gain work experience, nevertheless 16% of YouthCan! activities in 2020 were internships and job shadowing opportunities that happened before the pandemic hit or followed local COVID-19 prevention measures.



Work experience opportunities in YouthCan! Russia

YouthCan! Russia's social partner, RAOUL charity foundation, provided supported employment services in collaboration with local companies and succeeded in introducing 24 young people to their first successful work experience. Despite COVID-19, young people from Saint-Petersburg, Oryol and Vologda undertook internships in the retail industry, the municipal social service centre and an ice cream factory, thus gathering work experience of up to 5 months.

YouthCan! impact

Programme results

More than ever, 2020 revealed the transformative power of YouthCan! Our programme's impact statement places at its centre young people's self-reliance and evidence shows that **YouthCan! strongly supports care leavers with a successful transition to independence**. This year, the independence rate of care leavers was 6% higher in countries that are part of the YouthCan! network. Furthermore, young people who have lost or are at risk of losing parental care are 10% more likely to have high employability and digital skills in countries that are part of YouthCan! compared to countries where YouthCan! has not yet been implemented.



"I just joined YouthCan! but what I want to share is: the knowledge and experience I got is very useful to maintain my mental health and motivates me to face this pandemic crisis. I now have the courage to work part-time and open my own food business."

– male YouthCan! participant from Indonesia (19-21 years old)

Yes! YouthCan!

Results for young people

To ensure the YouthCan! partnership speaks directly to the employability needs of young people, regular feedback is key to the programme's success. So, we asked young people for feedback in a survey in which 2,273 young people from 30 countries took part. When asked about their opinions on the effectiveness of the programme, the majority of participants had a positive view of YouthCan!'s impact on their professional future. The interaction with volunteers and peers within YouthCan! also **supported young people to stay mentally healthy throughout the pandemic**: 74% of young people believe that connecting with mentors and peers helped them cope with the pandemic whilst being confined at home.

Young people feel inspired



83%

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

74%

are more confident in their ability to find a job

78%

feel more motivated to find a job

Young people have improved skills



77%

say they have gained necessary skills to succeed in life

70%

think YouthCan! helped them to develop professional skills

22%

of young people who participated in YouthCan! in 2020 already got a job

YouthCan! is a positive influence



78%

agree that YouthCan! helped directly or indirectly to find work

74%

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

78%

agree that YouthCan! supported them to find work

"I already graduated as a catering agent but restaurants, bars and hotels were closed. That's why I followed several online classes, and applied everything I learned at my place. YouthCan! taught me many things: how to search for an internship and how to be organized to find a job. As for my future, it seemed very hard at first, but now I'm sure I'm able to reach everything I hope for." – Kawtar, YouthCan! participant from Morocco



Results for volunteers

Through their participation in YouthCan!, 1,473 volunteers made a difference, not only for young people but also for themselves. SOS Children's Villages provides volunteers with quality onboarding and support, for example, through code of conduct training, child safeguarding or guidance on virtual mentoring, with **93% of volunteers feeling well prepared and supported to fulfil their role**. Through our 2020 volunteer survey of 275 volunteers in 31 countries, we found the majority of volunteers reported an increase in job satisfaction, skills development and feeling positive about their contribution to support young people. 20% of volunteers have been part of YouthCan! for more than 3 years, proving strong commitment over time.

Volunteering strengthens relevant skills



82%

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

95%

report using the skills gained in their daily work

80%

report increased interaction and collaboration at work

Volunteering increases job satisfaction



85%

report improved job satisfaction

90%

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

86%

feel more committed to their employer

A return on investment



89%

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

92%

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

"I decided to become a YouthCan! mentor to help me get out of my comfort zone and get a chance of exchanging ideas and experiences with young people. What I've learned from them has also helped me overcome my insecurities."

– Catalina, Johnson&Johnson, volunteer from Romania



The power of partnerships



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Leading the way in multi-stakeholder partnerships

YouthCan! is the result of a 232 partner strong initiative that began in 2017. The ambitions of our young people have inspired multinational, national and local businesses, as well as governmental institutions, training providers and other supporters to come together for young people, thus embodying the Sustainable Development Goal 17 - Partnerships for the goals. **Each partner brings a unique contribution and expertise, and jointly they build a partnership network creating lasting and meaningful impact** in the lives of young people who have lost or are at risk of losing parental care. In total, YouthCan! worked with an additional 8 partners in 2020. Compared to 2019, there was a 7% increase in national offices of global partners joining the YouthCan! initiative, as well as a 9% increase in local corporate partners. Businesses ranging from media companies, to banks, all the way through to manufacturers, have joined. It is through this diversity of organizations and industries that we can achieve better outcomes for young people, volunteers and businesses, and ultimately for communities.

"We had a big idea at the very beginning: one day reaching out to every single young person within SOS Children's Villages. The more partners we have working together, the better chances we have at finally being able to achieve that ambition. We have created a simple, easy to replicate model - something that cannot be stopped." – Christoph Selig, Vice President Sustainability Communications and Programs, Deutsche Post DHL Group

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



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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