

# Youth Engagement at the heart of UNFPA Jordan Efforts

Everything UNFPA does rests on the commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights for all embodied in **the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and its Programme of Action**. These commitments are crucial for adolescents and youth. Young people realizing their rights to make informed choices about their own bodies, their own lives and the world they live in is a matter of justice and a driver of a lifetime of returns.

UNFPA Jordan Country Office (UNFPA JCO) is working towards **"improved young people's ability to exercise sexual and reproductive health and rights in development and humanitarian settings"**. At the center of our efforts lies youth engagement and participation.

As UNFPA, we know and believe that meaningfully engaging with young people in our programmes with their voices influencing our work to reflect their needs is key to sustainable and long-lasting change and development.

In light of the **International Youth Day 2020** Global Theme **"Youth Engagement for Global Action"**, stories from young people were gathered on how s/he is engaging on a local, national or international level for global action. The stories were published on UNFPA JCO social media platforms, one story each day over the course of one week, with the title **"A Week of Youth in Action"**. Each story reflects how young people are working in their communities in the fields of **sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), youth participation and engagement and peace and security**.

## Youth As Key Component to UNFPA Integrated Approach

As part of the UNFPA integrated approach across SRHR, and GBV services, we work together with the Institute for Family Health (IFH)/Noor Al-Hussein Foundation. Across 7 locations in Jordan, we are able to reach young people through youth awareness sessions and interventions focusing mainly on GBV, SRHR and life skills awareness. The sessions are provided by youth educators based on IFH clinics in host communities.

**One of our youth educators Sahar said that**



**"being a youth educator in Jordan is no joke, but I love it"**

reflecting on the hardship she faces in her work and the rewards.

Youth play a key role in service provision as volunteers and professional staff. Together with Jordnaian Women's Union (JWU), refugee adolescents and youth are able to receive psychosocial support and work towards integrating them in the community with the support of professionals through the "Safe Space" program. JWU includes youth volunteers in their work and one of the volunteers, **Omar, a 23-year old Syrian young man expressed that it was one of the greatest experiences he has ever had and that the space was**



**"a safe haven where you can speak freely with no fears."**

In partnership with the International Rescue Committee, UNFPA is supporting the delivery of SRHR and gender-based violence services in Azraq camp to Syrian refugees at the primary health care level at the reproductive health clinic. At Azraq camp, young people are supporting the reproductive health clinic in delivering the services to the refugee population, which is continuing during the on-going COVID-19 crisis. They also play a key role on the Women and Girls Safe Spaces, and the GBV services and adolescents girls programming. **Doha, a 24 year-old Syrian young woman who volunteers at the clinic is proud of the fact that**



"we continue to provide this service to the largest number of beneficiaries even during the COVID-19 pandemic situation."

SRHR and GBV are also integrated with UNFPA Youth Services. Together with its implementing partner Quescope, UNFPA is supporting the only dedicated comprehensive youth center "A Space for Change" in Za'atari Refugee Camp providing adolescents and youth (aged 12-30 years) essential SRH and GBV awareness programs services, including life-skills training, in addition to recreational, artistic and cultural activities. The center builds the capacity of Syrian youth volunteers to be able to take the responsibility of managing the center and are the trainers and mentors of Syrian adolescents and youth. **Mohammad is a 21 year-old syrian youth volunteer and he joined the youth center at the age of 12, and he says that**

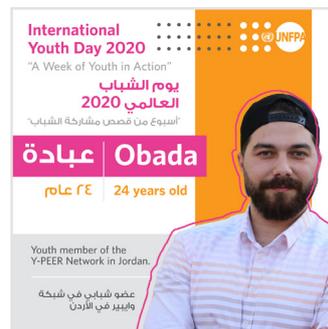


"It is the place where he has been able to build his personality and discover himself as a person."

## ICPD, YPS, and SDGs Agendas Led by Youth Networks in Jordan

UNFPA Jordan continues to support youth networks and groups across the country. The Y-PEER Network is one of those, which currently exists across most of Jordan's governorates, host communities and refugee camps, with 120 active youth members. Y-PEER Jordan has played a major role in building the capacity of young people as "peer educators" and supporting them to raise awareness about their SRHR in an interactive, youth-friendly, participatory and engaging manner. In addition to the active independent Y-PEER members across Jordan, Y-PEER programmes are integrated within UNFPA's supported projects, including with our implementing partners Quescope and IFH.

**Obada, one of the Y-PEER members, believes that**



"real change needs a young generation that is aware of the scale of the challenges, who are united to face them."

Shababna Youth Network is another youth led network supported by UNFPA in partnership with the Royal Health Awareness Society at the universities adopting the RH elective course. Students who take the course can apply for comprehensive training opportunities to join the network, focusing on building youth capacities in communication skills, youth led initiatives, team management, self-awareness, community awareness. The network members are actively engaged in peer education and leading youth led initiatives in the campus to raise their peers' awareness on health related issues.

Jamileh is a 21 year-old youth volunteer with Shababna network, who expressed that



**"as a young woman, contributing to the society I live in, I tried to acquire as many new skills as possible. I focused on my learning, and mastered it"**

reflecting how her life has changed during the pandemic and how she had to adapt.

UNFPA Jordan continues to advance the youth, peace and security (YPS) agenda as the co-chair of the the Jordan YPS 2250 National Coalition Secretariat in partnership with Generations for Peace. Comprising 22 member organizations and 23 youth members under the umbrella of the Ministry of Youth, the Coalition aims to translate the United Nations Security Council resolution 2250 (UNSCR 2250) into concrete actions while ensuring meaningful youth participation and engagement are at the heart of these efforts. Duha is a 23-year old youth member of the YPS 2250 Coalition, where she is working in multiple ways for peace and security across the Kingdom. Through this experience, she has deepened her knowledge on the UNSCR 2250, learned about the key concepts related to conflict, violence, conflict transformation and peacebuilding and how these relate to the communities and to the lived experience of young people in Jordan.



Duha feels

**"eager to work collaboratively with the other members towards a society where peace and security are prioritized."**

In January 2020, the UN Secretary General launched the global dialogue initiative named "UN@75", a global conversation on building the future that people want, and the UN people need in order to reach that. A one minute survey was created to collect the voices of the people, both online and in-person discussions. The Jordan Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO), in coordination with UNFPA and with the support from other UN Agencies, launched the 75 For UN@75 Youth Volunteers groups, to mobilize themselves and their peers and communities to take the online survey, and to implement their own activities and dialogues under the UN@75 initiative and to amplify it. Jordan was in 1st place in the Arab region that received the most respondents to the survey, and the focus area that people living in Jordan believes need more focus and efforts is: Human Rights.

**Ibrahim is a 24 year-old youth Volunteer with the 75 For UN@75 Volunteer group in Jordan, who joined the group because of his interest in human rights and women's empowerment and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) hopes that**



**" as a group we can make a difference."**