

Creating Opportunities for Youth



Across the countries where World Vision works in the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Southern Asia, youth face various obstacles: lack of opportunities, rising unemployment and the denial of their rights to name a few. Through programmes to empower youth, World Vision is working to give youth the chance to contribute to the transformation of communities at local, national and international levels as agents of change.

WHAT IS HAPPENING



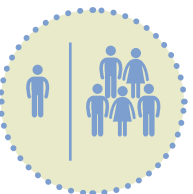
According to the Arabbarometer from 2008, **young men are much more likely to be civically engaged than young women** while gender disparities in civic participation remain highest in the low-income countries in the region. (Gallop, 2010)



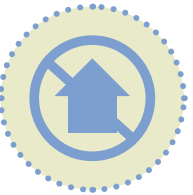
Civic group membership is a good indicator of how engaged youth are in their communities. **In Jordan, only 8 per cent of males and 4 per cent of females are members of civic groups. In Lebanon, the numbers are 23 and 18 per cent respectively.** (Arabbarometer, 2008)



In European Union countries, **37 per cent of temporary workers between the ages of 15 and 24 and 65 per cent of temporary workers aged 25–29 had a fixed-term contract because they could not find a permanent job.** (EuroStat, Youth in Europe, 2009)



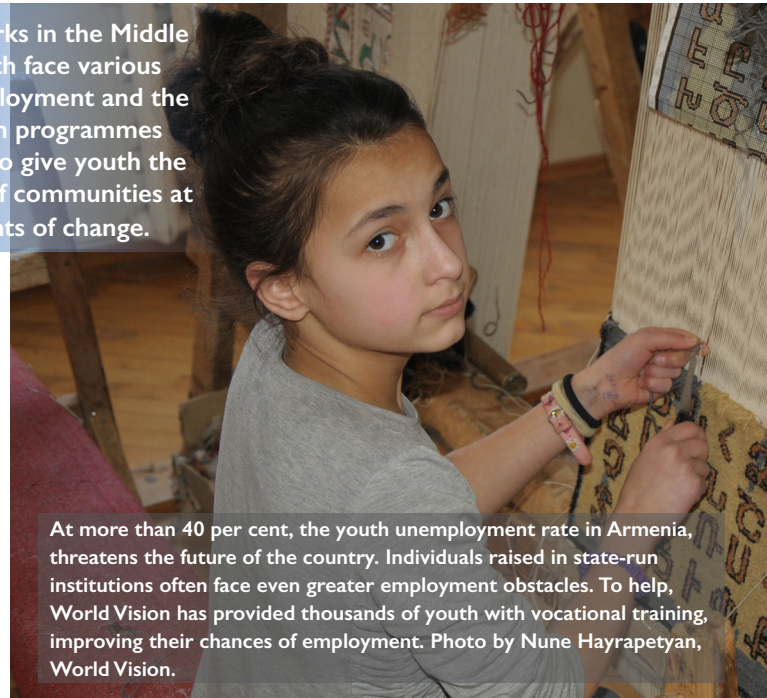
Young people tend to be far more affected by unemployment than their elders. **Unemployment rates among 15 to 24 year olds were often at least double and some times as many as five times as high as those between the ages of 30 and 54.** (EuroStat, Youth in Europe, 2009)



The **exact number of street children is impossible to quantify, but the figure almost certainly runs into tens of millions** across the world. (Consortium for Street Children, 2009)



Spiritual youth are 50-59 per cent more likely to experience the assets of positive family communication, a caring neighborhood, a caring school climate, parent involvement in schooling, and time in youth programs. (Scales Peter C., the Search Institute 2007)



At more than 40 per cent, the youth unemployment rate in Armenia, threatens the future of the country. Individuals raised in state-run institutions often face even greater employment obstacles. To help, World Vision has provided thousands of youth with vocational training, improving their chances of employment. Photo by Nune Hayrapetyan, World Vision.

THE ISSUES:

Adulthood: Youth feel that adults do not take them seriously. They are not given important roles in the community or seen as valuable partners for community development.

Undervalued/Ignored: Youth feel they work unnoticed and unappreciated by adults. They say their successes and achievements are not seen by adults in the community.

Lack of opportunities: Youth are not given the chance to plan or design community initiatives.

Denial of rights: There is a lack of understanding and protection of the rights and responsibilities of youth among both youth and adults.

WHAT WE DO:

Youth activism for youth empowerment: enable youth to become social activists promoting positive social change to influence adults' attitudes towards youth; encouraging them to take youth more seriously and perceive them as valuable partners.

Spiritual empowerment of street youth: through the use of a World Vision designed curriculum made up of the following components: a) relationship to self, b) relationship to others, c) relationship to transcendent power.

Provide leadership opportunities for community engagement: building the capacity of youth through training and hands-on leadership opportunities

PREPARING THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW TODAY

In an effort to prepare youth to be active, contributing members of society, World Vision Georgia equipped 200 youth from three different regions of the country with knowledge of debate techniques and gave them the opportunity to be able to debate important issues in front of a large audience.

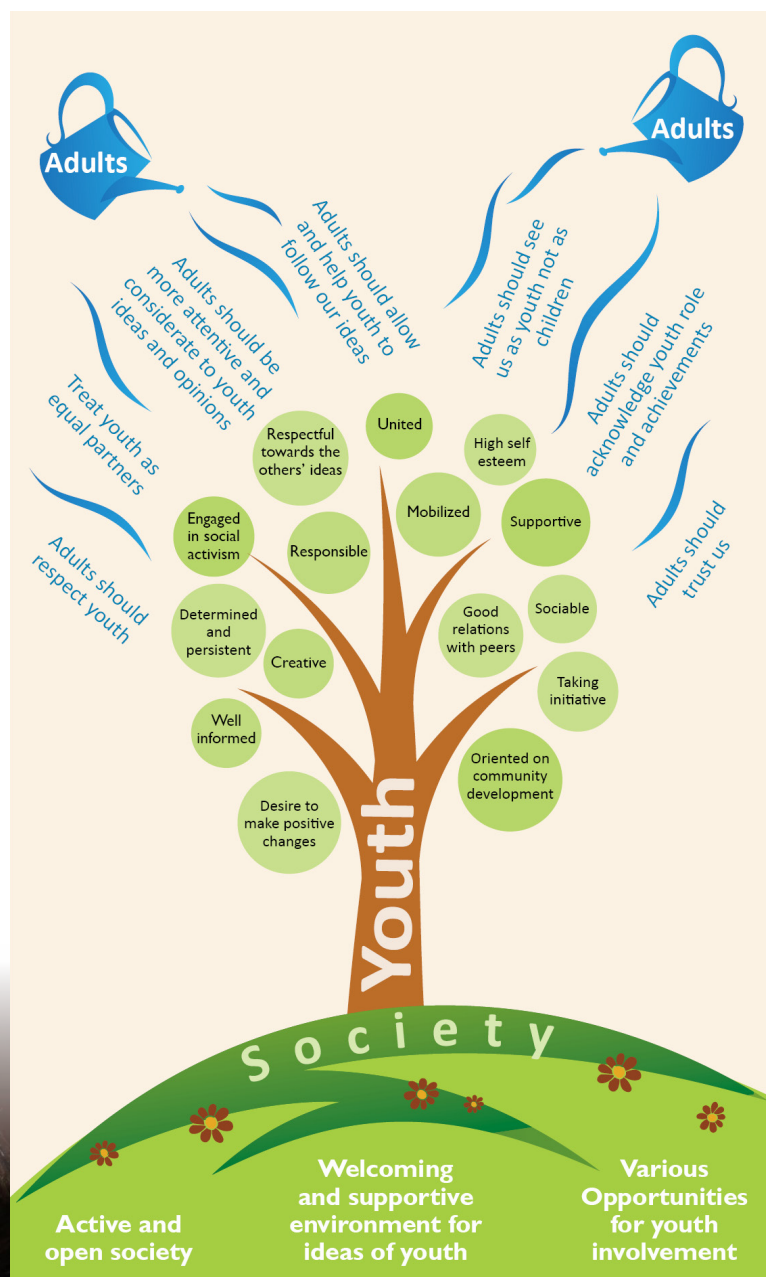
The youth participated in intensive training courses to develop their skills of responsive and evidence-based argumentation, they learned how to work under pressure, clearly articulate thoughts and ideas and to respond to the questions logically and with clarity.

"The debate techniques taught me how important it is to listen to one another," says Ana, 17. "It also helped me to improve my critical thinking and my ability to see the two different sides of the same issue," she adds.

While debating the importance of inclusive education, children were able to demonstrate how much they had learned and developed: children who were once shy and quite were now able to defend their positions with confidence and respect.

"We are very proud of our youth," explained Irakli Giorbelidze, Youth Officer at World Vision Georgia "Utilizing debating skills helped our youth to build confidence, improve communication and increase critical thinking. Now, they are well-educated, equipped and empowered children, ready to become engaged citizens, skilled professionals, and honourable leaders in our society."

Youth from Georgia prepare their talking points during the public debate. Photo by Mariam Khotcholava, World Vision.



CULTIVATING THE PROPER ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUTH TO GROW

Much like plants, youth depend on a healthy environment and support in order to excel in life.

In order to succeed, children and youth need:

-A healthy society that nurtures them, while providing a strong foundation on which to build and from which to grow.

-Space to grow and try new things, and

-Ongoing support and that comes from responsible and supportive adults that provide them the nutrients (tools) they need while also providing them room to develop as individuals.

World Vision Middle East, Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Regional Office

e-mail: contact_MEERO@wvi.org
62 Perikleous Street, 2021, Strovolos, Nicosia Cyprus
Office: +357-22-870277 Fax: +357-22-870204

World Vision MEERO WYMEERO [youtube.com/wvmeero](https://www.youtube.com/wvmeero)
wvi.org/meero