

Adolescents and Youth for Climate Action

UNICEF Jordan Country Office

Background

According to the Water Strategy for the period of 2008-2022, Jordan is one of the four driest countries in the world. The scarcity of water in Jordan constrains country economic growth and development as water is not only considered a factor for food production but a crucial factor for health, survival and social and economic development. Despite Government efforts in managing the limited water resources and its relentless search for alternative supplies, the available water resources per capita are falling due to population growth and refugee influx.

Jordan's Environmental Performance Index (EPI) score was 62.2 and ranked 62th among 180 countries in 2018. Jordan is considered one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change with extremely limited primary energy resources, which forces the Kingdom to depend on the imported petroleum and natural gas from neighboring Arab countries. With the rapidly increasing population, energy demand is expected to rise by at least 50 percent over the next 20 years, aggravating the existing shortage. Moreover, according to the Oxfam research on recycling in Jordan¹, there is a lack of nationwide solid waste management policy as well as lack of public awareness on recycling that even those who actively recycle and reuse products, especially refugees, do so largely for economic reasons and often face shame in doing so. In fact, a mere 7 percent of the 2 million tons of municipal waste produced annually is recycled informally in Jordan.

The sustainability of human development in Jordan is dependent on the availability of secure, adequate and clean energy sources and threatened by the decline in both the quantity and quality of water resources, environmental degradation, and negative consequences of climate change.

CPD Target (2018-2022)

- 100 schools with climate action curriculum
- 15 green startups supported by UNICEF
- 10,000 green volunteers engaged through Nahno
- 2,000 young climate leaders cultivated from all governorates

UNICEF Values on Youth Engagement in Climate Action

UNICEF recognizes climate change as a direct threat to girls' and boys' ability to survive, grow, and expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. Youth Engagement in Climate Action programmes take their part in Youth Engagement Pathway, aimed to involve and support youth to take the lead on positive initiatives in their society by providing them with skills and knowledge that can also help them with future job opportunities. The programmes focus on stimulating young people's civic and economic engagement specifically to address the effects of climate change and contribute to the Kingdom's overall environmental sustainability. In the long-term, UNICEF Jordan seeks **to equip young people with the technical and soft skills necessary to secure emerging jobs within the green economy.**

UNICEF Youth Engagement in Climate Action

According to the Climate Action Mandate survey on 100 young people conducted by UNICEF Jordan Country Office in 2019, over 90 percent of youth answered that they are concerned about climate change and nearly 50 percent of them use social media platforms to raise their concerns, while others raise their concern in their communities and schools.

Now more than ever, climate change is an important issue not only in Jordan, but worldwide. The need for awareness and action for climate is essential, especially for children and youth, as they will be the leaders of generation living in the world greatly affected by climate change.

¹ Recycling in Jordan, Oxfam (2019)

One of Jordan's biggest assets is its human capital. Jordan has one of the youngest populations in the world. Today, 63 per cent of the population is under 30 years of age. If these young people are to shape the future of the Kingdom, their understanding of climate issues and engagement in climate action is crucial.

To unleash the potential of this generation, including the most vulnerable populations, such as young women, refugees, and youth with disabilities, UNICEF proposes a vision for climate action that engages young people in raising awareness and strengthens youth leadership in Jordan through innovative approaches.

The goal of the **UNICEF Youth Engagement in Climate Action Programme** is to increase awareness of climate change and engage young people as agents of change to take action on environmental issues in Jordan and contributing to the Kingdom's overall environmental sustainability.

Strategy

Stimulating Civic, Social, and Economic Engagement of Youth in Response to Climate Change and its Adverse Effects on Vulnerable Communities in Jordan

- Stimulating young people to become active agents of change for the climate crisis. UNICEF will encourage and empower young people in climate policy-related issues and action in Jordan through the extension of the Environment Action Clubs in Makani and Ministry of Youth centers in all governorates of Jordan.
- Equipping young people with the technical and soft skills, innovativeness, and experience in working on environmental issues to strengthen youth leadership in green initiatives, as well as to secure emerging jobs within the green economy.
- Supporting national advocacy on youth engagement in climate action through establishing a platform for children and youth of Jordan to inspire, empower, and mobilize a generational movement of positive action on climate change.

Key Interventions

Climate Change Education and Awareness

- Promote climate literacy through the extension of the **Environment Action clubs** in schools, Makani centres and Ministry of Youth centres in all governorates in Jordan.
- Cultivate **Youth Climate Leaders** through capacity development workshops, covering technical and scientific background of climate change, climate policy on national and global levels, the role of gender equity in climate action, climate change mitigation and adaptation actions, and the design of environmental initiatives and their integrated management.

Capacity Building and Social Innovation

- **Participatory Action Research (PAR)** program empowers and builds the capacity of young people on data collection, research, and analysis to understand and map challenges and aspirations of young people in relation to climate action. The findings and the process are designed to support advocacy efforts of young people to lead grass-roots awareness initiatives at the community level and to hold consultations with key stakeholders at the local, national, and regional levels on key issues such as water scarcity, climate change, and employment.
- **Social Innovation Incubators**, as well as WASH Innovation Hubs, train and support young people with their green initiatives to implement pilot designs on interventions and new technologies with a focus on vulnerable areas including, water and climate change. The labs equip vulnerable young people with entrepreneurial skills and support their green business ideas and their successful transition to adulthood and employment. This is to support the establishment and growth of a social enterprise ecosystem in Jordan, which will directly engage vulnerable young people and benefit their access to socially-driven income-generation.
- **Amaluna economic engagement** programme provides youth in Jordan with 3 to 6-month accredited scholarships in sectors to support WASH and climate action efforts, both in host

communities and in refugee camps. These trainings equip young people with knowledge to maintain hybrid technology, support in servicing solar panels and water systems, as well as supporting overall WASH efforts in vulnerable communities through hygiene engineering.

National Support for Youth in Action

- **Local Conference of Youth (LCoY)** will provide a platform for children and youth of Jordan to come together to share ideas, resources, and experiences, as well as potential solutions, in order to make a generational movement of young people in taking positive action on climate change. Young climate activists will unite in a call for urgent action through a Youth Declaration on Climate Change and the outcomes of the conference will set the foundations of knowledge and awareness for participation in the Conference of Parties (COP).
- **Nahno** is an innovative online tool that allows youth to register and be matched to relevant engagement opportunities near them. The platform provides youth with variety of social and civic engagement opportunities through volunteering, including green volunteering, giving youth an exposure to environmental issues in their own communities as well as to support their actions in making positive changes to the environment.
- As part of its efforts to build the capacity of local women- and youth-led social enterprises, UNICEF supports **youth-led social enterprises**, with a focus on women employment and green entrepreneurship. UNICEF Jordan is planning to expand its support to green social enterprises, which both link young people with income-generation through self-employment and contribute to community efforts to increase environmental sustainability.

Case study: Green rooftops in Jerash camp

UNICEF Jordan initiated a partnership with a national youth-led non-profit organization to bring hydroponic and aquaponic technology to the most under-resourced Palestinian refugee camp – Jerash camp. This support targets the provision of training in establishing and maintaining the technology in the camp, increasing local families' food security and energizing the local economy through the sale of produce.



Green Rooftops started with an idea: make Jerash camp a self-sustainable ecosystem through the production of food and fresh produce. Each green rooftop can satisfy the needs of two families, whether through increased food security if the families consume the food themselves or through income generation if they sell their produce.

Green Rooftops can produce 17 different vegetables, including tomatoes, cucumbers, eggplants, zucchini, and strawberries. Over time, they plan to expand their capacities of production, as well as the establishment up to 50 green rooftops in Jerash camp,

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