

# Development Cooperation Programme of YMCA Finland



*According to the UN, there are 1.21 billion people between 15 to 24 years old in the world, constituting 15.5 % of the world population. More than half of the world's population are youths under 30 years old. The number of youths is estimated to grow to 1.34 billion by 2050.*

The largest concentration of youth populations, more than 600 million young people, live in some of the poorest and least developed countries, placing significant pressure on their societies, healthcare, education systems, infrastructure, and labour markets..

The YMCA is one of the world's oldest and largest movements for youth. We operate in 120 countries and reach over 60 million people. The YMCA is a local, national, and international organisation known for providing a safe community and bringing social justice and peace to young people regardless of ethnicity or religion.

In addition to the horizontal coverage, the YMCA has a unique opportunity to address young people's challenges and promote their rights utilising its vertical scope to link the grassroots level to the global arenas of advocacy.

The YMCA Finland's Development Cooperation Programme is steered by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, YPS. The YPS agenda recognises young people as important partners in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and social development. Followingly, the YPS agenda has strengthened the recognition of the societal importance of youth work. As a global youth organisation, the YMCA is critical in advancing this agenda. YMCA promotes solidarity across borders and connects young people between the global North and the global South to drive social change together.

The Development Cooperation Programme seeks to empower youth through livelihoods, opportunities and peace education so they can become active peacemakers both in their communities and globally. The programme is implemented together with local YMCAs in Lebanon, Palestine, The Gambia, Kenya and Ethiopia, and with the African Alliance of YMCAs in 2022-2025. The global education programme is implemented in Finland, and it acts as a binding element between the programme and youth empowerment in Finland.

**Milla Mäkinen**  
Programme Manager  
YMCA Finland

## ***The challenges of fragile contexts, the consequences of conflicts, social developments, and climate change – all directly impact young people's lives for decades to come.***

*At the same time, youth can find innovative solutions and creative ways to navigate their circumstances.*

*Youth are, however, too often left without an opportunity to impact on their future and living conditions.*



# YMCA with and for young people

*Throughout its history, the YMCA has been a pioneer in urban youth work. YMCA was founded in London in 1844 as a response to the masses of young people migrating from the rural areas of England to the capital.*

In the United States, the YMCA movement was founded to help European migrants find employment, housing and support their integration into society. To this day, YMCAs around the world are welcoming newcomers and assisting their host communities.

Today, many of the world's metropolitan cities have traditional YMCA movements with more than a hundred years of experience in urban phenomena, from the opportunities and communities they provide to their downsides and vulnerabilities. A local, authentic, and historical presence brings a deep and holistic understanding of the situation of young people.

*Vision 2030 serves as a roadmap for all YMCAs' strategic goals. The Vision comprises four pillars: Community Wellbeing, Meaningful Work, Sustainable Planet, and Just World.*

YMCAs worldwide align, with almost all their programmes, all over the world addressing similar agendas. At the 20<sup>th</sup> World Council

in 2022, YMCAs across the globe adopted a shared strategy and plan, Vision 2030, introduced by World YMCA.



*YMCAs around the world are committed to Vision 2030, which empowers communities and young people worldwide to build a just, sustainable, equitable and inclusive world.*

### **World Alliance of YMCAs**

has consultative status in UN Economic and Social Council and partnership with UNHCR. Cooperates with institutions as Human Rights Council, UNICEF, UNESCO, Big 6 Coalition, Youth Empowerment Network and is observer with IOM.

**YMCAs reach more than 60 million people worldwide.**

### **Area Alliances in Europe, Africa, Middle East, Asia and Pacific, Latin America and Caribbean**

includes networks such as YMCA Europe Working Group on Migrants and Refugees and scaling up best practises regionally.

### **YMCA Finland**

*National board and staff*

### **~120 National YMCA movements**

consists from over 7,000 local YMCA associations with 88,000 staff members and 900,000 volunteers worldwide.

### **Members of YMCA Finland**

consist of 30 local YMCA associations with more than 400 staff members and 2,000 volunteers.

***In 2022 ~30,000 young people participated in YMCA activities regularly in Finland and more than 24,000 events and meetings were organised.***

## **YMCA in Finland**

The YMCA was established in Finland in 1889 and is an acknowledged national youth organisation with a solid mandate to operate in the Finnish civil society. YMCA Finland works as a central organisation for 30 local YMCA associations across the country who engage in professional and versatile youth work.

The organisation's vast potential has been harnessed effectively over recent years. YMCA Finland draws on not only an international network but also a broad and diverse national network of professionals and young people.

*The YMCA movement in Finland has, altogether, more than 400 employees, almost 2,000 volunteers, and an annual turnover of more than 30 million euros.*

YMCA Finland began its international social work by helping refugees after World War II, and the first development cooperation project began in 1979 in The Gambia. The potential of the YMCA is significant, and the groundwork has been built over a long period of time. In 2015, a new page was turned when the expansion of development cooperation accelerated towards the Programme presented in this document.

YMCA Finland with its local associations is a part of the international YMCA movement. World YMCA with Area Alliances work as support structures for the national YMCAs. They connect national movements with each other and with global, regional, or continental bodies such as the European Union, African Union, United Nations bodies, and other civil society partners.



## Where we work

*As the largest youth organisation in the world, YMCA aims to support and empower young people wherever they are on their journey.*

YMCA Finland's Development Cooperation Programme is being implemented in Ethiopia, The Gambia, Kenya, Lebanon, and Palestine in conjunction with local YMCA movements. YMCA Finland also partners with the Africa Alliance of YMCAs, with whom cooperation is an opportunity to scale the work regionally with other African YMCAs. As a part of the Programme, YMCA Finland also develops and executes further Global Citizenship Education in Finland.

*The partner YMCAs are strongly rooted in their communities and provide a variety of programmes and services based on local priorities and issues affecting young people and their communities.*

The projects' target groups in the partner countries are particularly the most vulnerable young people in society, such as migrants, refugees, young women, people with disabilities, the unemployed, and the uneducated. The programme seeks to empower youth through livelihoods and peace education while encouraging them to become active peacemakers in their communities and globally.

All the programme partners have a long history of working with and for young people and have gained a significant position within their local civil societies. Most partners have existed since the beginning of the twentieth century. These organisations are strong, financially stable, and independent actors with excellent operating capacity even in challenging environments.

**YMCA Ethiopia** has a history of working with education, emergency relief, and community development and has focused on peace and media education, and community resilience.

**YMCA The Gambia** works with migrant returnees, vocational skills training, health awareness, and inter-faith dialogue.

**YMCA Kenya** has been at the heart of vocational training, with its five vocational colleges.

**YMCA Lebanon** has supported marginalised and vulnerable communities, especially in recent years refugees from Syria and Iraq.

**The East Jerusalem YMCA**, EJ YMCA, has a proven track record of over 30 years in action in humanitarian aid and development work and presence across the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

**The Africa Alliance of YMCAs**, AAYMCA, is a regional organisation that brings together YMCA movements in Africa to harness resources, share experiences and face the challenges of the continent as a network.

YMCA Peacemakers youth in Kenya.  
Photo Kaisa Strömberg.





*Agenda 2030, Youth 2030, and Youth, Peace and Security agenda are the three vital global agendas to which YMCA Finland's Development Cooperation Programme framework is built.*

Agenda 2030 provides a global action plan for people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnerships. The integrated goals reflect the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental.

# Programme framework

*The YMCA movement's strong connections to the UN and other global organisations play also an important role in empowering young people and promoting their participation and engagement. As a global movement, it's consistent for the YMCA to associate with globally shared agendas.*

## Shared Agendas

Agenda 2030. YMCA programmes globally cover all 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and unite the movement in its mission to serve young people in their opportunities in transforming the world for the better. In its development cooperation, YMCA Finland emphasises two of the SDGs which underpin the thematic priorities; the one of decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) and the one of peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16).

– peace and security, human rights and sustainable development, and in all contexts. The YMCA works in line with UN Youth Strategy priority areas with a special emphasis on supporting young people's employment, livelihoods and advocacy as well as promoting their role in peace-making and reaching sustainable peace in their societies.

people as essential partners in conflict prevention, global peacebuilding, and the prevention of violent extremism.

Finland was the first country to decide on creating a National Action Plan, NAP, on Resolution 2250 Youth, Peace and Security in 2018. As part of the consultations of NGOs leading up to the plan, YMCA Finland carried out a case study exploring local understandings of peace whilst connecting local youth work to global arenas. Two consecutive motions first submitted by YMCA Finland and followed by Sweden to address the 2250 agenda were approved by YMCA World Councils in 2018 and 2022.

As a result, promotion of YPS agenda is recommended for all 130 national YMCA movements with their 11,000 local associations around the world and included in the agenda of the World YMCA and Area Alliances of YMCAs.

## Youth, Peace and Security agenda

Initiated in 2011 by Finland's National Youth Council Allianssi, together with member youth organisations, including the YMCA, Resolution 2250 Youth, Peace and Security got unanimously adopted by the United Nations (UN) Security Council in December 2015. It is the first thematic resolution recognising the positive role of young people in conflict and post-conflict peacebuilding. Resolution 2250 and subsequent resolutions 2419 and 2535, adopted in 2018 and 2020, see young

## Why is development cooperation needed?

- ..for a sustainable future.*
- ..as part of foreign and security policy.*
- ..as a prerequisite for lasting peace.*
- ..to mitigate the climate crisis.*
- ..as a promise for the future of young people.*
- ..for a fairer world.*

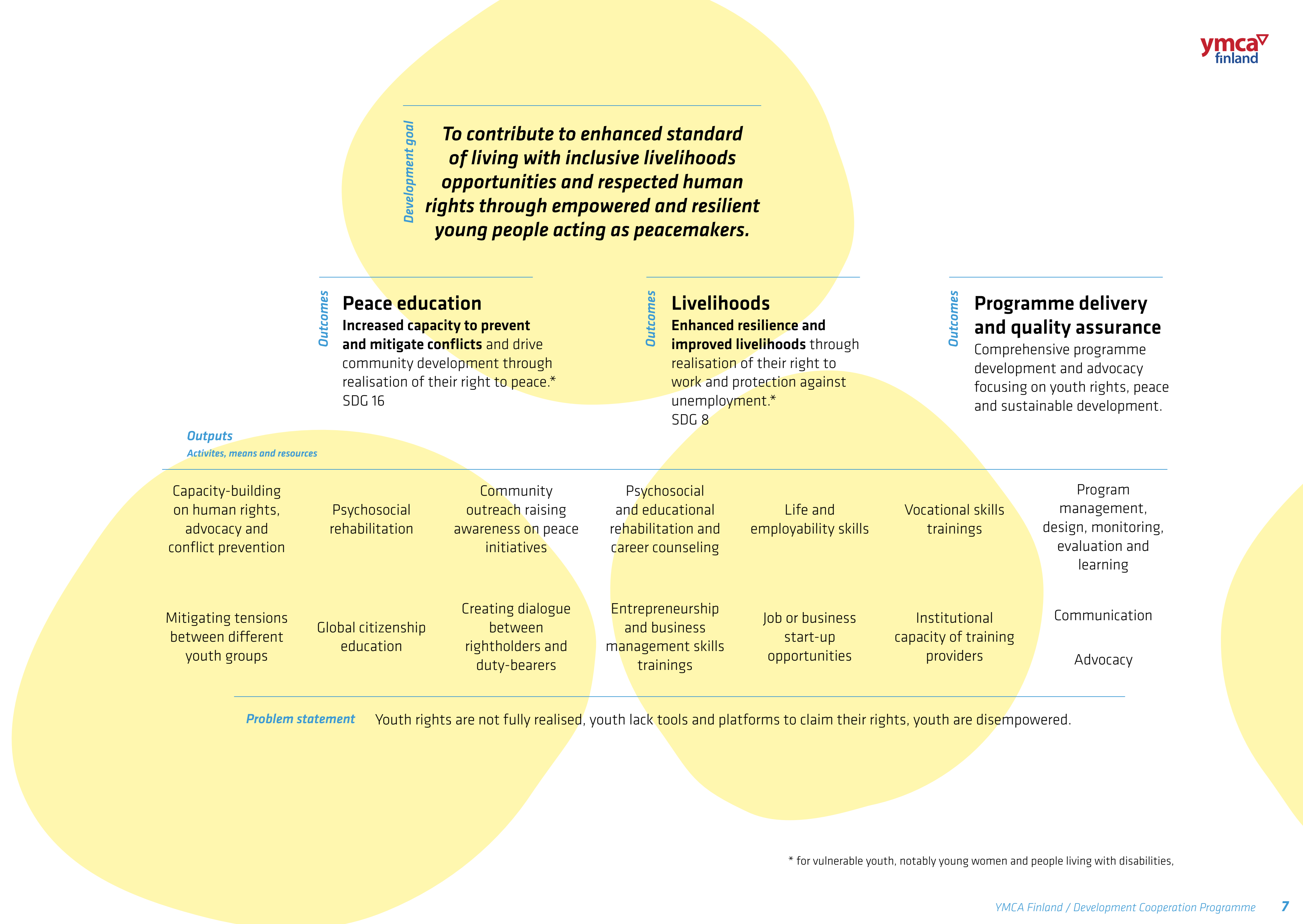


# Theory of change

The problem the YMCA continues to address with its interventions is that youth rights are not fully realised. Especially vulnerable young people in fragile contexts, such as young women, unemployed or school dropouts, minorities, or youth living with disabilities, are not participating in the development of their societies at their full capacity.

The root cause behind this is that many injustices disproportionately affect young people. They lack sustainable resources and tools, accessible and equal opportunities, and inclusive platforms to influence their communities and future.

YMCA believes empowered young people are change agents and human rights champions who can strengthen their local civil societies. With the right tools and platforms, youth can improve the standard of living of their communities while transforming society more just, peaceful, and sustainable. The change builds both individual and community resilience and boosts the local civil society in realisation of human rights and sustainable development.



\* for vulnerable youth, notably young women and people living with disabilities,



Perla El Hage and Tabu Hossaini participated in YMCA Finland and YMCA Lebanon's Peacebuilding Camp 2023. Photo Martiina Woodson.

# Peacebuilding Programme

*Young people around the world understand peace as being able to live without fear and in harmony with each other.*

***Peace and sustainable development are interdependent***

*Peace cannot last without sustaining livelihoods opportunities – and they cannot be developed in the absence of peace.*

*Empowering young people to contribute to a more peaceful future is a fundamental approach of YMCA Finland's Development Cooperation Programme. Meaningful participation of youth in conflict prevention is not only about preventing violent conflict but upholding equal, democratic, and just societies where young people's voices are heard on all levels.*

Peace is one of the two sub-programmes of YMCA Finland's Development Cooperation Programme. YMCA Finland's Peace Programme is steered by the Youth, Peace and Security agenda emphasising the active role of youth in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

YMCA Finland's programme promotes and advances the Youth, Peace and Security agenda and implements its five pillars – participation, prevention, protection, partnerships, and reintegration – in partner countries and Finland through a diverse set of contextualised activities. The programme also builds the capacities of local civil society actors to advance the agenda and its national implementation in partner countries. Moreover, the programme advocates the Youth, Peace and Security agenda in global networks and forums.

In line with the agenda, the YMCA Finland's Peace Programme activities aim to increase the participation and leadership of young people, with particular emphasis on the social inclusion of women and vulnerable youth.

This entails increased awareness of human rights, intercultural competencies, and skills to advocate, influence and organise for positive change. The activities are many, including capacity-sharing on Youth, Peace and Security agenda, training on conflict prevention, mitigation, and peacebuilding methods. They are expanded with awareness-raising events, advocacy campaigns or materials, community outreach, and trust-building activities.

Formation of YMCA Peacemakers groups facilitates skills building and promotes youth representation and inclusion. Peacemakers is a global, inter-religious grassroots movement mobilising youths who want to work for global justice and peace. The groups link the youth across borders together for mutual learning and sharing experiences and generate added value for the programme. Platforms for dialogue between young Peacemakers and local duty-bearers are created. The YMCAs' strong presence in the local communities also facilitates organising high-level cooperation.

The Peacebuilding Programme aims to reach around 11,900 young people during the four-year programme period.



# Global Citizenship Education with local YMCAs in Finland

*As a global and nationwide youth movement, YMCA's vision is that Global Citizenship Education, GCE, belongs to all. YMCA Finland implements GCE through the local YMCA associations' professional and diverse youth work. YMCA aims to develop methods, activities, and perspectives for GCE suitable for youth work and several target groups.*

The goal is to make GCE themes approachable and inspiring for all youth, not only those who are already active and engaged in the work for peace, sustainable development, and global solidarity through formal education or employment. At the same time, YMCA Finland's development cooperation allows sharing the realities of different contexts in which youth live and brings out the voices and perspectives of the youth from the "Global South".

The goal is to strengthen the knowledge, skills, and motivation of 1000 children and youth annually, enabling them to act as builders of sustainable development and peace in local, national, or global contexts. Additionally, the goals are to increase the knowledge, skills, and motivation of 100 employees and volunteers annually to implement global citizenship education in youth work; and to make peace, sustainable development, and global solidarity explicit and visible cross-cutting themes of YMCA's youth work.

The work concentrates on mainstreaming and stabilising the GCE in the YMCA's youth work and structures in six local movements covering Finland from south to north: Helsinki, Vantaa, Turku, Heinola, Tampere, and Oulu.

The actual GCE in the YMCA consists of nationwide, local, and programme-specific training of employees and volunteers. GCE becomes the daily routine and discourse through "the GCE lenses" of trained employees and will be added as an explicit part of the annual plans of the local YMCAs.

GCE is more concrete through the activities carried out in regular youth work like afternoon clubs, youth clubs, camps, leadership training, and the YMCA Peacemakers network, to mention a few.

## Local YMCAs create Peacebuilder groups through sports

Many of the 30 local YMCAs also focus on recreational activities, especially sports. Thus, YMCA will explore the methods of GCE within basketball in 2023. The flagship and pilot scheme of the YMCA's GCE continues: From the Players to the Peacebuilders groups of youth drawn from Midnight Street Basketball were formed in 2021–2022 in Tampere, Helsinki, and Oulu, and 2023 in Turku. Youth meet weekly to discuss peace and sustainable development topics in a youth-led manner and plan for advocacy and activism.

YMCA Finland aims to be an inspirational forerunner within the field of GCE in youth work, showing an example of how a youth organisation can build the whole culture upon the themes of Sustainable Development Goals and peace. YMCA Finland will create new partnerships to develop more influential and insightful GCE possibilities and activities for youth. By the end of the programme cycle, the aim is to publish material for Quality Global Citizenship and Peace Education in Youth work.

Jerreh ChamJerreh serves as an inspiration and proof that young people can thrive with access to the right tools, knowledge, and opportunities. Photo Kaisa Strömberg.

## Young Gambian's story highlights the intertwined themes of livelihoods and peace

*Jerreh Cham, a 28-year-old Gambian returnee migrant, exemplifies how access to education, information, and support can transform a young person's life.*

In 2016, Jerreh embarked on a perilous journey through Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger to reach Libya and cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. His decision was driven by his responsibility towards his family, who had supported his education. Recognising that his family couldn't afford to pay for his university studies, he saw the back door to Europe as a solution.

Jerreh endured over a year of hardships, including abuse, two failed attempts at crossing the sea, and months of imprisonment in Libya.

Eventually, he had the opportunity to return to The Gambia through the Government Assisted Repatriation Programme by IOM in 2017. Back in his home country, Jerreh was determined to pursue education, becoming a role model for Gambian youth. He engaged in the IOM sensitisation work, shared his experiences, and independently studied to prepare for university.

Through EU's Youth Empowerment Project, Jerreh received satellite installation and electronic repairs training, enabling him to start his own business. After the course, the young man became a trainer at YMCA Gambia, providing on-the-job training for other young people.

He also contributes to the YMCA Peacemakers group, advocating for peace and youth rights. Through YMCA Peacemakers activities, he shares his story with his peers, aiming to prevent irregular migration and to inspire them. Currently, he is studying Business Administration at the university and is self-funding his tuition fees.





# Livelihoods programme

*Two-thirds of youth in developing countries are unemployed, not in school, or engaged only in irregular or informal work. High youth unemployment and poor education opportunities are directly reflected in the well-being of young people and society.*

The growing youth population and its pressure on education systems, job markets, and urban planning are among the most significant challenges many developing countries face today.

There is a clear gap between young people and the labour market, which makes it especially important to offer market-relevant training for young people.

YMCA Finland, together with its partners, offers vocational and entrepreneurship training followed by on-the-job learning opportunities, internships and start-up business opportunities like tools or capital for vulnerable youth to develop their skills and find sustainable income opportunities. The Livelihoods Programme aims to reach around 4,400 young people during the four-year programme period.

Decent jobs develop resources, increase young people's resilience to shocks, and help lift youth and their families out of poverty. New resources provide access to new opportunities.

This enables young people to contribute to the development of their environments.

The result of this outcome is closely intertwined with the possibility for youth to contribute to peaceful development on local and national levels. Economically empowered youth can act as agents of positive change by securing their and their family's livelihoods.

*Training, capacity building, career counselling and promotion of entrepreneurship create new ways for young people to improve their livelihoods.*

The educational activities are both locally led and based on local market needs. A part of the livelihoods and employability element in YMCA

Finland's programme is also life skills and entrepreneurship and business management training, which equips the youth with skills to become self-sufficient and more confident. The trainings improve youth's resilience and contribute to the sustainability of the intervention. Finally, institutional capacity building includes also training of teachers, updating study modules and modernising accessible learning facilities. Best practices are promoted through YMCA networks and partnerships.





The Kenya YMCA College of Agriculture and Technology's, KYCAT, two-year course enrolls 250 students yearly. Paul Kamunu is interested in regenerative agriculture and horticulture. He hopes to make landscape management a profession as it serves as a method of mitigating the effects of erosion and climate change. Photo Martiina Woodson.

## YMCA brings young people into the change of farming culture



*One specific livelihood among YMCA Finland's programme focuses on agriculture and sustainable production, increasing farmers' adaptive capacities and advancing climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration.*

The integrated approach is climate-smart agriculture, CSA, also known as regenerative or conservation agriculture. Adopting CSA practices helps increase agricultural productivity by restoring the soil, reducing the vulnerability to climate risks and hazardous weather, improving livelihoods, and creating new economic opportunities.

As a farming method, CSA has a positive double effect. In addition to strengthening climate change resilience, it mitigates climate change by revitalising the ecosystem and increasing the carbon stock in the soil.

Kenya works in many sectors to promote sustainable development, including sustainable agriculture and food security, the latter being among the top four priorities on the Kenyan government agenda alongside public health, affordable housing, and job creation. The YMCA's training on promoting regenerative farming in Kenya responds to this need. The curriculum development is supported by YMCA Finland's Development Cooperation Programme.

Whilst agriculture has not been attractive for young Kenyans in recent decades, sustainable agricultural practices are expected to inspire new generations to take up the sector. Young people are particularly enthusiastic about the courses on CSA farming, as they respond directly to the demand in a changing agricultural sector.



# Quality assurance

*In addition to the thematic sub-programmes, the comprehensive implementation and effectiveness of the programme is supported by high-quality project management, versatile communication, and advocacy work. Policies and guidelines are an important part of risk management.*

## Design, monitoring, evaluation and learning

YMCA Finland applies the results-based management and Logical Framework Approach in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of its interventions. The plan for each project has been formulated together with the local partner.

YMCA Finland's programme team manages the interventions, including supervision, financial management, and reporting to the donor. YMCA Finland's project coordinators ensure that interventions are implemented on time and review indicators and monitoring data. YMCA Finland conducts regular field monitoring visits to assess the progress, meets and discusses with local partners, beneficiaries, and stakeholders, and supports them in all aspects of project delivery. The programme team also builds partners' capacity through thematic expertise.

Partner's project coordinator oversees the implementation and monitoring of project progress and ensures meeting the regulations and following the guidelines. Partner organisations have their own developed monitoring systems that YMCA Finland examines in the partnership capacity assessment before the start of the cooperation.

Samuel Anyal who teaches crop science at The Kenya YMCA College of Agriculture and Technology is presenting to Juha Virtanen, Secretary General of YMCA Finland, regenerative farming demonstration plots. Photo Martiina Woodson.



The results are tracked using the indicators and the findings are reported through regular reporting mechanisms. Special purpose audits are conducted annually both in partner countries as well as with YMCA Finland by an independent and authorised professional auditor.

At the end of the programme period 2022–2025, there will be an external mid-term evaluation focusing on the peacebuilding programme and promotion of Youth, Peace and Security agenda.

## ***Development Communication***

One of the key objectives of development communication is to ensure that youth rights and empowerment, livelihoods and decent work are at the forefront of the development debate. In addition to disseminating information on the Development Cooperation Programme's solutions, and results, the aim is to engage, inspire, listen, and discuss with the public.

*One of the priorities in YMCA communication is to enable an active role for the young audience. Youth have an opportunity to voice and exchange thoughts and experiences through their own and the YMCA's social media accounts, thereby creating commitment and ownership.*

The target groups for development communication of YMCA Finland are young people, development communication audiences, policymakers, funders, and partners.

Development communication contributes to the values of Finland's foreign and development policy. The critical role of development communication in forming public opinion and participating in the broader narrative on fragile communities is recognised. Communication in the international development sector requires cultural sensitivity and understanding media representations as building blocks of shared human culture and experience. Hence, all content must recognise the agency of right holders.

## ***Advocacy***

The thematic priorities in YMCA Finland's advocacy work are the youth's active and meaningful role as peacebuilders, challenges of youth employment, the root causes of conflicts, and global solidarity. YMCA highlights how questions of peace and security are inextricably linked to the questions of basic human needs, such as livelihoods.

Through the Youth, Peace and Security, YPS, agenda advocacy, connections are created between young global citizens worldwide, from North to South, and from the grassroots to the highest advocacy arenas of the international community.

Through its broad networks, the YMCA can provide young people a platform to advocate for their rights.

The expertise accumulated over several years and active involvement in the subject have contributed to the agenda's implementation and visibility and strengthened the YMCA's position and recognition as an influential actor and discussant in societal issues.

Partners' knowledge of the YPS agenda and capacity to contextualise it is increased through regular exchange and capacity sharing. In this exchange, YMCA Finland's

understanding of local conditions and processes for creating YPS strategies and locally relevant approaches for civil society advocacy is improved, too.

Finnish youth can gain the needed knowledge and tools to participate in decision-making and demand change in society through the Global Citizenship Education component, the YMCA Peacemakers activities, and participating in societal events. YMCA Finland connects young volunteers from Finland and the partner countries to exchange experiences, connect, and collaborate.





# Cross-cutting principles

*In addition to the programmatic themes, the YMCA promotes cross-cutting objectives as follows. The programme applies a twin-track approach: the cross-cutting objectives are mainstreamed in the programme's approach, and on the other hand, the implementation includes targeted actions advancing these goals.*



Young women and men graduated from YMCA Lebanon's Vocational Training as nursing assistants in 2023. Photo Martiina Woodson.

## Policies, guidelines and risk management

The code of conduct guides the staff of YMCA Finland, its partners, and other employer representatives involved in the YMCA Finland Development Cooperation Programme.

[The Ethical Guidelines](#)   [Anti-Corruption Policy](#)

[Policy and Guidelines on preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment](#)

[Working with Children and Young People Policy and Procedures](#)

YMCA Finland also has comprehensive **Risk Management Guidelines**, included in **The YMCA Finland Handbook for Development Cooperation**, describing the risk management system, including risk prevention, analysis, preparation, and mitigation.

Risk matrixes have been prepared for the Development Cooperation Programme as well as for the individual projects. Finally, The YMCA Finland Handbook for Development Cooperation is a guiding document clarifying the main approaches and project management guidelines.

The minimum standard for all implementation and cross-cutting objectives is to **do no harm**. In especially fragile contexts, the minimum level translates into a **conflict-sensitive approach**. Close partnership and communication together with local ownership of the projects ensures the programme is conflict-sensitive while contributing to positive developments. Besides its partners, YMCA Finland consults other NGOs, YMCA networks, and embassies. Regular field visits are conducted to maintain an up-to-date and comprehensive awareness of the limitations and possibilities of the operational contexts.

YMCA Finland **strengthens local civil societies** through supporting its partner organisations to act effectively in civic spaces through training of staff and board members, strengthening internal and external networks, and infrastructure development. The

YMCAs provide tools and platforms for youth to engage, learn, network, and organise workshops and events to strengthen their role as active members of society.

**Human-rights-based approach**, HRBA, is progressive with some transformative elements. YMCA partners' capacity is built to advance human rights commitments at the national, community, and individual levels. Youths are trained to advance the rights of their peers. The global YMCA movement has agreed on a Value Statement on Inclusion, which commits to inclusiveness and works against all forms of discrimination and human rights violations.

**Gender equality** is considered in assessing how activities and results can benefit all equally. For example, women's employment has been supported considering cultural expectations of women such as childcare and domestic work. Recruitment of female staff has addressed cultural barriers to women's participation and separate groups serve as a safe space

for girls from different cultural backgrounds. In all programme activities, at least half of the rights-holders are women or girls.

**Disability inclusion** is supported by strengthening the capacity of people with disabilities and the local partners, experts, and authorities. Examples include advocacy for breaking the stereotypes and stigma related to disability, accessibility of school and camp facilities, house adaptations and medical devices, staff training on sign language, and community initiatives focusing on the rights of the people living with disabilities.

**Climate resilience** is promoted in Kenya, where the YMCA's agricultural college is supported to adopt and teach regenerative agriculture methods and create related teaching materials in cooperation with other professionals in the field. Additionally, climate education is vital to global citizenship education in Finland. In line with its own environmental programme, YMCA Finland considers and minimises the climate impact of all its activities.



# Resources

*The appropriate resources, including human resources and budget for the implementation and efficient support functions, are essential cornerstones for quality programme delivery.*

The financial plan outlines the budget allocations divided between the outcomes and administration. In addition to the expenses arising from the delivery of the outputs, the budget includes necessary design, monitoring, evaluation, learning expenses, staff expenses, communications, and resources for advocacy. There are detailed budgets for each project, which have been formulated together with the partners.

YMCA Finland has an experienced team working on the Development Cooperation Programme.

The team is led by the National General Secretary with 20 years of track record and experience in development cooperation.

YMCA Finland's International Programme Team comprises a Programme Manager and

four Project Coordinators, supported by a Communication Lead and Communication Specialist. The financial management capacity is strong with an outsourced accounting company.

*In recent years, resources and professional capacities have grown rapidly and the YMCA's vast potential has been harnessed more effectively. The programme draws also on a broad national network of professionals and young people, demonstrated through Global Citizenship Education being scaled through the local YMCAs around Finland.*

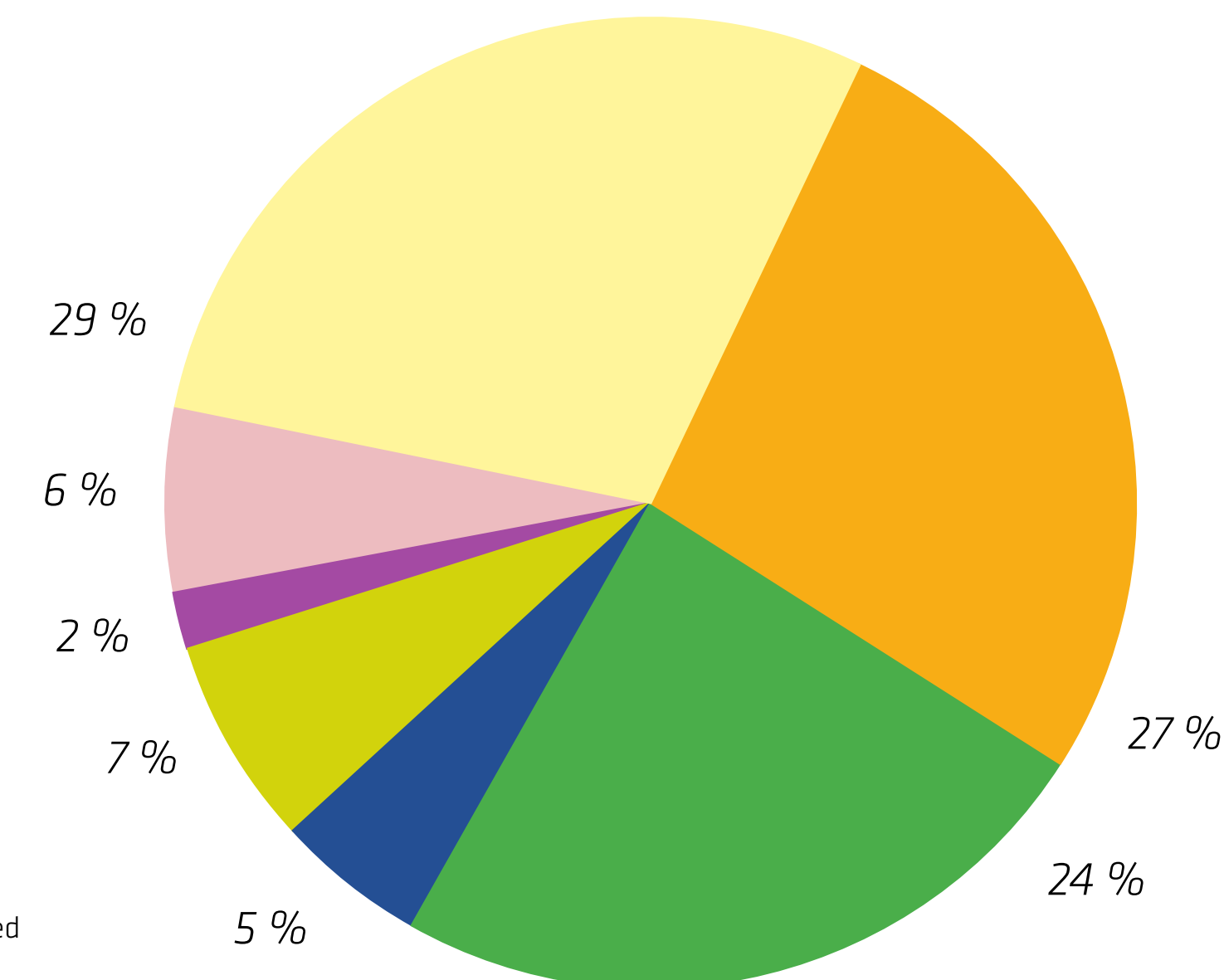
An active and competent board, elected by the member YMCAs, oversees and ensures that the staff works according to YMCA Finland's policies and strategies and that the organisation's functions and finances are regularly and transparently audited.

Engaging youth and volunteers, facilitated through the YMCA Peacemakers network, to share their expertise and experience in mutual exchange generates added value for the programme as an entity.

## Financial plan

This is the financial plan for the year 2022-2025. The total budget for the four year programme is 4.3 M€\*. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland funds the Development Cooperation Programme with 3.7 M€.

- Youth Peacebuilding Programme 29 %
- Youth Livelihoods Programme 27 %
- Programme delivery and quality assurance 24 %
- Communications and advocacy 5 %
- Administration 7 %
- Non-allocated funds 2 %
- Voluntary work 6 %



\*In 2019 and 2021 granted project-based support, is included in the total sum 4.3 M€.



# Contact us

*With our experts, together with our local associations and partners, we promote the well-being of young people in Finland and around the world.*

## Please meet the Development Cooperation team



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With support from  
Finland's development  
cooperation

Our Youth, Peace and Livelihoods Development Cooperation Programme aims to improve local living conditions and promote livelihood opportunities and peace-building skills for young people. The programme will be implemented with YMCA partners in Ethiopia, The Gambia, Kenya, Lebanon and Palestine 2022–2025, with funding from the Finland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs.



## **YMCA Finland**

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[ymca.fi](https://ymca.fi)

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