

First Youth Advisory Panel in Palestine

By the members of the Youth Advisory Panel, under the supervision of UNFPA



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hile there is an increase in the challenges that face young people globally, such as environmental pollution and unemployment, Palestinian youth face multiple challenges combined with the sensitive political and humanitarian situation, which impedes general progress, especially at the social, economic, and political levels. As Palestinian youth account for 22

percent of the Palestinian population, these young people will be the leaders and service providers of the next generation.

Across the globe, youth are integrated in decision- and policy-making processes, which makes it possible for youth representatives to voice their concerns, propose initiatives, and analyze policies that target youth. Therefore, the European Union, the United Nations, the Representative Office of Denmark, and other key stakeholders have supported the establishment of the Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) in Palestine.

The 19 young people who form YAP come from a variety of backgrounds and distinguished experience and are from various locations – eight members from the West Bank, two from East Jerusalem, and nine from Gaza. They came together to break the political and geographical division and to unify Palestinian youth across the country.

With a motto of “Youth for All, All



YAP's first in-person meeting in the West Bank.



The YAP members from Gaza on their first visit to the West Bank.

for Youth,” YAP's main mission is to strive to ensure that the voices of Palestinian youth are heard in the decision-making processes that affect them. YAP members will focus on reaching Palestinian youth across Palestine to create a network among them and to analyze their needs. Moreover, they will also be consulted by donor organizations before and during the implementation of programs and will focus on promoting civic services. Since October 2021, YAP members have been consulted on strategic plans and future programs for youth by donor organizations. Furthermore, YAP members participate in intensive trainings on Palestinian identity, diplomacy, and the impact of politics on the social and economic aspects of Palestine. These capacity-building workshops will equip YAP members with a well-rounded knowledge of the prime issues that face Palestinian youth while also developing their interpersonal and technical skills.

In February of this year, YAP members from Gaza were able to join their fellow team members in the West Bank for a capacity-building

group training. It was the first time that many of the YAP members from Gaza were able to visit the West Bank. “None of us believed that we would ever come here. Usually the only reason that people from Gaza are able to visit the West Bank is if they are dying and are fortunate enough to get a medical permit,” one of them states. The visit and in-person group training was a mark of unity and hope.

With the surge in unemployment, environmental pollution, human rights violations, an increase in the number of persons with disabilities and their limited inclusion, as well as so many other core problems, we members of YAP are prepared to combine our love for Palestine with our passion for change in order to improve the Palestinian community. “Youth for All, All for Youth” is truly the chant all Palestinians should be able to hear and feel, and we pledge to work towards making it a reality.