

Governance

Strengthening Youth for the Stabilisation of Palestine Programme

Background and Objective

As a consequence of the unresolved Middle East conflict, Palestinians are facing restrictions on their freedom of movement, high unemployment rates and rising poverty. This results in diminishing positive prospects for young Palestinians who make up more than half of the Palestinian population. Youth lack adequate spaces and platforms to interact and are insufficiently involved in local and national decision-making processes. As a result, their feeling of social and political agency on the national level and in their local communities decreases. Furthermore, the impact of the recurring conflict in the largely sealed-off Gaza Strip is specifically severe for children there who are in need of urgent psychological support.

The German Federal Foreign Office supports Palestinian youth and children through the Strengthening Youth for Stabilisation Programme (SYSP) implemented by GIZ. Its objective is to strengthen their personal skills and increase social participation to improve the way they deal with their difficult living conditions. The focus lies on (1) psychosocial support of children and young people and psychological crisis intervention in the Gaza Strip; (2) the promotion of youth initiatives in communities and (3) the development of safe spaces for children and youth. The programme is implemented by GIZ in cooperation with selected civil society organisations. This is being done in the mainly marginalized areas in the Westbank (area B and C) and in the Gaza Strip.



Project name	Strengthening Youth for the Stabilisation of Palestine
Commissioned by	German Federal Foreign Office (AA)
Project region	West Bank and Gaza
Partners	Selected civil society organizations
Duration	01.09.2019 – 31.10.2023

Our Approach

To enhance the social and political participation of youth, the project promotes youth initiatives. Young people are trained to initiate and implement projects to address issues that are important to them in their communities. They learn to overcome obstacles that limit their involvement in social, political, cultural, and community life. Youth act as multipliers; they apply and pass on the knowledge they have gained in the training and through their experiences.

Sport and culture-based psychosocial support (PSS) programmes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip **enhance the psychosocial well-being of children**. They focus on decreasing the negative psychological impact of war and conflict on children and youth. Youth workers and coaches who are in contact with young people receive training in mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) measures and increase their knowledge on referral systems for further psychological support.



Left: Kids playing with clay at Abu Hindi Bedouin Community summer camp.

Right: Kids practicing music at Asirah AlShamaliya summer camp, implemented by Tamer Institute.



Left: Tamer Institute's community garden after renovation as a safe space for children and youth in Ramallah.

Right: Kids making art at Summer Fun Weeks Camp in Gaza, implemented by SYFS.

Selected Achievements

This approach is complemented by a crisis intervention project to support traumatized individuals. Mobile satellite teams conduct home visits to affected households in particularly marginalized areas of the Gaza Strip. They provide psychological first aid and help manage experiences of violence and trauma. Those in need of further support can be referred to mobile clinics, set up to improve access to specialized mental health services.

Furthermore, the project aims to **provide "safe spaces" for youth and children** in existing premises of local civil society organisations, in which youth can exchange ideas freely and implement their own activities and initiatives without violence or discrimination. This creates protected opportunities for exchange and participation.

- **21** safe spaces for children and youth have been developed in schools, sports clubs, and facilities of community-based organisations.
- More than **6,220** youth and children have received regular psychosocial support. Activities include football, volleyball, traditional dance, music, and drama sessions as well as group and self-reflection sessions.
- A total of **16,146** affected individuals in the Gaza Strip have benefited from emergency psychological first aid and advanced specialized therapy services.
- So far, a total of **92** youth groups have been established. These groups work to make meaningful contributions to their communities. The work they do is as diverse at the communities they belong to but range from the restoration of local youth centers to clean-up campaigns and tree planting in the neighbourhoods to establishing a local health clinic.



Clockwise from top left:
Shadow puppets created and used by librarians during training, implemented by Tamer Institute.
Librarians during training, implemented by Tamer Institute.
Youth participants icebreaking at workshop implemented by Nafs for Empowerment.
Kids during a book reading activity implemented by Tamer Institute.
Kids playing at Summer Fun Weeks Camp in Gaza, implemented by SYFS.

Published by

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Claire Aanes | Head of Programme
P.O. Box 38383
East Jerusalem 91383
stabilisation.palestine@giz.de
www.giz.de/en/worldwide

As of

August, 2023

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of

German Federal Foreign Office