

# YOUTHBANK INTERNATIONAL



## IMPACT REPORT

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### Mission

YouthBank International's mission is to work with worldwide organisations who want to give young people authentic leadership, decision-making and community building opportunities while growing the network and supporting young people through grant-making. We have developed a framework, training and resources that enable organisations to provide necessary support with confidence and integrity.

Encouraging organisations and their partners to enhance or change operating structures to support and relate to young people, YouthBank International seeks to build an ecosystem of individuals, organisations and businesses that share our values and our aim of bringing decision making opportunities to young people. We stand for a redistribution and allocation of budgets from private and public sources to support young people's agenda for change in their communities.

### SO FAR



37

Countries with established model



300+

YouthBank Model practitioners



320+

YouthBanks around the world



16,000+

Youth-led projects



4+ Million

Beneficiaries



8,5 Million €

Worth of funds given by the YouthBanks

# YOUTHBANK MODEL

The YouthBank Model is first and foremost a young people's story: how they see their communities, what they understand to be the key issues they face, how they believe these should be tackled and what they can do to effectively make a positive change in their communities.

YouthBank International provides:

- YOUTHBANK METHODOLOGY and CURRICULUM,
- LEARNING PLATFORM, CERTIFICATION and
- ONGOING SUPPORT.



YouthBank Model consists of 5 phases, rounded into 1 cycle (1 cycle = 1 round of grant-making).

The cycle takes the YouthBank Team through **5** phases. The first four phases build the team's knowledge and understanding about themselves, their communities, and their potential as change makers. They are coached in developing their skills to take action and make decisions with their funds, and they are challenged to exercise power in an ethical and value driven way. In the fifth and final phase a process of reflection consolidates what the YouthBank team has learned in the first four phases, and identifies and evaluates the changes that have occurred during the process.

# YOUTHBANK PROCESS

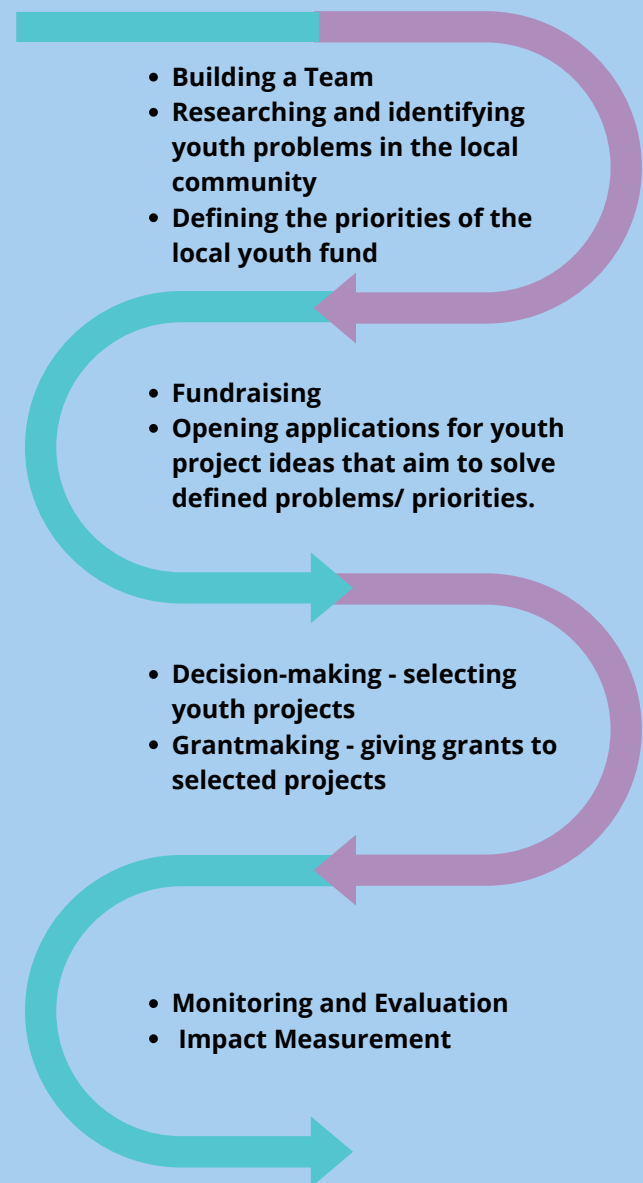
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YouthBankers are young people who are guided through the YouthBank process. They are decision-makers who define problems/priorities in their communities. YouthBankers are also grant-givers.

Grant-receivers are young people who are offering their solutions for defined problems through project application.

## YOUTHBANK PROCESS





## VOLUNTEERING



**1,050**  
hours

Grant-makers = YouthBankers



**850**  
hours

Grant-recipients

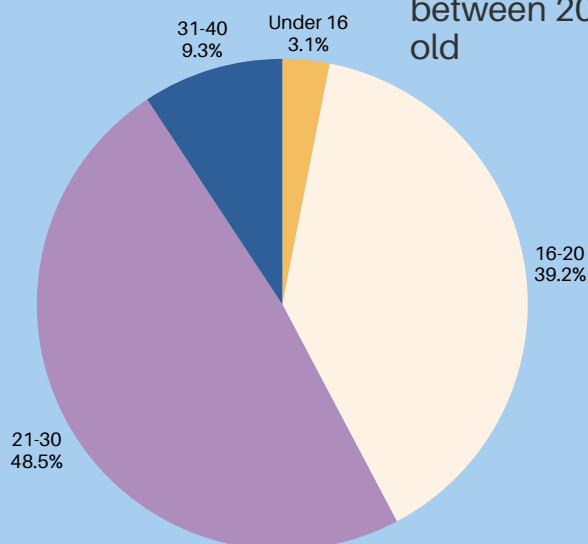
**Based on 1 cycle of 1  
YouthBank**

## AGE



**~50%**

between 20 and 30 years  
old

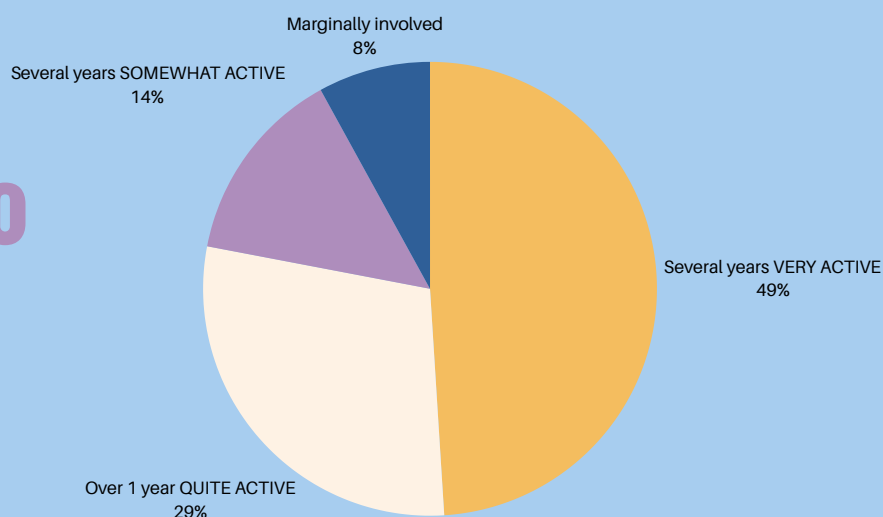


## ENGAGEMENT



**~50%**

Very actively engaged for  
several years





# IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE

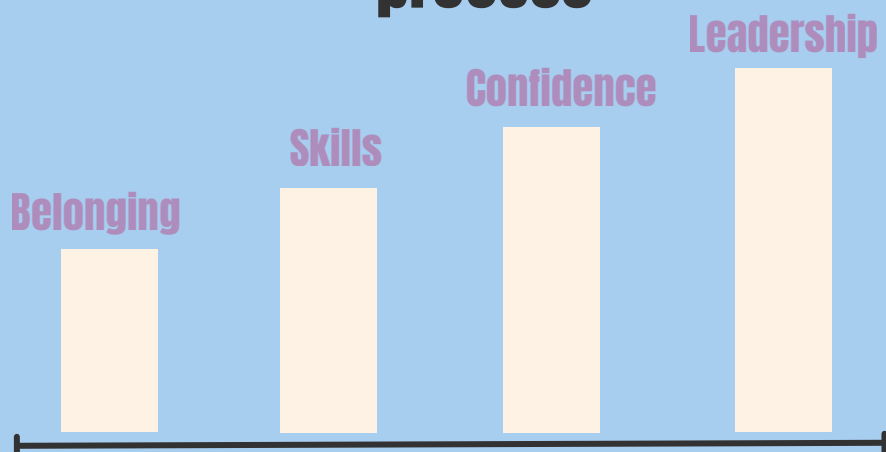
YouthBank embeds dynamic learning and evaluation in its day to day approach. This allows individual YouthBanks to consider not only how they are working, but what difference they are making and for whom. The outputs from each YouthBank include: the amount of money given out as grants, the number of projects supported, the number of young people and others in the community who have benefited from each project.

In addition, a number of independent evaluations have usefully brought together evidence about the YouthBank model and its impacts. Those who benefit principally from YouthBank have been found to be:

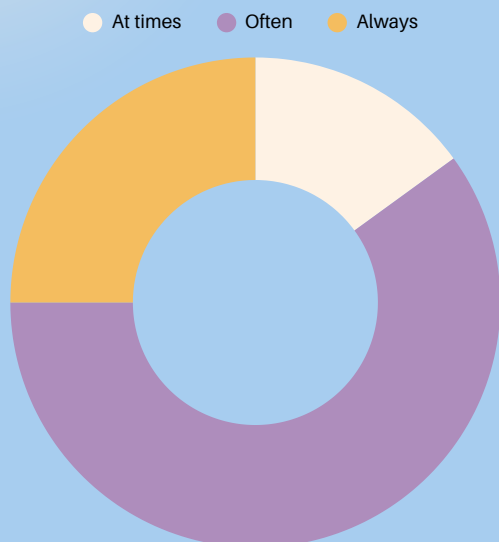
- The young people who make up a YouthBank
- The young people who receive YouthBank grants for their community projects
- The organisations who host YouthBanks
- The wider community

“While I was in high school, YouthBank supported the implementation of a project that provided high school students with short internships. Lots of my friends were highly interested in such an opportunity and had the chance to take part in these internships, working by the side of doctors, lawyers or accountants. For some of them, this was the point when they made a decision about their future career.”

## Changes after the YouthBank process



## More open to differences among people



“ I think my humane attitude and acceptance towards people is largely due to YouthBank because YouthBank provided space to express ideas and share emotions in a very open way. For example, at a certain stage I was very negative about people that were different, I was homophobic, I would say, very intolerant. In YouthBank my ideas changed, they did not exclude me because of my ideas, but they listened to me, asked questions and engaged me in discussions.

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Being part of YouthBank made me much more confident, opened the way how I think about others, showed me the value of understanding, trust and positive values among youngsters.

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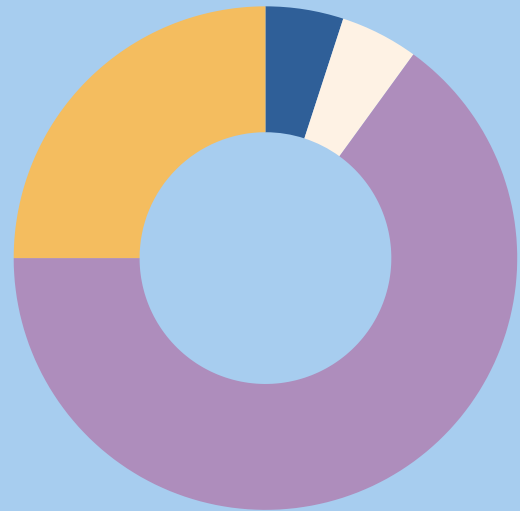
## Taking on leadership roles in a group

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*YouthBank changes everyone and everything for the better, it is a prerequisite for perfecting everything, working here has given me the opportunity to make new friends, gain some knowledge, experience on how to lead a team, how to be a team leader or how to handle responsibilities.*

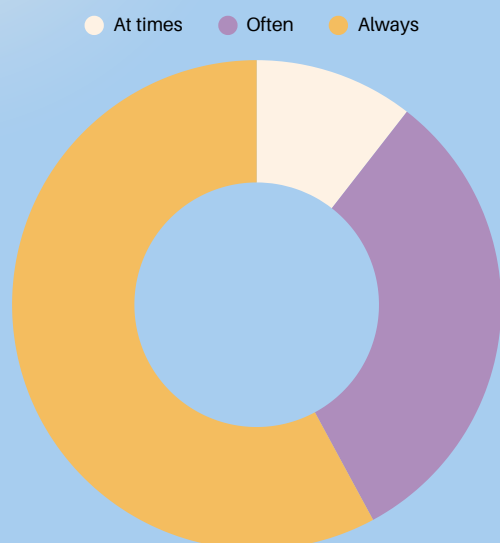
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● Rarely    ● At times    ● Often    ● Always





## Acting more entrepreneurial & exploring opportunities

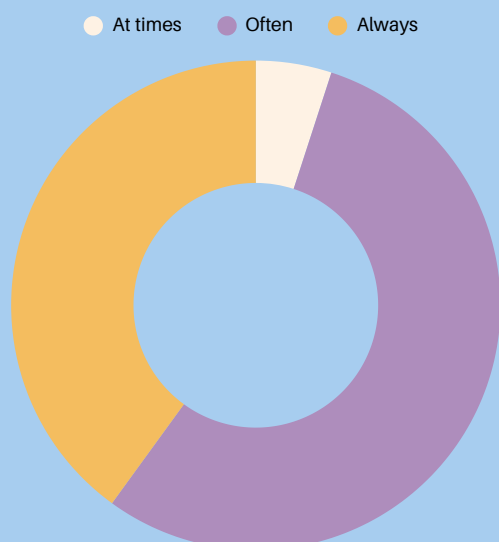


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*I saw a growth in the young people from the YouthBank team. They became experienced project managers, fundraisers, public speakers and facilitators. One of the members became a YouthBank coordinator and an employee of the NGO that is hosting YouthBank. She had the knowledge and skills needed for this job position thanks to YouthBank. Another YouthBank member continues to work towards youth development, first in her hometown and then on a regional level. She became the head of Region Youth Congress.*

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## More open to new ideas



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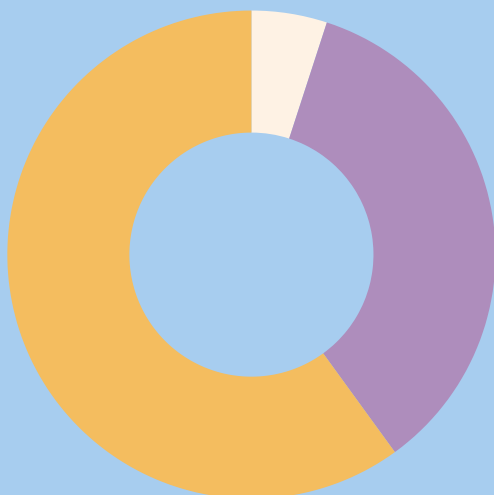
*From today's perspective, I think I was very lucky to get into YouthBank in 2009. My life changed positively and became interesting. I have always wanted to change the environment of myself and my peers, however it was very difficult without the knowledge and leverage. The idea of youthbank also gave me the knowledge and opportunity to make a real difference in my community, which is quite far from civilization. I became more confident and motivated, this experience helped me in university and services.*

*After completing the program, I became a trainer, which allowed me to share and teach the experience I received for other young people like me for 6 years. We had 6 generations of YouthBank during my coaching and in many of them the positive change soon became noticeable. I especially highlight their acceptance of different opinions and people. We have all developed the ability to protect, promote equality and improve other human rights. Today I meet them on various platforms and they always mention that YouthBank - helped them to reach the goal.*

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## Becoming better problem-solvers working with peers

At times Often Always



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*In 2019, my local YB decided to choose the topic of a project competition "I and Society" focusing on inclusivity, cooperation between different groups and integration of marginalized groups into society. As a result of the "I and Society", the team got to establish good ties with the local School for Youth of Special Needs, connect different generations and create projects together with youth from other regions. At the end, the YouthBank team admitted that this was their best experience because of the insight they managed to get. No one had thought before that they could become friends with someone from the Special Needs high school.*

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One of the most important aspects for me, even more than the opportunities and that experience of the world, was this core of impact! Right from the beginning seeing the impact of small grants in my city, in local areas, just fostered a deep and enduring responsibility in me and a knowledge that we can use what little we have to make things better.

I think putting the money directly in young people's hands to then put that money in other young people's hands is so important. It was a real life experience of how these resources can be used and that is something that's followed me through. Not just about having a voice and having a say, but also having direct action and having access to resources and being responsible for them being used well. I think that fostered a sense of justice and fairness in me as well. It was sort of a political awakening in a lot of ways and that sense that if I have access to these resources, then all young people should.

**Erin Wright, YouthBank Alumna**

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# IMPACT ON ORGANISATION

More than one organisation hosting YouthBank indicated it had become the backbone of their organisation, and that it had allowed them increased visibility in the community and with authorities. As one of the coordinators explains: *"We became more visible in the region because it involved many actors from the region's young people, but also schools, public authorities, businesses and even police because the program became so popular everybody understood that if you want to work with young people YB is the place to go...."*



## 75%

of youth workers indicated that the change in community lasted

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We supported a cycling event accompanied by police representatives within the project "Safe Road - Safe Community" and "Safety School". The purpose of the event was to draw attention to safe traffic, increase joint responsibility for safety and quality of life in our community, through advocacy of cycling in the community and healthy lifestyle, raising issues of cycling infrastructure in the community, improving the safety of children and youth on the roadway.

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We have started raising funds for the Safe Bicycle Parking project. This project would start the construction of bicycle parking lots near the schools of our community. There is no bicycle infrastructure in our community at all, so the first fundraiser is aimed at arranging the territory near the school, creating a bicycle parking lot there. In the future, we plan to install safe bicycle parking on the territory of all educational institutions of the community.

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” A lot of people from my hometown realised the possible influence of young people in their close community. YouthBank was the inspiration for many other initiatives in our city. For example, the first e-sport tournament was sponsored by YouthBank. Then the headmaster of the high school realised that it was a good idea to promote his school and asked students from his school to do it again and now they're doing e-sport events at least once a year. “

” One of the projects we helped implement, developed by high school students in my city, was about making graffiti art on a wall near the center of town that wasn't being used and looked jarring in the environment. We guided the project team and got approval from the city council, got sponsors for their materials, and the wall art is still there to this day. “







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Some of the real value that we found in our Community Foundation when we implemented the YouthBank is the fact that we're getting new ideas from young people. You know, often times we think about who's going to succeed, the people that are currently working in organisations and there's a lot of talented young people out there with the inner of the very communities where they work. So YouthBank allows us to actually work and you have a journey with these very young people, see what their talents and capabilities are, what their passions are. And over time you might find a few gems within the YouthBank group that eventually could find their way within your organisation. So the YouthBank actually allows a lot of opportunity for the organisation to get a lot more richer content and richer ideas coming from young people.

**Jeremy Maarman, Coordinator/ Associate South Africa**

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Being involved in YouthBank has been an enriching learning experience, especially for young people. It equips them not only with budgeting skills but also fosters a broader perspective on community issues beyond their immediate surroundings. Witnessing their confidence grow as they take on the responsibility of allocating local authority funds is truly remarkable.

At Manchester City Council, our role in YouthBank is about amplifying voices that are often overlooked. We intentionally direct funding towards young people who may not typically engage in civic duties, ensuring diverse representation. It's about giving those who aren't usually heard a platform to make decisions about their communities.

YouthBank brings together a mix of young people from various backgrounds, bridging divides that often exist. It empowers them to have a say in shaping their community's future, even in seemingly small ways. For many, it's the first time they've been asked for their opinions, especially on issues that directly affect them.

While some may dismiss their concerns as trivial, like littering or knife crime, for these young people, it's a reality they face daily. Through YouthBank, they become change-makers, sparking a ripple effect that impacts others in their community. It's about breaking stereotypes and showing that every voice matters, regardless of where you come from or your background.

**Alima Sonne, Manchester City Council**

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# IMPACT ON COMMUNITY

The impact on the wider community is less measured but more than apparent. The entire community benefits from the provision of facilities and opportunities for young people that YouthBank supports. Both grant recipients and grant-makers inspire other young people as they see their peers as active leaders in the community. Indeed, many grant recipients and grant-makers actively participate in other community activities and committees using the skills that they develop in YouthBank.

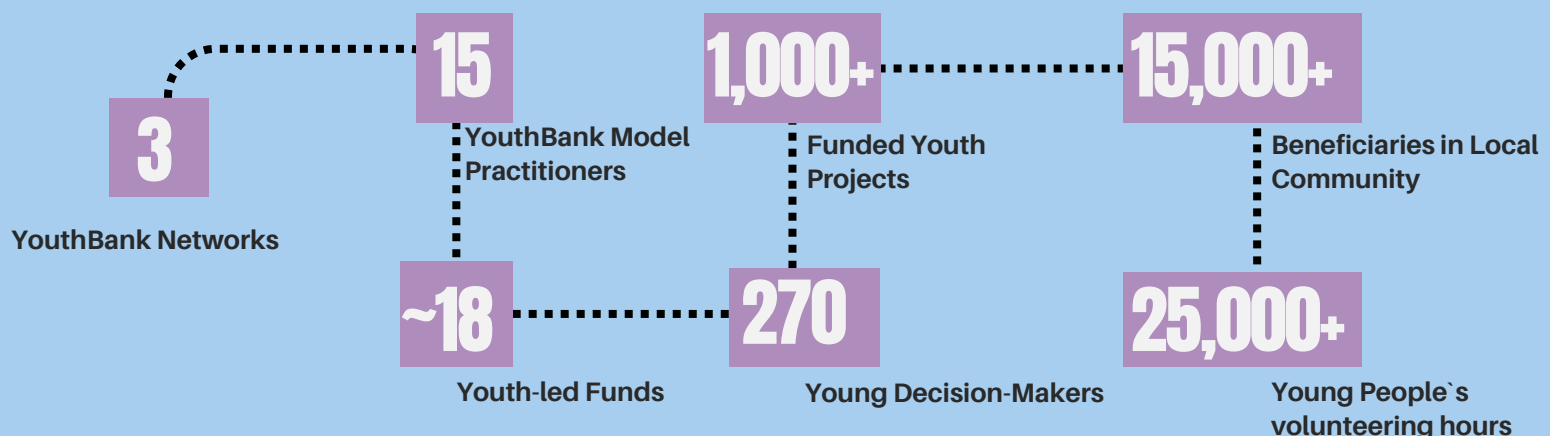
Authorities and community members are exposed to young people explaining their concerns and needs. Various interviewees spontaneously mentioned that YouthBank participants impress and influence the local authorities and private sector actors they engage with in their communities. And at a very practical level **'things get done that otherwise would not get done'** through the money that YouthBanks give out.

YouthBanks impact on communities by:

- Enabling young people to implement projects that address their needs and that they themselves design and run and sometimes fundraise for;
- Generating projects that not only have concrete, sustained impacts on the lives of young people in communities but are at times replicated by third parties;
- Supporting projects that can be either relatively simple or quite complex, involving a variety of stakeholders in the community.

And as a consequence YouthBank programs positively influence attitudes of community members towards young people as decision, and change makers, as well as amplifying the voice and agency of young people.

1 YB Network = up to 10 YouthBanks starting the YB Model



A major strength of the YouthBank process is that it captures and acts upon real life experiences of the young people of the 21st century. More than a 1/3 of the 169 targets of the SDGs highlight the role of young people and the importance of their empowerment, participation, and well-being, to accelerate economic development, reduce poverty and build sustainable societies. Our emphasis is about defining the relationship with the SDGs and the importance of protecting the independence of young people's voices and experiences as they assess and understand the issues in their communities.

YouthBank International analyses the priorities YouthBank groups identify, mapping them against the SDGs. What remains to be amplified are stories from young people about why these changes occurred, how they should be further represented and, in this context, how those changes reflect the SDGs.



## TOP 3 problems defined by the YouthBankers 2017



The 2017 data show that roughly one third of the grant resources went to SDG 3 (Good health and well-being) and one third to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and communities), a little over 10% went to SDG 4 (Quality Education).

## TOP 3 problems defined by the YouthBankers 2023



The data for 2023 show that one of the top priorities is SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities) among the two top priorities that remained the same as 5 years before - SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 3 (Good health and well-being).

Last few years there has been lots of discussions, initiatives and talks regarding the mental health. We at the YouthBank International have recognized this thanks to our YouthBanks around the world 15 years ago.

Priorities in young people's lives change over time. However, the voice of young people is the voice that recognizes the trends NOW. Young people are the ones who recognize and define what is about to become a trend.



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*I feel like young people are always going to do the present! They always know what's going on right now, so they know what people need, what people think and maybe some of them know some solutions, something to change, something to act on. And I feel like they are probably the biggest influencers in the world because they are now, they live now, in the present.*

**Sergiu Bejan, Moldova**

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REAL LIVES.  
REAL MONEY.  
REAL CHANGE.



**YOUTHBANK INTERNATIONAL**

[www.youthbankinternational.org](http://www.youthbankinternational.org)