

# EMPOWERING YOUTH TO ADDRESS THE WORLD'S GREATEST CHALLENGES



With 1.2 billion youth between the ages of 15 and 24 (around 16% of the global population)<sup>1</sup>, **today's young people comprise the largest generation in the world's history.** Globally aware, culturally competent and socially inclusive, these changemakers have the ideas, passion and motivation to address society's most intractable challenges and create a world we all want to live in. With YMCAs in 119 countries, the global Y Movement is uniquely positioned to leverage our collective strength to empower these young leaders. With the support of donors like you, **YMCA World Service** works with YMCAs worldwide to create opportunities for more young people to lead positive change in their communities.

Learn more: [ymca.net/world-service](http://ymca.net/world-service)

## CHALLENGES



**One in every 5 young people** is out of school worldwide.<sup>2</sup>



Globally, less than **6%** of elected government leaders are **under 35** years old, and less than **2%** are **under 30** years old.<sup>4</sup>

Youth are **three times** more likely to be **unemployed** than adults.<sup>6</sup>



Climate change represents a major threat to the health and socio-economic stability for the **80%** of the world's youth who live in developing countries.<sup>9</sup>



**75%** of all mental illnesses emerge before **age 24.**<sup>11</sup>

## OPPORTUNITIES

Every **\$1** invested in early childhood care and education for underserved youth can generate up to **\$17** in **future economic gains.**<sup>3</sup>



In **90%** of the world's countries, young people are eligible to vote at **age 18.**<sup>5</sup>



**70%** of the world's youth are **online** and **65%** of children starting primary school today will work in technology jobs that don't yet exist.<sup>8</sup>



In 2019, an estimated **4 million** young people participated in global climate strikes in over 163 countries around the world.<sup>10</sup>



Every **\$1** invested in mental health treatment yields a return of **\$4** in better health and ability to work.<sup>12</sup>



1 [https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2019/08/WYP2019-10-KEY-MESSAGES\\_GZ\\_8AUG19.PDF](https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2019/08/WYP2019-10-KEY-MESSAGES_GZ_8AUG19.PDF)  
 2 <https://en.unesco.org/news/one-every-five-children-adolescents-and-youth-out-school-worldwide>  
 3 <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/unicef-report-urges-investment-in-early-childhood-development/>  
 4 <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/political-participation/>  
 5 <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2019/how-the-world-votes-2019/index.html>

6 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg8>  
 7 <https://www.itu.int/en/itu-d/statistics/documents/facts/ictfactsfigures2017.pdf>  
 8 [https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/sowc\\_2017\\_eng\\_web.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/sowc_2017_eng_web.pdf)  
 9 <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/environment-climate-change/>  
 10 <https://www.vox.com/energy-and-environment/2019/9/20/20876143/climate-strike-2019-september-20-crowd-estimate>  
 11 <https://www.who.int/mental-health/maternal-child/child-adolescent/en/>  
 12 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/mental-health>