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OUR LATEST NEWS

## Bringing Positive Change through Code and Passion

Young people's innovation is endless, as long as we encourage them to identify their passion rather than suppress it. "ChangeMakers" is a friendly youth space where 20 young people come for 15 weeks to learn coding basics and discuss interesting topics that help young people identify their passion.

Its goal, broadly, is to create the future generation of innovators and problem solvers, as well as to minimize the gender gap in computer sciences.

We are almost halfway (Week 8) to the end with "ChangeMakers.". These 20 young people are enriching the course with their bright and innovative ideas, quick learning skills and desire to digest more information in a very short time.

"Learning how to code changed my perspective of life and made it more organized," Baraa, youth participant. While Loulia, another youth participant, said that her communication skills has developed notably throughout the course and she is, now, more encouraged and motivated to stand up to talk in public.

Moreover, coding alone might create amazing applications but without inspiration and ideas "out of the box", we won't be able to create something new. Therefore, we are using TED Education curriculum to stimulate youth's ability to innovate ideas and relate to global issues with creative solutions and inspirational talks.



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*Discussing what makes a great idea*



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*"Coding has taught me how to improve my communication skills," Joudy.*

# Y-PEER: a Youth-to Youth Initiative

Y-PEER team visit Homs for the first time in 6 years on the 24 November 2016. A training with YPEER was taking place at Al Safir Hotel, in Homs. It is the first YPEER training since the crisis hit in 2011, supported by UNFPA –Syria office.

“Young people in Homs come with high sense of creativity,” I’m proud to deliver this workshop. May this be the first and not the last”, Alaa Al-Khachi, UNFPA youth assistant and Y-PEER trainer.

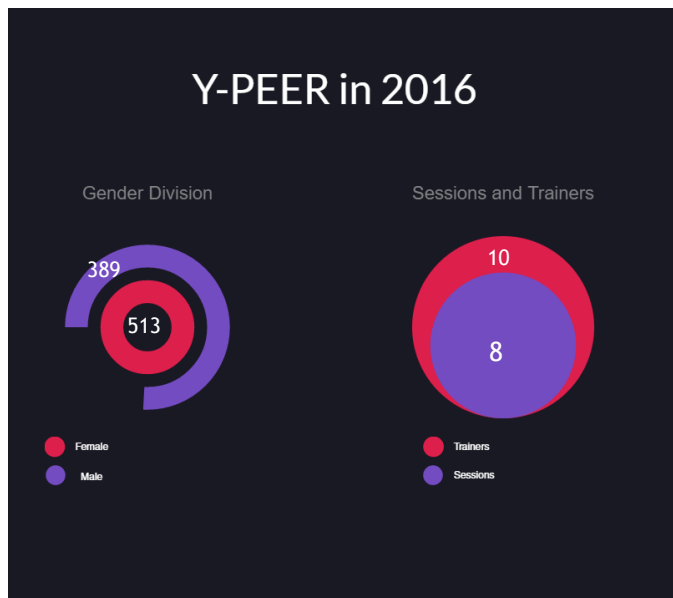
22 young participants attended the workshop from Syrian Family Planning Association (SFPA) and TEDxMimasStreet. During the workshop youth participated in group work, created short sketches and brainstormed solutions through open discussions aiming to highlight the most challenging issues towards the Syrian society, in general, and towards Homs, specifically.



Y-PEER team visit Homs for the first time in 6 years

The 3-day workshop highlighted the importance of peer education, especially in raising awareness on sensitive topics such as, “Sexually Transmitted Diseases” STDs and drugs. The workshop also included topics like stigma and discrimination, gender vs. sex, SDGs “Sustainable Development Goals.

“Interactive theater is an easy and creative method to highlight social issues and bring attention to the unseen aspects of many challenges,” Sara Al-Malki added at the interactive theater training. Sara enjoys training young people because she lives their passion towards making a change.



Youth open discussion on youth related issues

# TEDx Continues to Inspire Hundreds of Syrian Youth

TEDxYouth@Jahez team continues to organize events in Damascus, Syria, in partnership with UNFPA and under their highest commitment to provide every youth a chance to raise up their voices and spread ideas worth sharing.

In 2<sup>nd</sup> December, events took place aiming to raise awareness, introduce new topics, and stir up conversations. Topics were diverse in order to create a bigger place for more youth with different interests to participate.

The first TEDxYouth@Jahez event aimed to put poverty under the spot and stimulate young people’s potentials to relate to their situations and identify their role as powerful stakeholders. The workshop was short in time but it held a lot of information on stats, facts and innovative solutions from around the world. 40 young participants joined to watch inspiring TED talks and open discussions.

The second event themed under “Machine Learning without Magic.” The whole day event included interactive workshops, icebreakers and open discussions. It aimed to open an eye on a very popular, yet still overseen and not fully understood in Syria, topic; “Artificial Intelligence.”

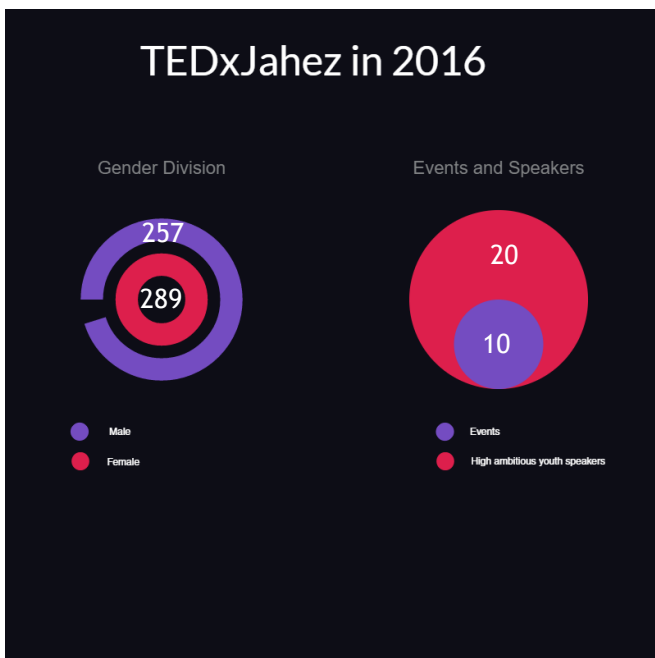
50 young people from technology and mathematical, engineering backgrounds gathered for 6 hours to create an interactive learning environment where Eyad Al-Shami and Aghyad Kabbani, 2 ambitious Syrian young people, presented a short informative talk on the topic.

Each speaker’s talk was followed by a short TED video related to his presentation. Afterwards, young people participated in an open Q&A session.

“Today’s world is developing rapidly. It is essential for all corporations and nonprofit organizations to start inserting machine learning in their systems. Otherwise, even the big ones will fade very soon because they won’t be able to follow the stream,” Eyad Alkhayat, TEDxYouth@Jahez organizer.

TEDxYouth@Jahez team maintained a youthful spirit in all their work, including targeting and recruiting volunteers. “I enjoyed volunteering here because it is a place where I can see my potentials fulfilled,” Nibras Abo Al Zahab, co-organizer and medical engineering students.

Sara Nemeah, English literature graduate, said: “Although my field of study is completely far from technology, I was curious to look deeper and learn new concepts. I think it is an important endeavor and could be inserted in education as well.”



*Aghyad Kabbani speaking at TEDxYouth@JahezSalon*

# UNFPA Supports Youth in Syria

Syria is home to 4 million young people

## UNFPA Supports TEDx Events in Syria

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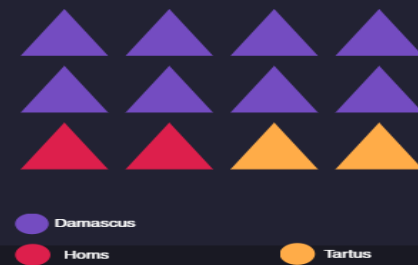
TEDx Events in Syria



## UNFPA Supports Y-PEER in Syria

Y-PEER is a Youth-to-Youth initiative working to empower youth to protect their health. It was relaunched again in mid-2016 after it had been terminated for a long time during the Syrian crisis.

Y-PEER Training Sessions in Syria



## ChangeMakers

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Gender Division



## United Nations Population Fund

Damascus, Syria

UNFPA is the lead UN agency for delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

While UNFPA assistance must remain concerned with saving lives and safeguarding human dignity, preparing Syrian people for future recovery, reconstruction, reconciliation and stability, is equally a priority.

UNFPA Syria focusses on:

- Improving access to high-quality reproductive health care.
- Scaling-up gender-based violence prevention and response.
- Enhancing youth participation and inclusiveness.
- Supporting capacities to collect and use gender- and age-disaggregated data for tailoring response and recovery programming.



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