



GirlZone

**Every Girl Deserves the
Opportunity to Thrive**



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Every girl deserves the opportunity to grow in a safe environment, discover her potential, and build the confidence needed to shape her future.

Across Palestine, however, adolescence has become increasingly challenging. In both the West Bank and Gaza, girls are growing up amid complex social, economic, and political realities that affect not only their education, but also their wellbeing, relationships, and opportunities to participate fully in their communities. Education remains one of the strongest pathways toward resilience and hope, yet learning alone is not enough. Girls also need safe spaces where they feel heard, respected, supported, and empowered to navigate one of the most important stages of their lives.

Girl Zone was created in response to this need.



Developed by Sharek Youth Forum in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and implemented through the Sharek Partners Alliance, Girl Zone is more than a learning programme. It is a comprehensive journey that accompanies adolescent girls as they discover themselves, strengthen their resilience, build healthy relationships, and develop the practical skills and confidence needed to become active participants in their families, schools, and communities.

Every session, every conversation, and every creative activity is designed with one purpose: to ensure that every girl leaves the programme stronger than when she first arrived.



Why Girl Zone, Why Now?

Across Palestine, growing up has become increasingly complex for adolescent girls. While every girl deserves the opportunity to learn, grow, and shape her future, many are navigating daily challenges that extend far beyond the classroom and influence every aspect of their lives.

In both the West Bank and Gaza, disruptions to education, movement restrictions, displacement, economic hardship, and growing psychosocial pressures continue to shape girls' everyday experiences. These challenges affect not only their access to education, but also their emotional well-being, self-confidence, relationships, and sense of security. At a stage of life that should be defined by learning, exploration, and opportunity, many girls instead face uncertainty and limited opportunities to discover their potential.





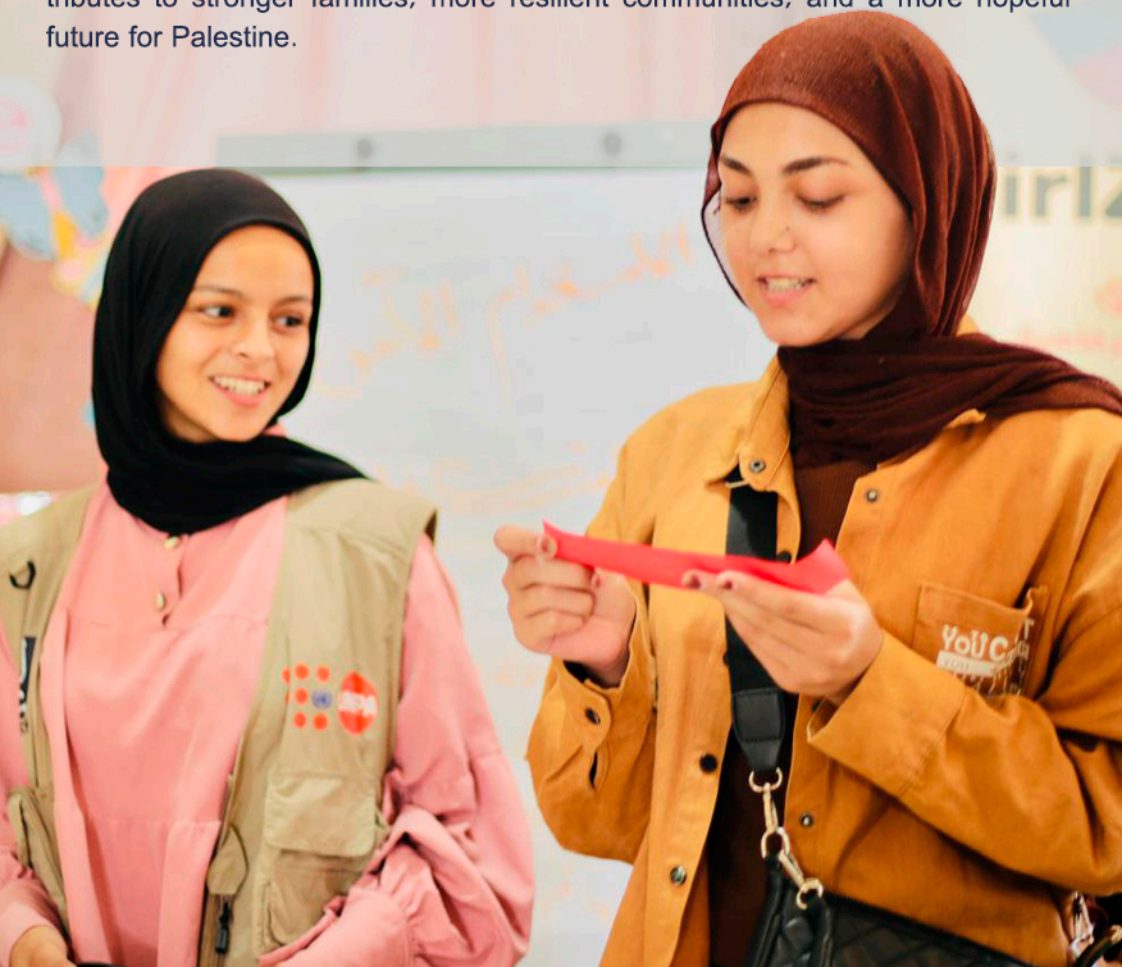
Research consistently shows that adolescence is one of the most influential stages of life. The experiences, knowledge, and support girls receive during these years shape their future health, educational attainment, confidence, economic participation, and ability to contribute to their communities. Investing in adolescent girls therefore creates lasting benefits—not only for the girls themselves, but also for their families, communities, and future generations.

The urgency of investing in adolescent girls is reflected in recent evidence. Around **95% of school buildings in Gaza have been damaged**, while schools across parts of the West Bank continue to experience disruptions that affect students' access to regular learning. At the same time, **more than 70% of Palestinian young people report mental health challenges**, highlighting the urgent need for interventions that address emotional wellbeing alongside education, life skills, and social connectedness.

Responding to these realities requires more than restoring access to education. Girls need opportunities to build confidence, strengthen resilience, develop practical life skills, and establish positive relationships with their families, peers, and communities. They need environments where they can express themselves, explore their identities, and prepare for the future with hope and purpose.

Girl Zone was created as a practical response to these realities.

Rather than focusing solely on knowledge transfer, Girl Zone offers adolescent girls a structured journey that combines learning, psychosocial wellbeing, holistic health, creative expression, family engagement, and leadership development. The programme recognises that meaningful change begins when girls are supported to discover their strengths, strengthen their relationships, and build the confidence to shape their own futures. By investing in girls today, Girl Zone contributes to stronger families, more resilient communities, and a more hopeful future for Palestine.





Theory of Change

Girl Zone is built on the belief that lasting change does not happen through information alone. It happens when girls are provided with a supportive environment where they can learn, express themselves, build relationships, and gradually develop the confidence to shape their own futures.

The programme follows a structured pathway that guides girls from participation to personal growth and community engagement.

Safe Space

Every journey begins with a safe and welcoming environment.

Girl Zone creates inclusive spaces where girls feel respected, listened to, and accepted. Within these spaces, they are encouraged to ask questions, share experiences, express their emotions, and participate without fear of judgement.

Confidence

As trust grows, confidence grows.

Girls begin to recognise their strengths, believe in their abilities, express their opinions, and participate more actively in discussions and group activities.



Life Skills

With growing confidence, girls are better prepared to develop the practical skills they need for everyday life.

Through interactive learning, they strengthen communication, decision-making, problem-solving, emotional wellbeing, financial literacy, holistic health awareness, and healthy relationship skills.



Leadership

As girls gain knowledge and confidence, they begin to see themselves as active contributors rather than passive participants.

They learn to take initiative, support their peers, make informed decisions, and develop leadership skills that prepare them to become positive role models within their communities.



Community Participation

Empowerment extends beyond the programme itself.

Girls strengthen communication with their families, engage positively with their communities, and become more willing to participate in volunteer work, community initiatives, and collective action.



Positive Change

The result is a confident, resilient, and informed young woman who is better equipped to navigate challenges, continue learning, build healthy relationships, and contribute positively to her family, community, and society.

By investing in girls, Girl Zone contributes to stronger families, more resilient communities, and sustainable social development.

How Girl Zone Works

Girl Zone is designed as a structured journey that places adolescent girls at the centre of the learning experience. Every stage of the programme is intentionally designed to create a supportive environment where girls can develop personally, socially, and emotionally while gaining practical knowledge and life skills.

A Journey, Not a Training Course

Unlike traditional awareness sessions, Girl Zone follows a progressive learning model where each session builds on the previous one. Girls gradually move from building trust and self-awareness to developing practical skills, strengthening relationships, and becoming active participants in their communities.



Who Participates?

The programme targets adolescent girls aged 10–18 years, with participants identified in close coordination with local community centres and partner organisations. Selection aims to ensure equal access while reaching girls who can benefit most from safe learning environments and structured personal development opportunities.

Who Facilitates the Journey?

Girl Zone is delivered by trained female facilitators from local communities. Facilitators receive specialised preparation on adolescent engagement, participatory learning methodologies, safeguarding principles, psychosocial support, and referral pathways, ensuring that every girl is supported in a safe and respectful environment.



How is the Curriculum Developed?

The curriculum has been developed by Sharek Youth Forum in partnership with technical experts and UNFPA, drawing on international evidence, national priorities, and the lived experiences of adolescent girls in Palestine. The content is regularly reviewed and adapted to respond to changing contexts and emerging needs, particularly in humanitarian settings.

How Learning Happens

Girl Zone adopts participatory and experiential learning approaches rather than traditional classroom teaching. Girls learn through discussion, teamwork, role play, theatre, art, storytelling, games, reflection, and practical exercises that connect learning to their everyday lives.

Measuring Progress

Learning is monitored throughout the programme using participatory assessment tools, facilitator observations, and pre- and post-programme assessments. These approaches help measure changes in girls' knowledge, confidence, participation, and life skills while continuously improving programme quality.





The **Girl Zone** **Journey**

The Girl Zone Journey

Girl Zone delivers a comprehensive empowerment journey that combines knowledge, wellbeing, creativity, and practical experience to support girls throughout adolescence.

The programme is implemented through:

35-hour
learning journey in
the West Bank.



40-hour
adapted model in
Gaza, designed to
respond to the hu-
manitarian context
and increased psy-
chosocial needs.

During the school year, sessions are delivered primarily as after-school activities. During summer, the programme is implemented through intensive camps that provide girls with a safe and engaging environment for learning, creativity, and personal growth.



Core Learning Areas

- Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing
- Holistic Health
- Life Skills
- Leadership and Civic Engagement
- Financial Literacy
- Communication and Healthy Relationships
- Creative Arts and Theatre
- Self-Expression
- Family Engagement
- Volunteerism and Community Participation



Every learning area contributes to one shared objective: supporting girls to become confident, resilient, and active members of their communities.

Families and Communities Matter

Girl Zone recognises that meaningful change cannot happen through girls alone. Families and communities play a central role in supporting adolescent development and creating environments where girls can thrive.

For this reason, the programme actively engages parents—particularly mothers—through dedicated dialogue sessions that strengthen communication, increase understanding of adolescence, and encourage positive family relationships.

Girl Zone is implemented through a network of trusted community centres that serve as safe spaces for girls while strengthening community ownership of the programme. These centres are not only venues for activities; they are long-term partners that help identify participants, support implementation, encourage family engagement, and ensure that girls remain connected to their communities throughout their journey.

Girl Zone at a Glance

Since its launch in October 2025, Girl Zone has continued to expand through strong partnerships and community ownership, reaching adolescent girls across both the West Bank and Gaza.



Today, the programme
has achieved:

2,500



Adolescent girls reached
across Palestine.

20



Community centres
providing safe and
supportive learning
environments

35-40

Hours

A structured empowerment journey tailored to different contexts across the West Bank and Gaza.



West Bank & Gaza

Implemented across diverse communities, responding to different realities while maintaining one shared vision.

Sharek Partners Alliance

A network of local community organisations ensuring locally led implementation, sustainability, and wider outreach.

Partnership with UNFPA

Implemented in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), combining community leadership with international technical support.



Measuring Impact

Girl Zone measures success not only by the number of girls reached, but by the positive changes experienced throughout their journey.

The programme combines quantitative and qualitative monitoring methods to understand how girls grow, learn, and apply new skills in their daily lives.

Key Areas of Change

Increased self-confidence and self-esteem.

Improved communication with parents and family members.

Greater awareness of mental, physical, and holistic wellbeing.

Stronger life skills, including communication, decision-making, and problem-solving.

Increased participation in community and volunteer initiatives.

Greater willingness to seek support and access available services when needed.

Monitoring tools include baseline and endline assessments, facilitator observations, participant feedback, and regular programme reviews, ensuring continuous learning and programme improvement

Voices of Girl Zone

Behind every number is a girl with her own story.

Zeina Najeh Tubas Sports Club

"I learned how to understand the feelings I have inside and how to deal with negative emotions without letting them affect me."



مشاركة المدنية
والرفاهية



مشاركة المدنية





Asinat Abdul Kareem **Beit Liqya Club, 12 years old**

"I felt that there is hope, and that I can be strong and face challenges without fear."

Sara Mahmoud Jabr Assi

Beit Liqya Club, 12 years old

"When I first joined the GirlZone program, I felt like I was different from everyone else, and I was going through difficult emotions during puberty. With Ms. Fidaa's support and thanks to the safe space she created for us, I was able to talk about my feelings without fear.

I learned that mental health is about finding balance in different aspects of our lives, and that we can understand our emotions and deal with them in healthier ways. Today, I feel more confident in myself, and I enjoy sharing with and listening to my peers. Thank you, Ms. Fidaa, for being the support and sense of safety I needed."



Shatha Bisharat

Tubas Sports Club, 14 years old

"Before the program, I was shy about sharing my opinion in front of others, and I did not like to participate much. After the program, I became more confident in myself. I now participate more and express my opinions without hesitation."



Lamis Hussein

Najoom Al-Amal Association, 15 years old

"Through the program, I discovered that I have a talent for public speaking. I also learned more about my mental health, comprehensive sexuality education, and leadership." "Through the program, I discovered that I have a talent for public speaking. I also learned more about my mental health, comprehensive sexuality education, and leadership."

Renad Al-Ajla

Najoom Al-Amal Association, 13 years old

"I have chronic asthma, and because of the situation in Gaza, I do not attend school. The program helped me make better use of my time. I learned more about myself and became more comfortable joining discussions and sharing my opinions."



Hala Siam

Al-Sabra Group, 13 years old

"The most valuable thing I benefited from was the digital safety sessions. I learned how to protect myself and use the internet safely."





Strong Partnerships, Greater Impact

Girl Zone is implemented by Sharek Youth Forum in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and a diverse network of local organisations working through the Sharek Partners Alliance .

This partnership model reflects a shared commitment to ensuring that every girl has access to safe, inclusive, and meaningful learning opportunities regardless of where she lives.

Local partner organisations play a central role throughout implementation. They identify participants, prepare community spaces, engage families, facilitate outreach, and ensure that activities remain responsive to local priorities and realities.

By combining community leadership with technical expertise and strategic partnership, Girl Zone creates a model that is locally owned, community-driven, and designed for long-term impact.

Sustainability

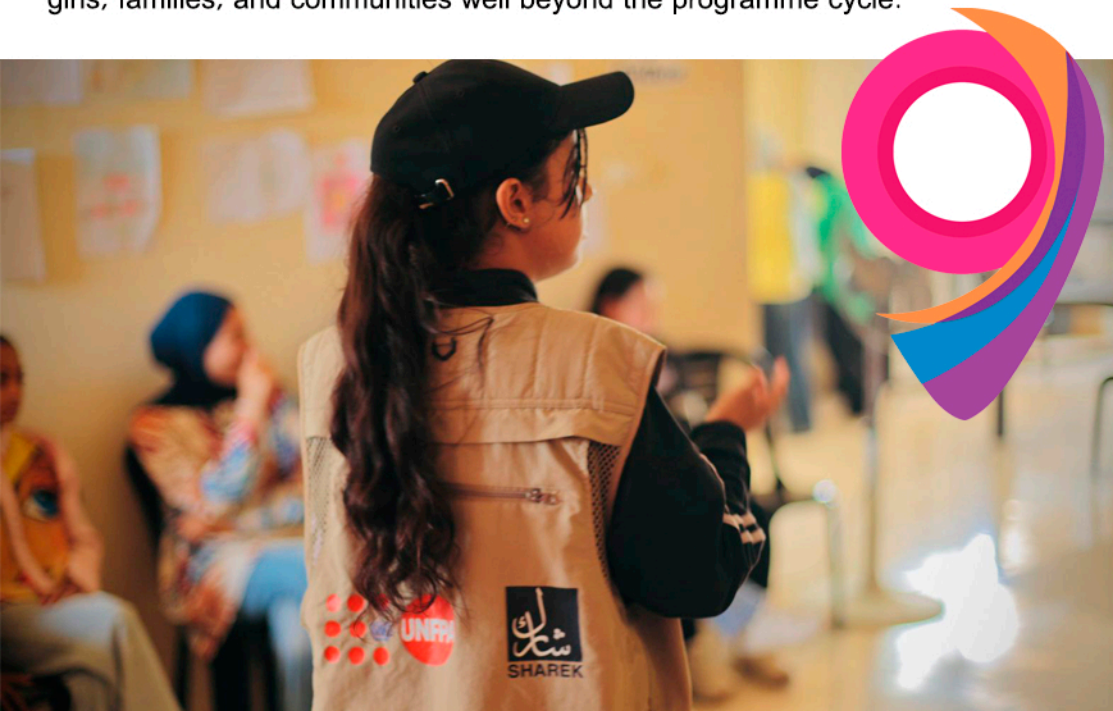
Girl Zone is designed to create lasting impact beyond the duration of the programme.

Sustainability is embedded throughout implementation by investing in local capacities, strengthening community ownership, and equipping girls with knowledge and skills that remain with them long after the final session.

The programme contributes to sustainability by:

- Building the capacities of local female facilitators.
- Strengthening community centres as long-term safe spaces for girls.
- Engaging families as active partners in adolescent development.
- Developing practical life skills that girls continue to apply in their daily lives.
- Working through local partner organisations that remain present within their communities.

Through this approach, Girl Zone creates foundations that continue to benefit girls, families, and communities well beyond the programme cycle.



Looking Ahead

Girl Zone began as a response to the needs of adolescent girls. Today, it has grown into a model with the potential to reach many more girls across Palestine. Over the coming years, Sharek Youth Forum and its partners aim to expand the programme's reach, strengthen the network of community-based safe spaces, and continue investing in girls as leaders of positive change.

The long-term vision includes:

- Expanding Girl Zone to reach more communities across the West Bank and Gaza.
- Strengthening the capacities of local facilitators and community partners.
- Establishing a growing network of Girl Zone graduates who continue supporting and inspiring one another.
- Expanding opportunities for girls' leadership, volunteering, and civic engagement.
- Continuing to adapt the programme to emerging needs while maintaining its girl-centred approach.

Every girl who joins Girl Zone represents more than one participant. She represents a stronger family, a more connected community, and a future shaped by confidence, resilience, and hope.





Funded by
European Union
Humanitarian Aid

