Shiam - Youth Make the Future, is a Palestinian locally registered non-governmental, non-profit organization that aims to spread the principles of good citizenry, human values, gender equality and mainstreaming, democracy and good governance among Palestinian youth. Shiam is the spinoff organization of the internationally recognized Palestinian Youth Local Councils (YLCs) program initiated by Global Communities in 2008 to develop youth as accountable leaders’ who believe in and practice democracy, good governance, equality, humanity and their own agency to effect positive change in their society.

Shiam organization was founded by Palestinian leading youth advocates, YLCs alumni, and non-partisan civic engagement activists. It was established to sustain the YLCs venture, scale-up and institutionalize its national presence, enhance coordination, networking and synergies between all YLCs, provide an advocacy platform for effective policy change, and build youth capacity through targeted trainings and practical engagement in their communities’ social, cultural and economic development.

Shiam Mission: To develop and support platforms and initiatives that promote youth social, economic, and civic effective engagement and leadership

How was your organisation’s experience mobilising resources?

Shiam is a local Palestinian organisation that has been established in 2018. Since its establishment the organisation has been incubated under an INGO that has been operating in Palestine since 1994, Global Communities – formerly known as CHF. Through Global Communities network and its operational and administrational support, Shiam was able to cultivate relationships with the donor and sponsor community in Palestine, which has allowed the organisation to be awarded large grants from the commencement. Furthermore, Shiam has focused on building relationships with the private sector through developing strategic partnerships, which support in reducing project direct and indirect costs and in creating sustainable interventions.
What was the most important change that you have observed as a result of being awarded the CSF?

Joining CIVICUS Solidarity Fund has opened the doors to connect with organisations that work in similar sphere but in other parts of the Global South. This has created a space to share and exchange experiences and lessons learnt that has helped in better sculpting our funded intervention.

Another important change that we have witnessed at Shiam, is the strong relationship and the trust that is being built with CIVICUS team by joining General Assembly meetings, open discussions, focus groups and other activities, which is an integral part in building our internal capacities and will support us in creating collaborations for future initiatives.

Other than the financial support, has being part of the CSF been helpful in any other ways?

We believe that CIVICUS Solidarity Fund can be considered a non-traditional fund. Their approach of selecting initiatives is focused on ideas that could be simple in implementation yet have an impact that is considered “outside of the box”.

The engagement with CIVICUS in designing the Youth Local Council Platform has opened doors for us to reach out to youth across of Palestine coming from various backgrounds and demographic presence to engage them through this platform. Furthermore, it has advanced the discussions with other donors and sponsors who would be willing to invest for scaling-up. As mentioned earlier, the fund has supported in advancing our internal capacities regarding how to conduct our business. In addition, through the one-to-one meetings, it has helped us to better develop our intervention and encouraged our participatory approach and our resource mobilization efforts.

What could have made the experience better?

The overall experience has been very pleasant. The flexible methods of communication and reporting has eased our implementation process and increased our effectiveness and efficiency in delivering the agreed upon intervention outcomes.

Any advice for future applicants?

For the next cycle, I believe increasing the amount of funding can support in implementing larger initiatives that can produce more sustainable and scalable results.

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