



# Young Voices For A Sustainable Future

The BASF & JA Worldwide  
Innovation Challenge For A Just Transition



## Listening to Young Voices to Build a Sustainable Future Together

The first year of our partnership, called “Young Voices for a Sustainable Future”, has been a rewarding learning journey.

Through the development of the concept, our teams at BASF and Junior Achievement worked closely to build a unique opportunity for young people across the globe, to develop key skills, learn about sustainable development, and come up with solutions to the challenges their communities face.

The students openly shared their views on what matters to them, what worries them, and where they see themselves as possible change makers. It was fascinating to see that from Mexico to Vietnam, from Greece to Uganda, the youth have similar concerns when it comes to air and water pollution, and waste production and management. All in their own way, aware of the specificities of their countries and communities, they came up with very creative ideas to address local issues, yet showed the potential for these ideas to be scaled up at a wider scale, sometimes global!

Their appetite for digital solutions shows the relevance and importance of initiatives that help them develop these key skills for the 21st century.

Throughout the year, we witnessed the power of youth, to take matters in their own hands and actively contribute to a green, digital and fair economy and society, for generations to come.

Building on this successful first year, we are looking forward to continuing our partnership in 2023. We will reach more young people in eight more places in Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Uganda, Nigeria, Greece, Vietnam and Indonesia. Learnings from the first year will help to focus on a deeper learning experience to empower young people to understand and utilize their potential to contribute to sustainable development.



*“It has been a great honour for us at BASF to help amplify the voice and power of the youth and give emphasis to the role they play in sustainable development. We are convinced that by offering such opportunities to young people, we will help contributing to building better communities throughout the world”.*

**Dr. Christoph Jaekel**  
Vice President Corporate Sustainability at BASF



*“Young people want to be part of tomorrow’s solutions, especially when it comes to global challenges such as sustainability. We are delighted that BASF engaged with young people to hear their voice, involve them in finding solutions to shared issues, and gave them an opportunity to contribute to sustainable development.”*

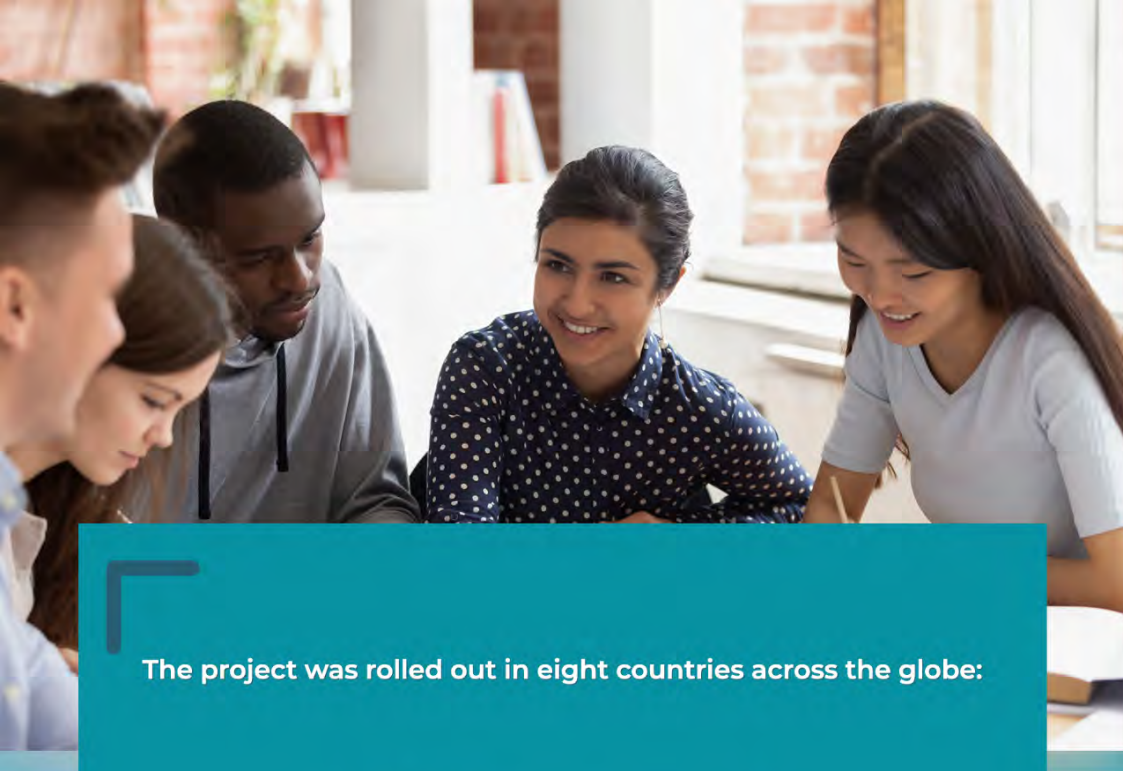
**Asheesh Advani**  
CEO of JA Worldwide



**Don Sedlock**  
Director, Global Development at  
JA Worldwide



**Judith Trueper**  
Sustainability Relations -  
Societal Engagement at BASF



More than a thousand students aged 15-20 years old took part in the project.



1453 STUDENTS

Supported by BASF volunteers who coached the students through the ideation process and project development.



156 VOLUNTEERS

Eight winning teams were invited to the Virtual Global Exchange to present their concepts and share with youth from across the globe.



The project was rolled out in eight countries across the globe:



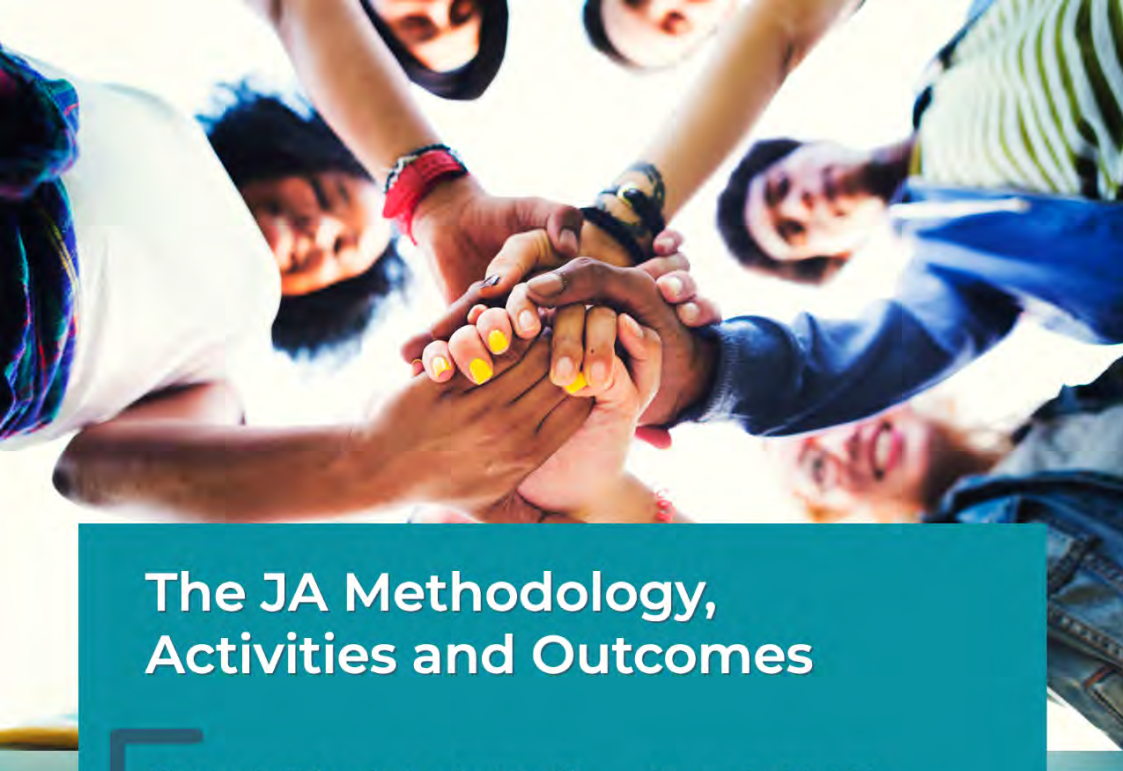
Brazil, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Uganda, Vietnam

Global youth share similar concerns about sustainability:

Through this initiative, the students have learned and developed critical skills for the 21st century:

SEA  
PLASTIC  
WASTE MANAGEMENT  
WASTE PRODUCTION  
WATER POLLUTION  
AIR POLLUTION

GLOBAL SOLUTIONS  
CREATIVE THINKING  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
DIGITAL SKILLS  
LOCAL ISSUES



**Young Voices for a Sustainable Future aims to deliver on the following learning objectives:**

- . Support employment relevant 21st century competency development;
- . Explore the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to identify ways business/communities/individuals can address these consequences and support fair sustainable development
- . Raise awareness amongst young people and communities about climate change induced societal consequences making climate adaptation and a just transition necessary
- . Capture and present youth voices by identifying the local impact of climate change

## The JA Methodology, Activities and Outcomes

JA's experiential curriculum begins with an introduction to critical skill sets—collaboration, creativity, self-confidence, and resilience—that prepare students for university, vocational education, the workforce, or their own start-up ventures.

JA students job shadow skilled mentors, challenge themselves and their teammates during technical and business innovation contests, and test their skills through multiple channels and experiences.

Many students also launch their own businesses, get their first taste of entrepreneurship, and lay the groundwork to becoming the next generation of job creators.

Along the way, JA students develop self-efficacy—the belief that they have the power to achieve their goals—which is as important as skill building to preparing young people to own their economic success.

As a result of their JA experiences, our alumni start more companies, hire more employees, and produce significantly larger annual sales than ventures led by non-alumni.

Our alumni also save more, hold less debt, and are less likely to spend more than they earn.

JA alumni report higher levels of household income and career satisfaction. In addition, they are less likely to leave school, face unemployment, or collect social insurance.

## The experience was built around four key steps and learning activities:



Challenge Selection Workshop



National Innovation Challenge Event



BASF Mentoring of the Winning Team



Virtual Global Exchange Meeting

**This learner experience consists of four distinct, yet interrelated components:**

- 1) In this team-based, activity driven workshop experience, learners investigate the impact of pollution on the environment. They explore climate change induced societal consequences that make climate adaptation and a just transition necessary and identify their communities' biggest challenge.
- 2) Learners solve for the challenge defined during the workshop and establish innovative and potentially viable solutions to community related problems and challenges caused by climate change and the transition to a sustainable economy and society.
- 3) Six-month local mentorship offered to the national winning team to gain practical implementation experience for their winning idea.
- 4) The Virtual Global Exchange gathers the national winning teams and allows the youth to showcase their ideas to an international audience and get feedback from peers.



## BRAZIL

A local school, close to the BASF offices in the city of Guaratinguetá was selected to take part in the project. This proximity allowed the students to meet several volunteers from the business, who shared their expertise, brought in colleagues as the students had specific questions and needs on communications, technology or finances.



108

Number of students



24

Number of volunteers

## THE CHALLENGE

During the Challenge Selection Workshop, the students decided to tackle the issue of waste and landfill, a plague in their home country they want to see gone.



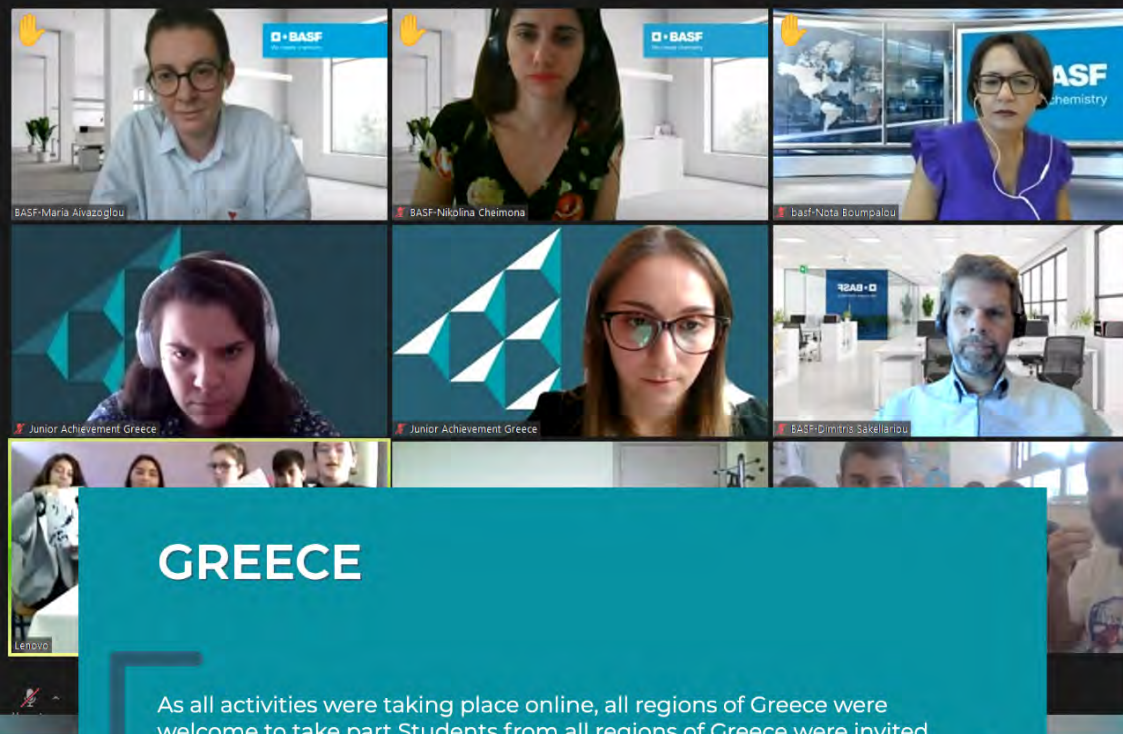
## WINNING IDEA

The team "Zero Two" took on the challenge to deal with the 82 million tons of garbage generated per year in Brazil. While 3% of waste is recycled, the rest ends up in landfills and dumps. With their application Green Return, households are able to track progress in collecting and sorting garbage, and access a reward programme with partnering companies.

The students propose to create a facilitating App for waste separation connected with local waste recycling and reuse companies. In addition to this functionality, the application will have the potential to generate income for socially vulnerable people who work with recycling.

*"I had never taken part in anything like this before! It was a cool experience and I think everyone should participate in such an initiative at school!" - Student*

*"Being a volunteer was a turning point of me: it made me understand even more the importance of social responsibility. It also took me back in time when I was still in school and I could see how much education has evolved in the last ten years." - BASF Volunteer*



## GREECE

As all activities were taking place online, all regions of Greece were welcome to take part. Students from all regions of Greece were invited to take part in a virtual experience, and address with their schools the challenges of the SDGs.



68

Number of students



18

Number of volunteers

## THE CHALLENGE

The youth, from all over the country, agreed to tackle the SDG 14: "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development."



## WINNING IDEA

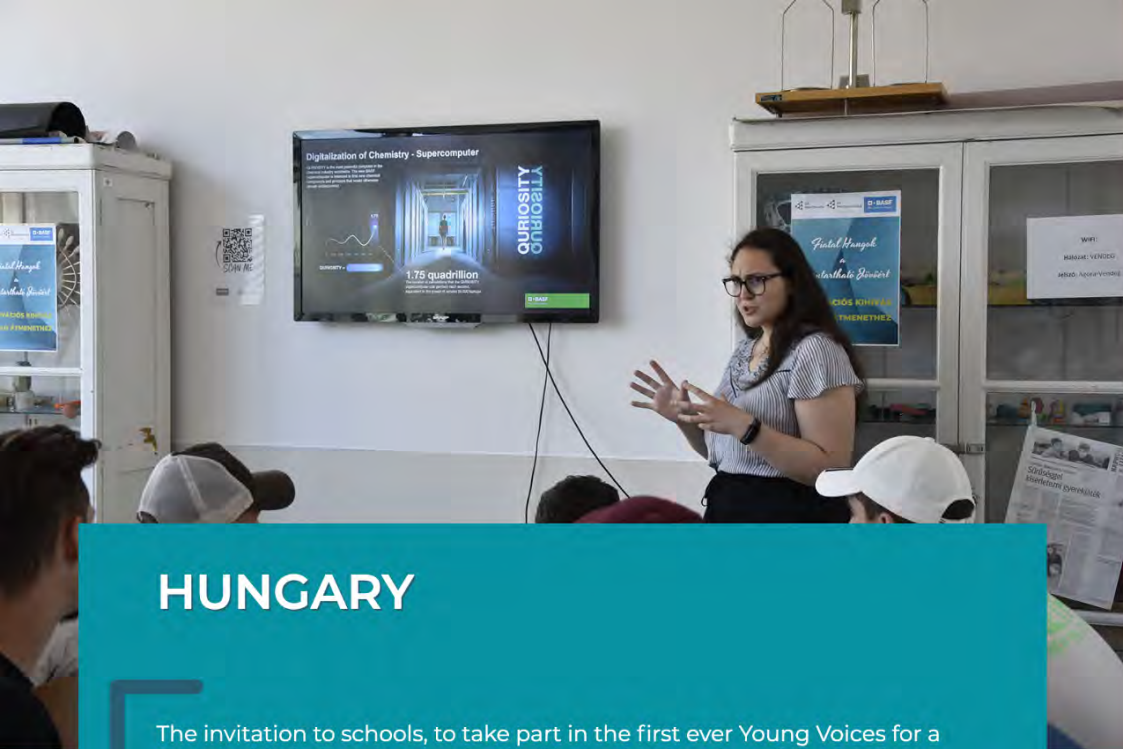
The students from Neos Marmaras, a tourist town in Halkidiki, Greece, are shocked by the amount of plastic litter discarded in the sea, that lead to the death of sea turtles and the proliferation of jellyfish.

Involving the residents of the small town, the team created an app to help them learn more about waste management and allow them to notify the municipality when collection points are full. Thanks to a partnership with a local NGO, residents can earn and redeem reward points in local partner stores.

Their own school, the High School of Neos Marmaras, would be turned into a mentoring hub on recycling for their community, where they would create a smart corner with recycling bins so that the school can function as an information hub for recycling and drive more sustainable behaviours.

*"The climate needs solutions from everyone and for everyone. Don't leave us out of the conversation."* - Student

*"The combination of creativity and innovation together with organisation and teamwork is a key recipe for any successful action."* – BASF volunteer



## HUNGARY

The invitation to schools, to take part in the first ever Young Voices for a Sustainable Future was received with great enthusiasm from teachers and students, who were eager to learn about the UN SDGs and how they can contribute to a sustainable future.



513

Number of students



31

Number of volunteers

## THE CHALLENGE

In Hungary, the young participants decided to address SDG 12, that aims to ensure sustainable production and consumption patterns.



## WINNING IDEA

The Green Devils have the ambition to disrupt current production and consumption systems, by introducing the EPS – the “Environmental Protection System”. With the EPS, consumers and producers will be incentivised to favour environmentally friendly products rather than non-sustainable products.

The students want to create a central IT system, whereby environmentally friendly products would be competitive against non-environmentally friendly ones.

The IT platform, a website, would be able to categorize products from different kinds of environmental aspects and offer discounts for eligible customers. The system would make statistics about consumption and production habits (gathering data and managing it).

*“They are on a great path to understand the complexity of sustainable development. Starting with their own communities and focusing on tangible challenges, they are going to reach a bigger crowd and get to work on bigger projects.” – BASF Volunteer*

*“Young people are interested in environmental protection. And that is why they want be a part of the conversation. They consider that the most challenging thing is to motivate people to lead an environmentally conscious lifestyle. That is why their idea is so fantastic! They developed a lot and thanks to the mentors, they were also able to get to know the business policy side of their idea.” – BASF Volunteer*



## INDONESIA

Students from SMAN 81 Jakarta were given the unique opportunity to take part in the initiative and show how youth can contribute to supporting underserved communities around them.



323

Number of students



46

Number of volunteers

## THE CHALLENGE

The students chose to address the challenges of responsible and sustainable production and production, while promoting sustainable and inclusive communities.



## WINNING IDEA

While Subang is the largest pineapple-producing region in Indonesia, only the fruits are used, with pineapple leaves destroyed, burnt and leading to air pollution and contributing to global warming.

The team at COVARSI created BIOPIC a fabric made of recycled pineapple leaf waste combined with natural dyes which is then processed into fashion materials with a touch of Indonesian Culture; namely, Batik.

So far, the student company has successfully used 300 kilograms of pineapple leaf waste, contributing to the empowerment of 27 families.

*"Being part of 'Young Voices for a Sustainable Future' initiative gave me an intriguing experience as there are lots of new and fresh ideas coming from the younger generation to make a positive impact on a broader scale. I hope this program continues and reaches more students, since I am confident their ideas and innovations will make a difference in making the world a better place."*

– BASF Volunteer



## MEXICO

Secondary-level students from the state of Tamaulipas took part in their first JA experience thanks to the collaboration with BASF. The students were even invited to discover the BASF site!



117

Number of students



17

Number of volunteers

## THE CHALLENGE

Waste production and management is the global challenge the Mexican students decided to address, with a very local approach.

*"We are very proud that we could take the next step in our project, and test it in the school. Thank you BASF and JA!" – Student*

## WINNING IDEA

Vida Verde's mission is to reduce pollution in the country, starting with their county in Altamira. "Green Life" tackles the formation of clandestine dumpsites, by collecting plastic and aluminum waste, and selling it to recycling companies for the benefit of the community.

The students aim to raise awareness about the possibilities to recycle, and the need to sort waste to better manage landfill creation.

At the beginning of the programme, 43% of the young people who took part in the project said they knew what the Sustainable Development Goals were – this figure increased to 97% at the end of the programme.

43 %

57 %

3 %

97 %

BEFORE THE PROGRAMME

AFTER THE PROGRAMME



## NIGERIA

The students from 10 schools across 5 states, were invited to take part in the virtual activities and to pitch their idea on the impact of climate change in their environment and communities.

 100

Number of students

 7

Number of volunteers

## THE CHALLENGE

The challenge they chose was around SDG 11, and sustainable cities and communities, to make cities and villages more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.



## WINNING IDEA

The young entrepreneurs of GSTC Garki in Abuja are part of a JA Nigeria student company.

They produced interlocking blocks from waste nylon (LDP) to use in paving walkways. They came up with the idea to source the waste nylon from their school premises, melt it and use it as a binding agent, mixed with fine sand to produce strong, durable, light and cheap interlocking blocks.

The team has the ambition to reduce the effects of pollution in their country and the world at large, while tackling unemployment by providing new jobs in the communities.

*"I had a great experience! I learnt new skills such as self-reliance, team work, tolerance, collaboration and shared responsibility which will be useful for my future." – Student*

*"Working with the BASF volunteers has been very satisfying and very impactful. They actively supported the program, both in attendance during the mentoring sessions and the local and global events. They provided input, recommendations, solutions to the environmental challenges the students wanted to approach, and their contributions were much welcomed by the students." – JA Staff*

## UGANDA

Nine secondary level schools answered the call to take part in the Young Voices for a Sustainable Future Challenge.



109

Number of students



10

Number of volunteers

## THE CHALLENGE

The students decided to address the challenge of plastic waste in their community.

*"Students have come up with amazing projects, easily scalable, feasible, and saleable. They can easily make money and can be done tomorrow."*  
- Christine Masta, Volunteer from BASF

*"This project has opened my eyes as a student to embrace sustainability and work to reduce the damage that we are doing to our environment as human beings."* - Student



## WINNING IDEA

Green Pearl Investments is a recycling company that turns plastic debris from the environment into useful everyday products that are safe, durable and affordable.

The students first collected all the plastic waste they could find around their school campus, gathering it in a room the school provided them. The waste was mostly made of used water and beverage bottles, plastic tins for foods and the plastic parts of other products.

They then started to use the plastics to create and design other products that can be used in the community such as garbage bins, baskets and, unique plastic fencing for gardens and compounds around the campus.

Through these products, the students believe that while trying to mitigate the poor disposal of plastic, they will also spread awareness to the negative effects of plastic waste and opportunities to better manage.

Their most popular products include a self-irrigated flower pot with plastic bottles inside of the pot that keep water and fertilizers, providing the plant with sufficient quantities at all times.



## VIETNAM

The project was open to all students nationwide, and took place online only. The participants came from 15 high schools and universities, in the North and South of the country.



115

Number of students



13

Number of volunteers

## THE CHALLENGE

The students identified food demand and security as the global issue of urgency they wanted to address.

*"We learned a lot through the project, for example on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We are passionate about solving problems related to sustainable agriculture and are so proud of our idea to support farmers." - Student*



## WINNING IDEA

Solutions for the Future tackle the effects of climate change on agriculture, as they witness in their home province of Ben Tre.

They see firsthand how climate change has affected agriculture, causing coconut production to decrease and depreciate, leading local farmers to shift from coconut tree production to other crops, namely organic vegetables. Through this switch, other challenges appear such as epidemics of pests and insects such as planthoppers and butterflies.

The team came up with an IoT tool to help farmers manage pest and insects damage their organic crops, by example by managing pests with electric traps, automatically adjusting energy consumption according to environmental conditions or measuring and storing environmental information such as temperature and humidity, etc.

93.5% of responded students agreed that the experience they had in Young Voices for a Sustainable future project will encourage their participation in local sustainable development projects.

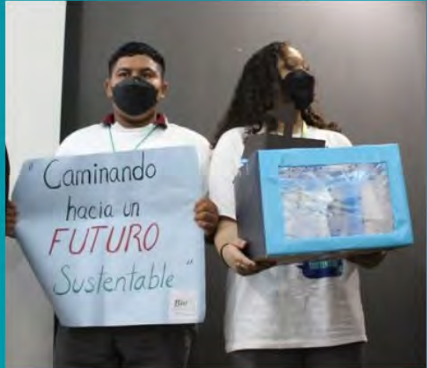


# Year 1 Survey Results

JA's experiential curriculum begins with an introduction to critical skill sets—collaboration, creativity, self-confidence, and resilience—that prepare students for university, vocational education, the workforce, or their own start-up ventures.

Results indicate a positive increase in participating youth's knowledge, attitude, and behaviours. These findings show that engagement in this project resulted in positive outcomes in learning.

- 1) Knowledge: At programme completion, 83% of youth report gaining knowledge about climate change, a just transition, and the Sustainable Development Goals versus 32% at the start.
- 2) Attitude: More than 75% of youth reported that working with BASF mentors helped them to gain confidence to learn new things, solve problems, and be more creative.
- 3) Behaviour Change: By participating in the programme youth were 2½ times more likely to set future employment goals.





[jaworldwide.org](http://jaworldwide.org)

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