



the Possibilists

An in-depth study of the lives and
work of young changemakers.

Why the World Needs *Possibilists*

Young people are creating change everywhere we look. They are winning Nobel Peace prizes, they are mobilizing around the climate crisis in ways that put our national leaders to shame, they are voting in record numbers, volunteering for their communities, and leading movements against systemic racism and inequality. It's time to take them seriously.

Some of them dedicate everything they have to tackling the most pressing issues of our time. They are choosing purpose over paychecks. Their work is their way of life. They are changemakers, activists, social innovators, disruptors, dreamers, doers – people who believe social and environmental change is possible. They are Possibilists.

Aged
15–24

16%
of global
population

1.2*
Billion youth

* Source: United Nations. (2019). International Youth Day, 12 August 2019.
UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Dynamics.

Who We Are

We are 16 changemaker networks who have come together to improve the lives of young social innovators.



Academic partner:



Kindly supported by:



Initiated by ChangemakerXchange, The Possibilists is a unique global alliance committed to delivering real insights into the lives and work of young changemakers and to improving their conditions.

the Possibilists

The Study

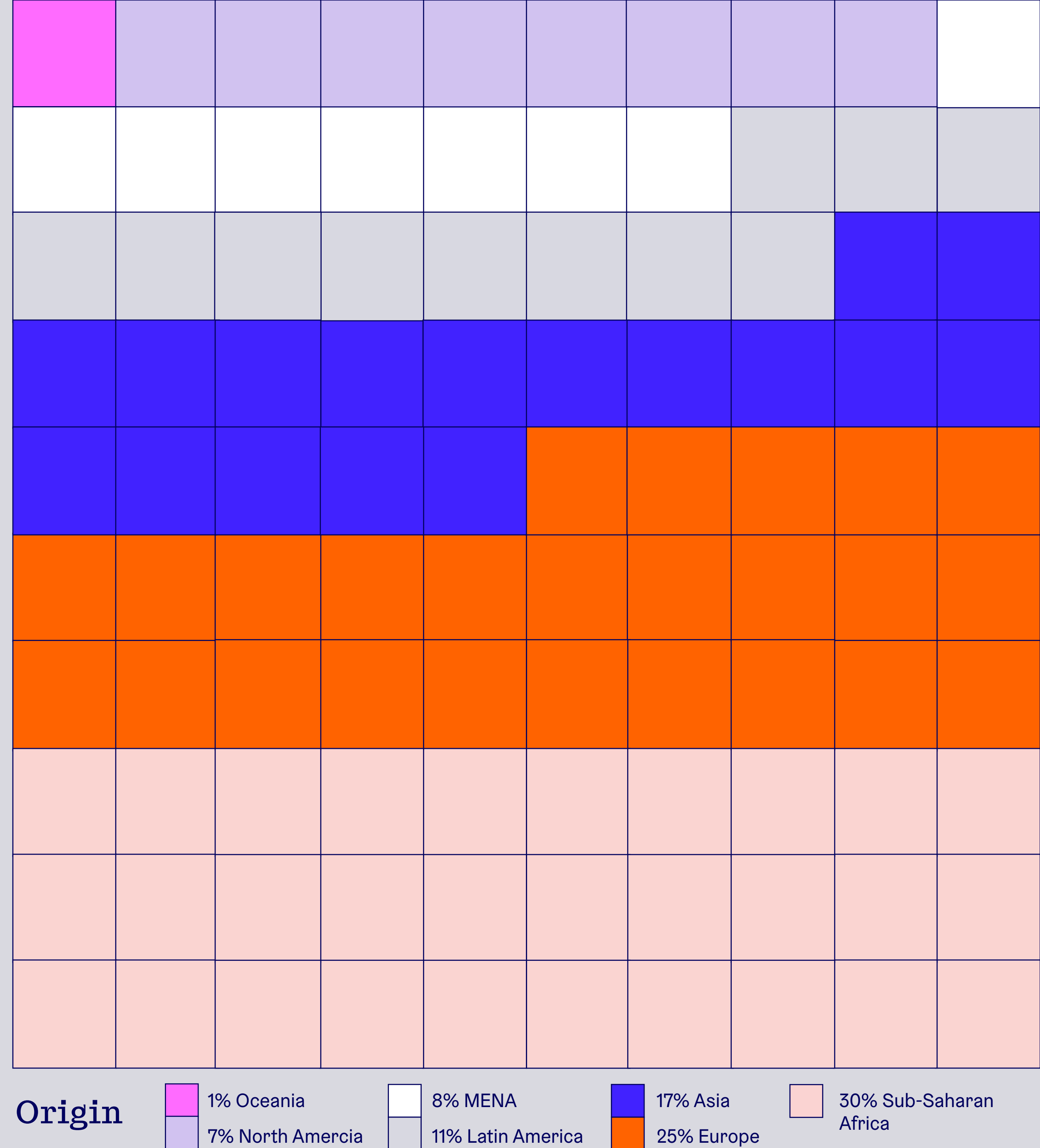
We conducted a 40+ question in-depth study on young changemakers.

The focus of the study was youth between the ages of 16-35 who lead initiatives with a social and/or environmental impact. 35% of respondents are in the start-up phase, 37% operational and 28% are in the scaling phase.

53% were female, 45% male, and 2% were non-binary or preferred not to say. 27% of respondents consider themselves to be part of a marginalized group.

The survey was conducted between February 19th – March 4th, 2021 and distributed among the 16 partner networks, as well as other young changemaker communities around the world.

Here's what we found.



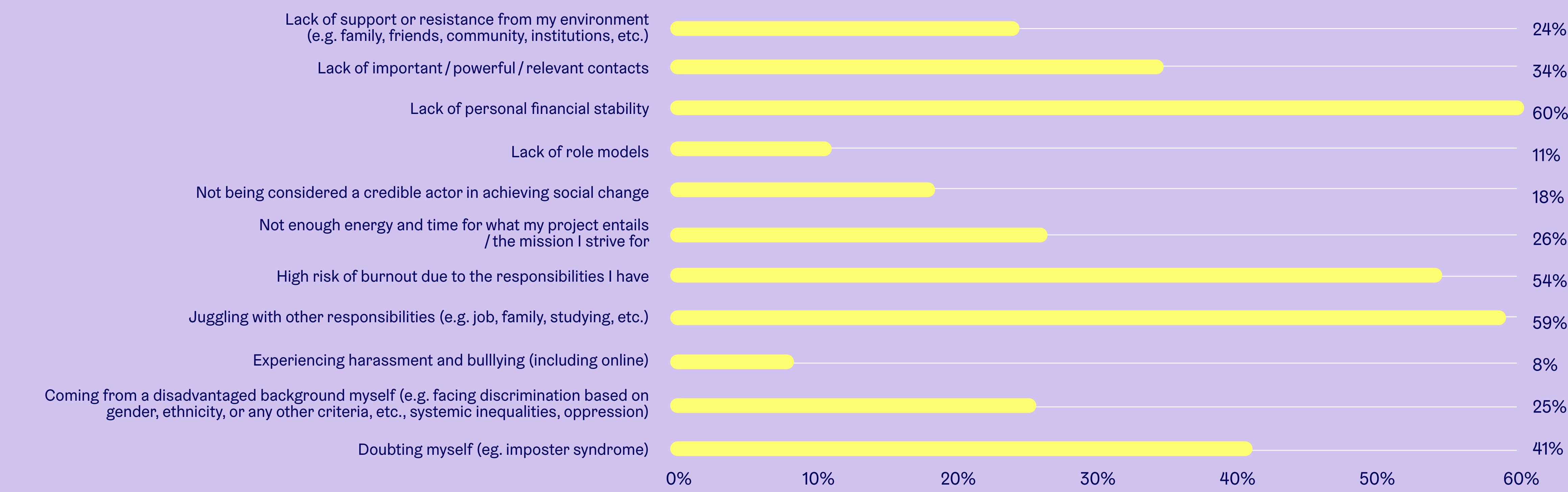
The Findings

Young changemakers are resilient, innovative and intrinsically motivated to *change* the world and improve the lives of others. But at what cost to themselves?

Young changemakers are sacrificing their financial security and well-being to change the world. 59% have experienced some form of burnout and only 9% can live off of their ventures.

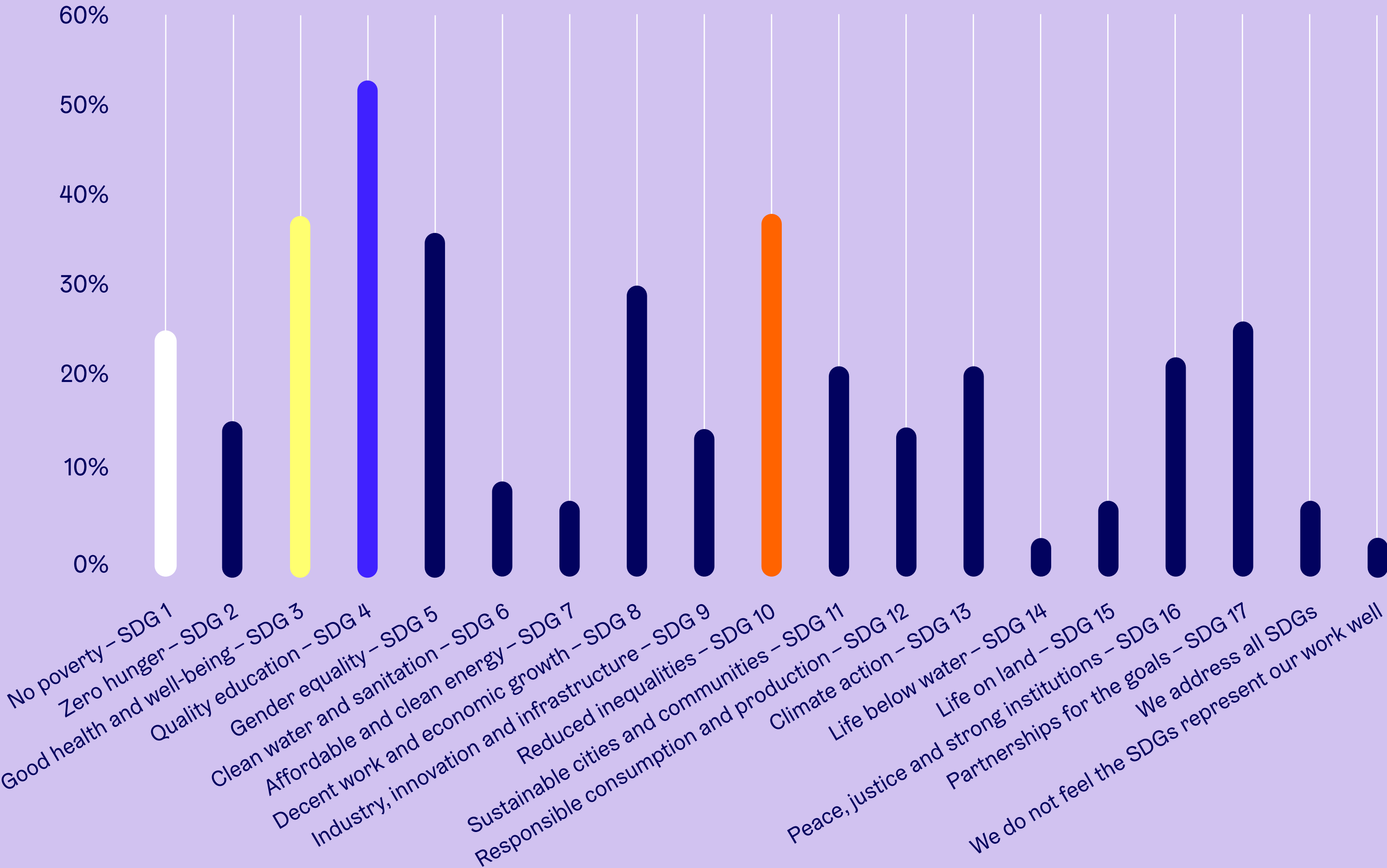
This combination of financial and well-being strain is visible when young changemakers were asked what makes it difficult for them to work on their initiatives.

What makes it difficult to work on the initiative



What they work on and *why*

Distribution across SDGs



When asked to think about their work within the SDG framework, the three main focus areas are:

SDG 4
Quality education
53%

SDG 10
Reduced inequalities
38%

SDG 3
Good health and well-being
37%

Our study found that most young social innovators focus on *education*, seeing it as a major lever for reducing inequalities and creating change.

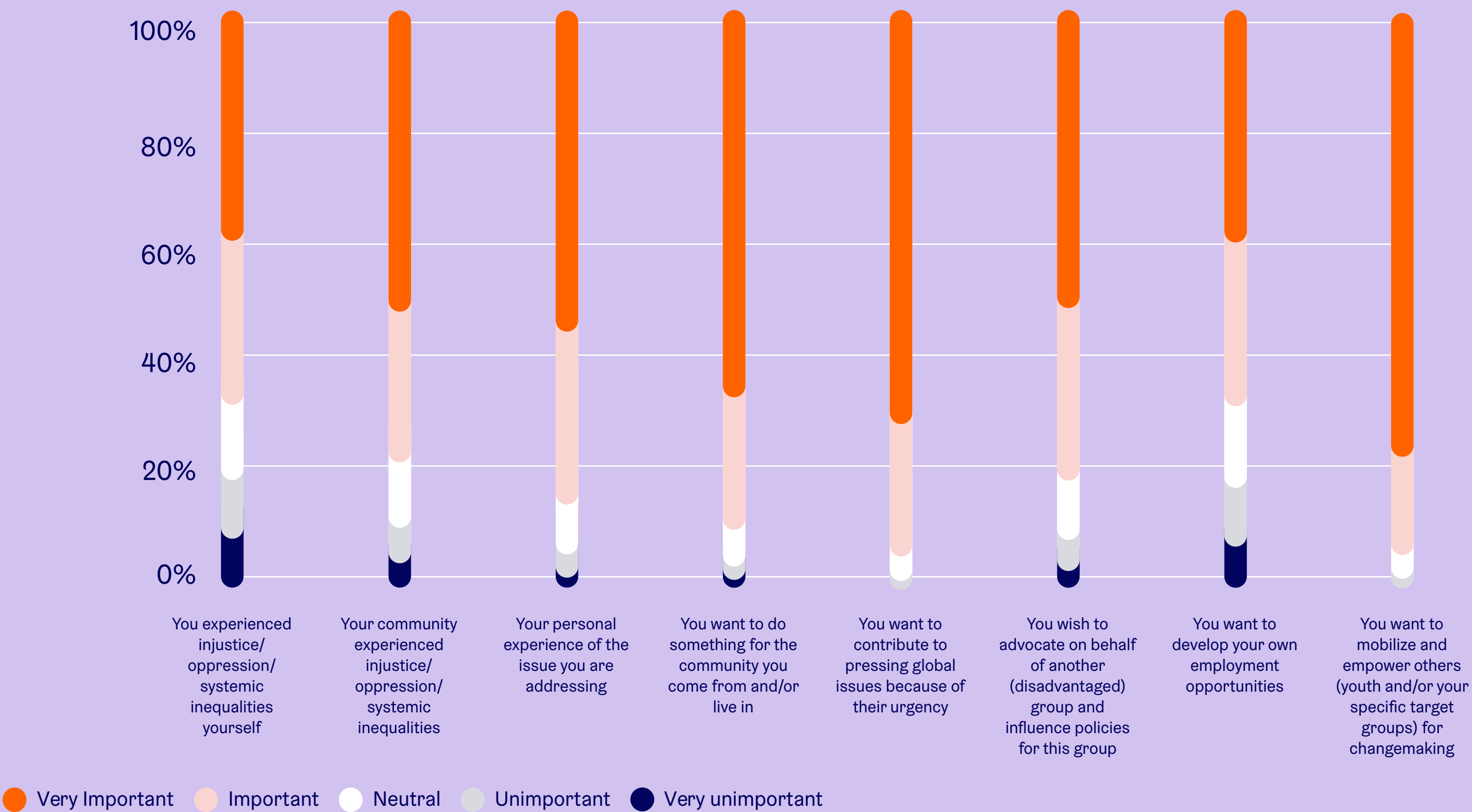
“The *education system* needs to provide opportunities for girls in their formative years and make a difference in their own lives.”



Rachita Saraogi
SISTERHOOD, UK

What they work on and *why*:

Main motivation for developing the initiative



The three main motivators for their work are to:

78%
mobilize and empower others for changemaking

74%
contribute to pressing global issues

67%
do something for their community

KEY FINDING

Young social innovators are not primarily driven by their own employment needs and wishes, but rather by an intrinsic desire to improve the lives of others on a global and local scale.

A closer look



Maria Clara
Magalhaes

LOCATION
Brazil

INITIATIVE
Be.Labs

Be.Labs is a social tech company that works to accelerate diverse, inclusive and abundant futures by promoting gender equity and women's economic power and democratizing futures through methodologies that unblock unconscious biases. Be.Labs arises from the radical desire to change gender gaps in Brazil.

“I think I was born a protagonist. The very first time I remember standing up for *girl's rights* was when I was six. The boys didn't want to let us play soccer. Then I created the girl's team where we could finally play. Instead of freezing or shutting down, I stood up and that's what I've been doing since then.”

What motivated you to start your venture?

In 2010, when I was 14 years old, my mother woke me up with the news that my friend was in the ICU. Her stepfather had raped her and her mother, killed her mother, set the house on fire and my friend managed to survive. Her house, which was next to mine, was charred. Despite being horrified and worried about my friend, situations of violence were very common in my city. Brazil occupies the 92nd position in the ranking of gender equality and is the fifth most violent country for women according to WHO.

I always walk in fear and am prepared to defend myself at all times. I have constant nightmares about violence. But instead of being paralyzed by fear, I stood up and decided to create a better future for myself and other women in Brazil. I co-founded Be.Labs, a social technology business that seeks to establish gender equity in Brazil through the economic empowerment of women. Today there are over 300 women-owned accelerated startups and our work has already impacted more than 3,000 women.

A closer look



Alhassan Baba
Muniru

LOCATION
Ghana / Germany

INITIATIVE
Recycle Up!

Recycle Up! Ghana believes that local problems need to be solved by local people. Through trainings and support, they work to empower Ghanaian youth to tackle the plastic waste challenges that exist in their communities, with the aim of creating a more sustainable future for Ghana and beyond.

“We have colonized the earth and we see ourselves as separate from nature – and hence we also deny *climate change*. These are the things that keep me up at night. I hope that our generation will be able to change some of this for the better.”

What motivated you to start your venture?

My aha moment occurred in the summer of 2013, when I was on a road trip in the countryside of Ghana and saw how underdeveloped other parts of my country were. It was a real eye opener for myself and my cofounders. We started asking ourselves, what can we do to make a difference? How can we take advantage of the little “privilege” we have from being educated and living in the city to help make a difference, however small that may be. We knew that all we had was time, our knowledge and youthful exuberance. We put all that to good use and that was the beginning of our journey in starting the Recycle Up! movement.

What has been your venture’s greatest accomplishment?

After attending our RUG summer camp in 2016 in Accra, one participant helped start a branch of RUG at the University of Ghana (UG). Julius and his team created a culture of plastic waste segregation and provided dustbins for waste separation and recycling. Two years later, they managed to get the project adopted and upscaled by the Vice Chancellor to maximize its impact. Today the University of Ghana Plastic Recycling Project (UGPRP) has diverted over 18 metric tonnes of plastic waste from ending up in landfill sites. The fact that a simple summer camp project has managed to serve as a catalyst for the biggest campus wide recycling project in Ghana makes me proud and shows how far we’ve come as an organization.

Key challenges that young changemakers face

59%

say they are juggling various responsibilities and being stretched too thin

54%

see themselves at high risk of burnout

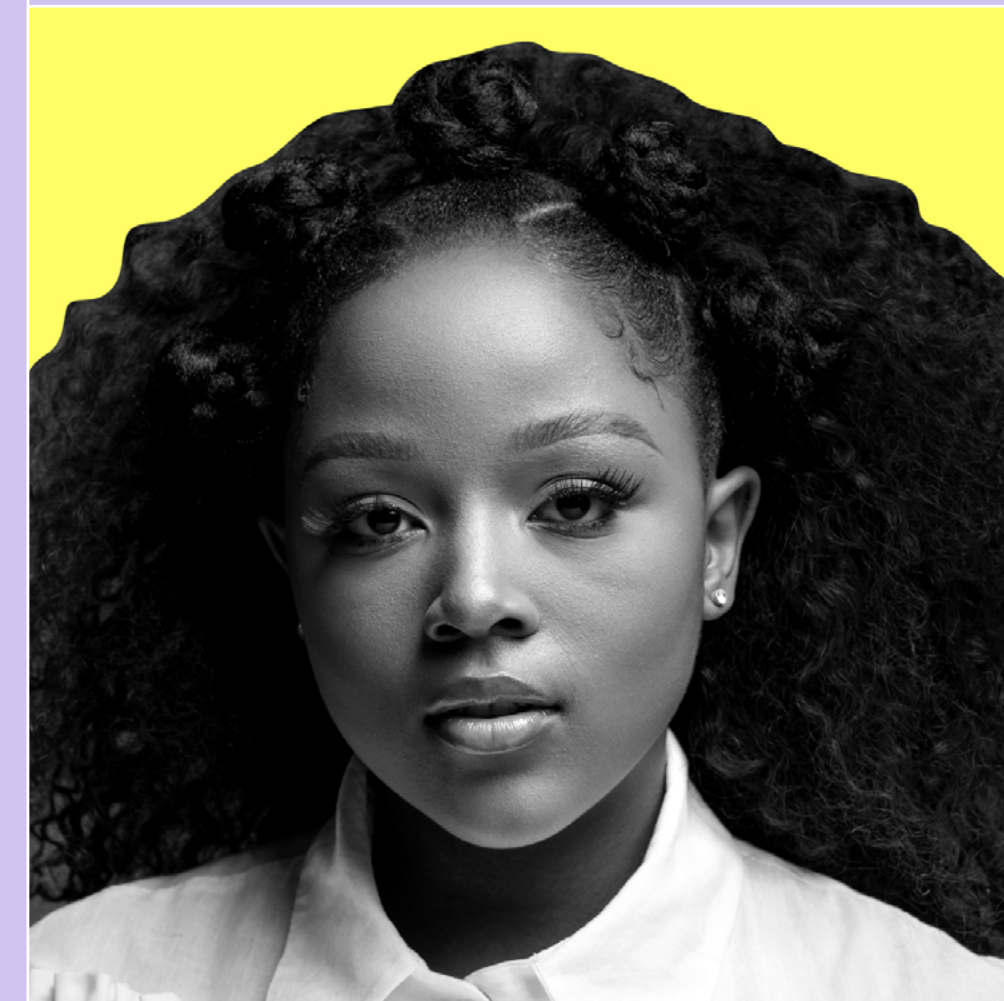
60%

experience a lack of personal financial security

“Funding has been our biggest struggle. We got by on small grants and awards for 2-3 years before we were able to raise capital. This came at a great personal and financial cost to our founders – including lost income, lost time in being able to purchase a home and raise families. There isn’t enough *funding for early stage ideas*. If we had gotten more funding early on, there is no doubt that our impact would be much larger than it is today.”



Rónán Ó Dálaigh
THRIFTIFY, IRELAND



Amonge Sinxoto
BLACKBOARD AFRICA, SOUTH AFRICA

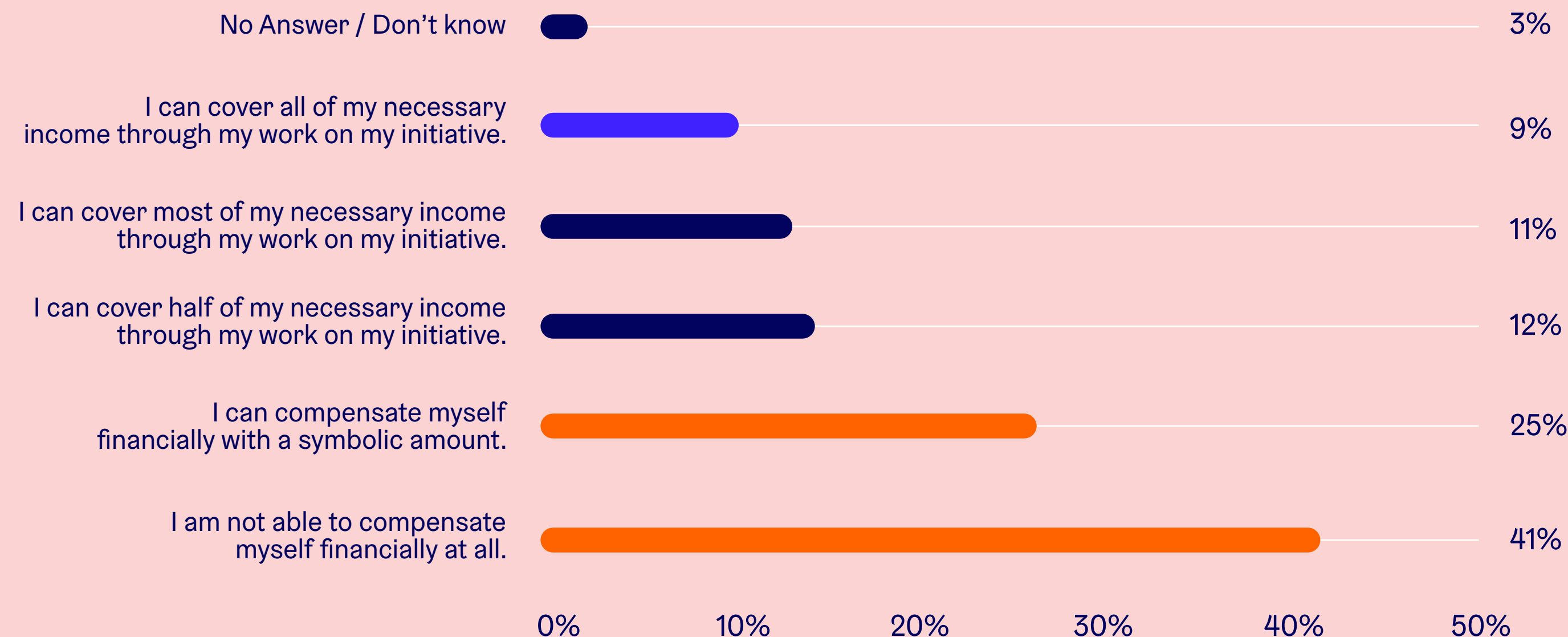
“I suffer from *anxiety* like so many other young people out there. And so stress is very present when I am trying to juggle my responsibilities within the organization, my academic responsibilities as a student and just finding time for myself and close friends. It does sometimes seem overwhelming.”

Financial *insecurity*

Only **9%** of young changemakers can cover all their necessary expenses through their initiative.

66% of young changemakers cannot compensate themselves at all or can only pay themselves a small token amount. Nearly **75%** of all young changemakers cannot cover more than **50%** of their necessary income, meaning they have to look elsewhere for financial compensation and security.

Financial compensation



KEY FINDING

The personal financial situation of young changemakers is precarious and alarming. The vast majority (66%) cannot live off their initiatives and have to supplement their income through various side-gigs, despite the fact that they are very dedicated to their ventures.

The gender pay gap is alive and well even in the social impact sector. Women are 15% less likely to be able to compensate themselves financially than their male counterparts. Similarly, out of the respondents that can cover half or more of their necessary income through their initiative, 35% are men compared to 28% women. Unsurprisingly, older (age 31-35) men living in Europe have the highest levels of financial security.

As often the case in matters of employment, those starting out find themselves in the most precarious position. 79% of youth between the ages of 16-20 and 21-25 are not able to compensate themselves.

Therefore, though only 27% of respondents indicated that they felt they belonged to a marginalized group, the data on financial security indicates that a much higher number are in fact experiencing discrimination based on their gender, age, region – not to mention other factors including sexual orientation, race, ethnicity or religion affiliation.

Case Study



Jan
Stassen

LOCATION
Germany

INITIATIVE
Museum of Values

The Museum of Values facilitates immersive experiences in order to face the complex issues of our time through the lens of individual and collective values. Their goal is for people to foster a better understanding of each other and the world around us, so that we might advance together as a unified society.

“Our funding comes entirely from *collaborations with initiatives*, museums and sponsors. That means the Museum of Values relies on project-based funding, which is stressful from time to time.”

It feels a bit like being Schrödinger’s Cat – we are dead and living at the same time. You develop a constant hope towards the future and crossing fingers that the next application, grant or contract comes through. In that sense, COVID showed us perfectly that even if you have an upcoming project, things still can go South.

On March 3rd 2020, Merkel announced the German lockdown. Directly after her press conference, our phones wouldn’t stop ringing. For us, it takes more than a few months to plan initiatives and participatory exhibitions, but it only took 15 minutes to cancel all of them for the next two years. Our initiatives were stopped, and we had nothing to do. All of our project funding was gone. From busy days and enthusiasm, everything came to a hold and frustration grew. That was challenging and nerve-wracking. We started living like students again, with less than 1000 EUR a month. Suddenly we were alone. The foundations, the funders, everyone retreated into their own bubbles. We were all in survival mode but in that time I felt very unsupported. Finally, in October, one funder took pity on us and accepted a project proposal.

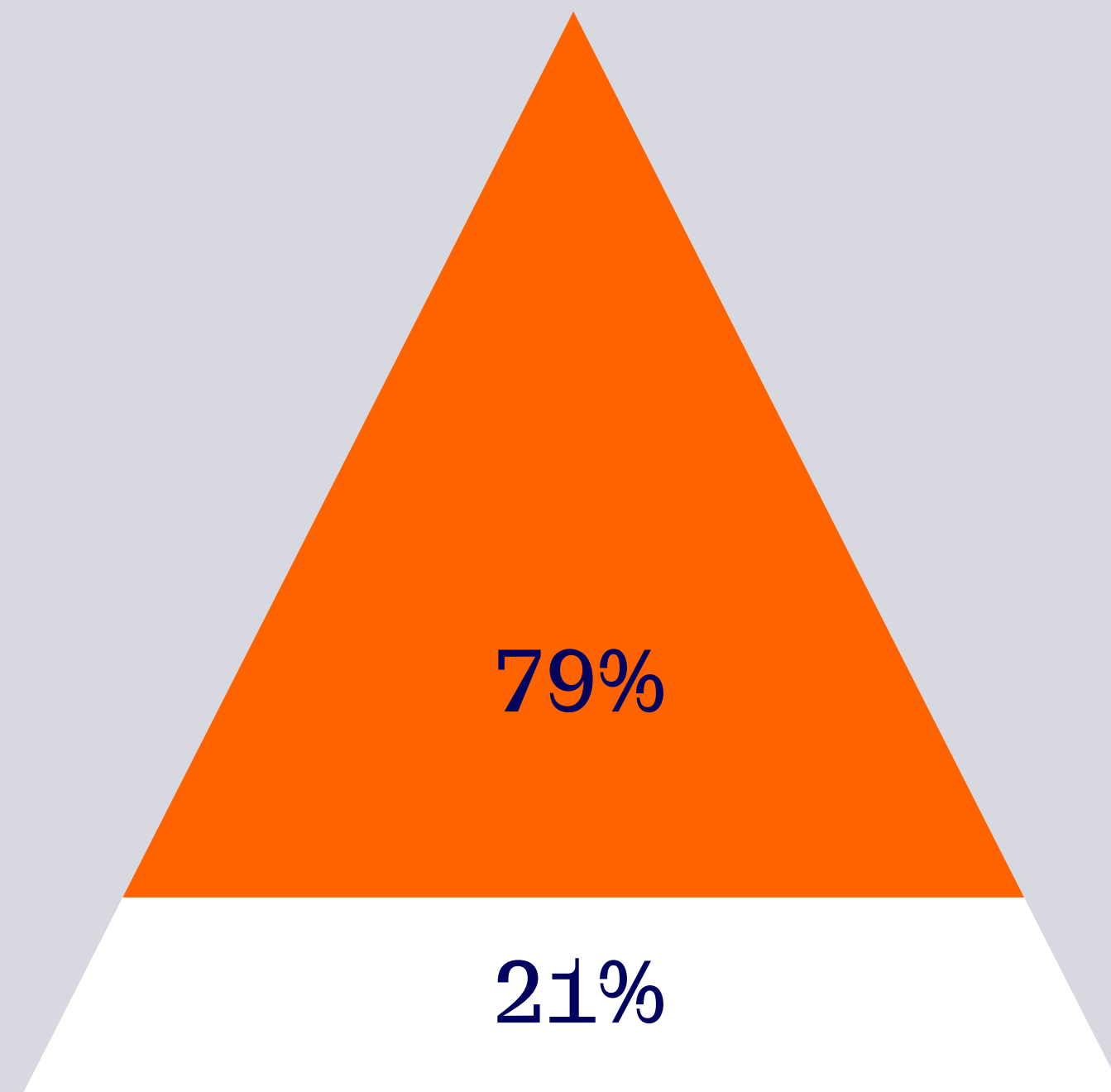
From a professional standpoint, scaling impact in these kind of conditions and with so many uncertainties is challenging. Thinking about our personal life, it’s just stressful from time to time.

Around 60% of my time is spent looking for funding or managing funding programs. My wish for us as a team would be that we can focus on the actual work. Working with the finest human beings and the inspiring partners but also enjoying every bit along the way (while not being Schrödinger’s Cat anymore).

Multiple Simultaneous Responsibilities

I have other professional commitments:

● Yes ● No



79% of young changemakers have other ongoing professional commitments in addition to their initiatives.

21% work solely on their initiatives.

KEY FINDING

Work, studies, volunteering and activism. These are all common simultaneous pursuits for today's youth. Young social innovators want to be engaged in their communities, while continuously learning and growing as individuals. Many work and study at the same time, and hold various volunteer positions. That said, their overachiever tendencies are also rooted in their financial strife and the need to supplement their income in order to cover their living costs. The tensions between this urge to learn and contribute and the need to provide for themselves take a significant toll on their overall well-being, as they find themselves stretched thin and struggling to find a healthy balance. Additionally, societal expectations around youth are starting to normalize this juggling act that increases pressure on them to perform.

Case Study



Mirabelle
Morah

LOCATION
Nigeria

INITIATIVE
BlankPaperz Media

BlankPaperz Media supports and amplifies the voices and stories of young writers, “artists”, social entrepreneurs and advocates who use their words, projects and initiatives to address or offer solutions to the world’s most pressing problems.

When I was an undergrad, it was really hard for me to tell people “no.” I was managing BlankPaperz, pursuing my studies, volunteering at different places, traveling around the world and speaking at different conferences. I also had my own personal life and I always wanted to jump on new exciting opportunities and explore so much. I feel fortunate to have had those experiences, but on many occasions I broke down and fell very ill. There was also a lot of mental stress. I had to learn how to balance and prioritize my life. I was between 16 to 20 when all of this was happening.

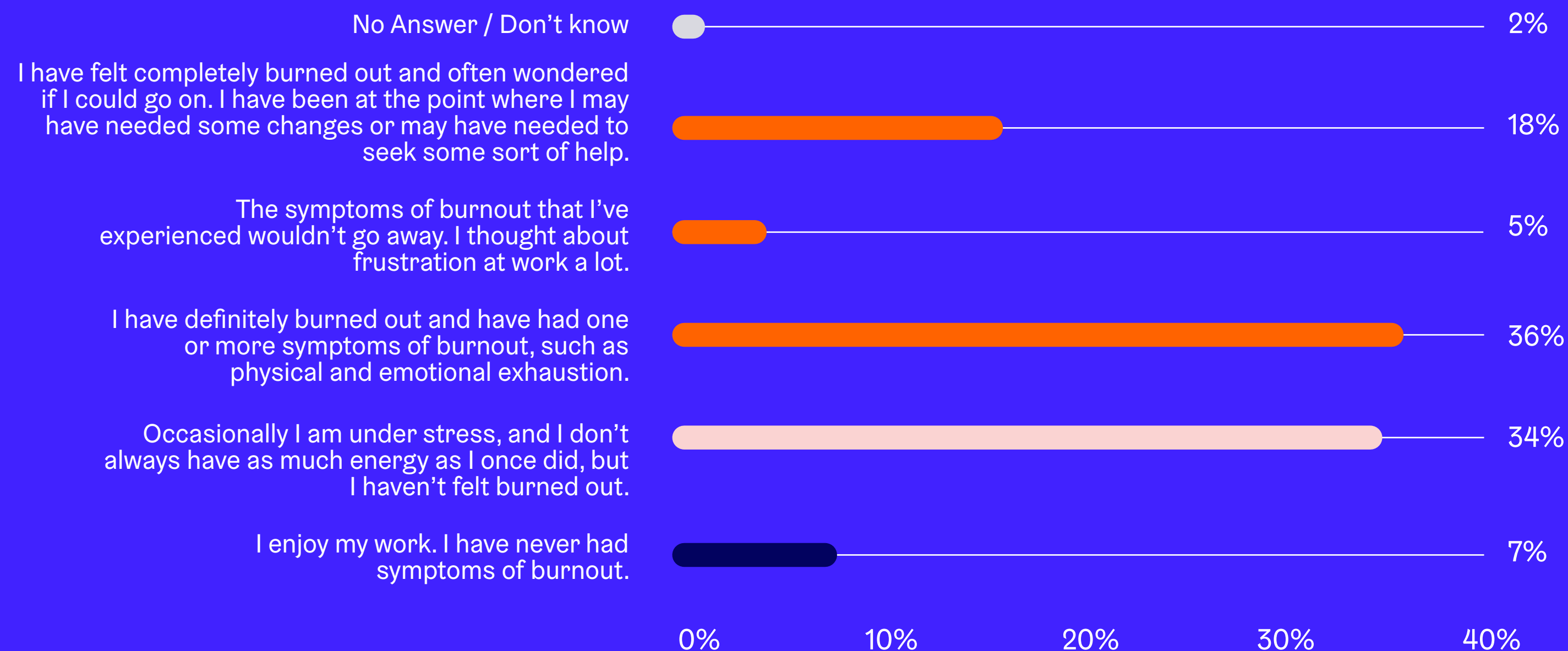
I recently became the Social Enterprise World Forum’s Community and Communications Manager and within my first month, we had the SEWF Policy Forum so there was much work to be done. That same month, I also had to find and move into a new place in a totally new city. That was a stressful situation.

So how did I handle all of that? With the lessons I learned from my undergrad years – I had to prioritize the most important things. I tried to automate as much as I could, communicate my availability and non-availability to do certain things. Of course I’d love to be superwoman and accomplish everything but that’s not always possible.

In general, I try to keep in touch with the people I love and find time for myself, that keeps the stress away.

Prone to *Burnout**

Level of burnout during the entire time of working on the initiative



59% of young social innovators report having experienced some degree of burnout since starting work on their initiative. **34%** emphasize stress as being problematic for them. **7%** report no symptoms of burnout whatsoever.

Burnout levels seem to be more acute among women (62%) and nonbinary respondents (60%), compared to those of men (52%). North America saw this highest levels of burnout (72%), followed by Europe, Asia and Oceania (all 60%). Sadly, youth between the ages of 16–20 reported the highest levels of burnout (67%).

KEY FINDING

When it comes to well-being, the results are alarming. Our findings show that the majority of young changemakers have suffered some form of burnout (59%) and that marginalized groups (teens, women and non-binary individuals) are at the greatest risk of burning out. 78% of young social innovators in the study reported needing support in increasing well-being. Young people cannot reach their full potential, or their full impact potential, if they are crashing and burning out at dangerous levels.

* Our working definition of burnout: "A state of mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion, usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration, whereby a person is unable to cope with their life situation and perform optimally."

Case Study



Ryan
Gersava

LOCATION
Philippines

INITIATIVE
Virtualahan

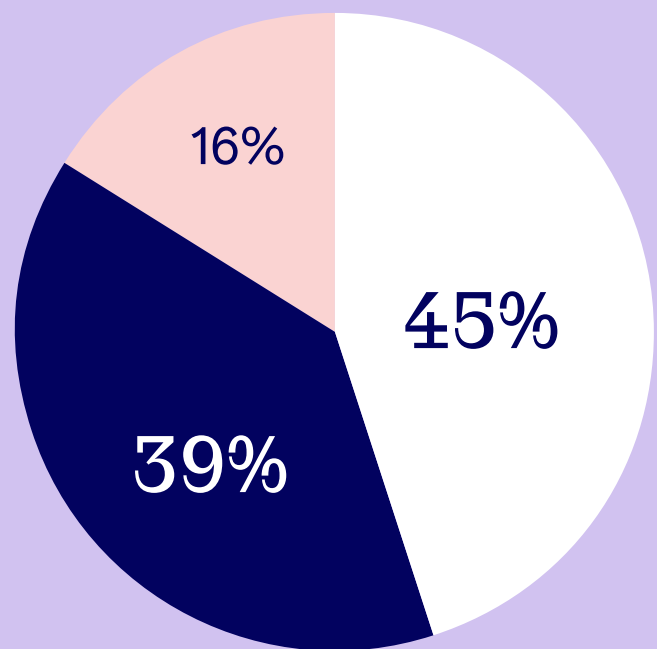
Virtualahan is an impact-driven company that breaks down employment barriers for persons with disabilities and other excluded communities using the equalizing power of technology. It is using an impact formula that combines digital skills training, employment and entrepreneurship support, lifecoaching and community building delivered through an inclusive, cost-effective, and transferrable virtual platform.

I have experienced burnout several times since I started my company. There was one time where Virtualahan reached the final stage of a competition and I had to pitch while burning with fever just to secure another six months of salary for my team. I also had anxiety attacks while in meetings. It even got to the point where I had to call my brother to take me home because I no longer had the strength to make it home myself. How ironic, since as a founder who you are always expected to project strength of character, serve as an inspiration, and be seen as always positive and “on” so that people will take you seriously. Many young founders experience this, some even worse, when they are just starting out. It will continue to harm us unless we do something to address this growing problem.

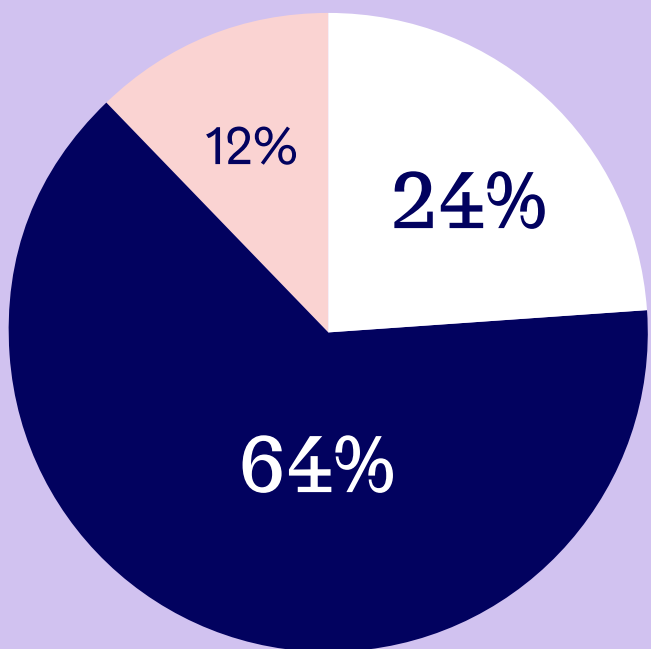
What keeps me up at night are questions around my personal sustainability as a leader and changemaker. How long can I keep doing this work considering all the constant challenges that I have to deal with? Will my “DEEP WHY” always have my back? Will it always be enough? What is my limit when it comes to delivering impact when my body can no longer handle the pressure? How much more am I willing to sacrifice? I know that my work is important and I would not trade it for anything else but at the same time, I can’t ignore the internal struggle. We need a systemic solution to support young changemakers so we don’t reach our breaking point.

Influence of context: Other systemic issues

- Positively affects my work
- Negatively affects my work
- Doesn't apply to my work

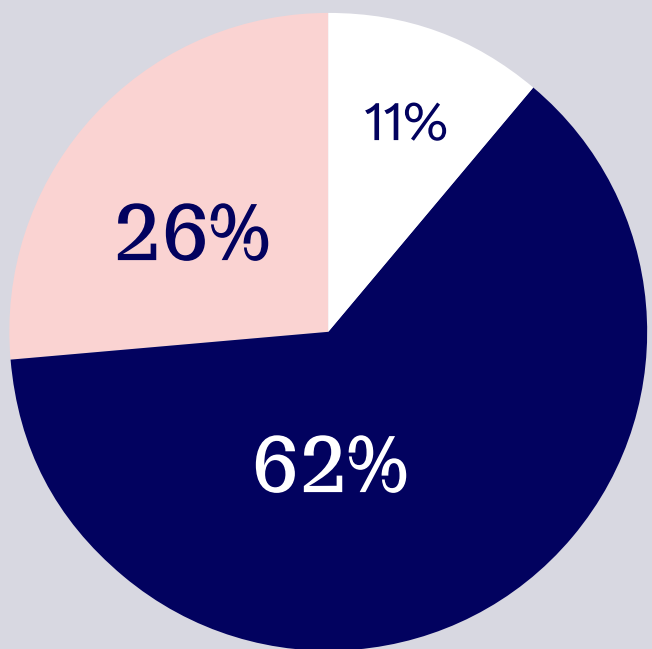


Challenges related to the climate crisis

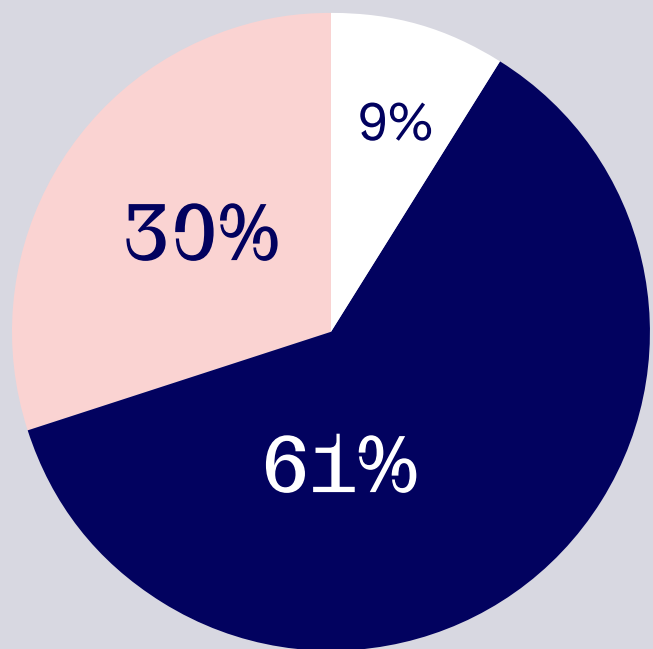


Systemic inequalities

Influence of context: Economics



The state of the economy in my country



The financial opportunities in my country

The Role of External Conditions

KEY FINDING

Young social innovators are very much influenced by the world around them. Unfortunately young changemakers do not perceive their broader (national) contexts as being particularly supportive of their work and efforts to grow their initiatives. The COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty, political turmoil, and systemic inequalities have been felt greatly by young changemakers. Given that many of them still find themselves in the startup phase, these external influences can have a significant impact. The issues most often cited as negatively affecting their work were systemic inequalities (64%), the state of the economy in their home country (62%), and the financial opportunities in their country (61%).

COVID-19 as an *Opportunity*

80%

of youth report that the pandemic increased their wish to make a change in the world.

58%

of young changemakers also report that the pandemic has actually increased their capacity to make a change in the world.

“COVID-19 has definitely affected *my organization*. My nonprofit is a community-based movement, so all of our projects had to be reconsidered and approached differently for the sake of our team, our community, and the youth we serve. A lot on Amazon wish-lists, online shopping, Zoom calls and a whole lot more emails became the new normal! While I know that everyone went through the same kind of virtual transition, our team is made up of all-youth board members between the ages of 8-18! It's been a bit much to juggle virtual school, keeping up with current events in the world, community service, and extracurriculars. Luckily, our amazing team and amazing community have been working together well to continue bringing happiness to youth in need.”

They have adapted extremely quickly to the new digital reality and adjusted their programming to serve the needs of their communities during the pandemic – 80% continued activities with 69% pivoting activities in some way. Only 3% were forced to close down activities, while 17% temporarily paused them.



Grace Callwood
WE CANCERVE MOVEMENT, USA

COVID-19 as an *Opportunity*



Dylan Zajac
COMPUTERS 4 PEOPLE, USA

“The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated our efforts and creates an increasing demand for *our services*. We are currently focusing on building additional tech infrastructure that will enable other organizations serving similar populations to use our impact formula through social franchising. We are also enabling our internal employees to spin-off and build their own agencies to create more jobs. Recently, Microsoft partnered with us to use our employment model for companies in their network to embrace inclusive hiring in the new normal.”

“It’s interesting because the concept of the digital divide became much more publicized during COVID-19, meanwhile our organization was formed more than a year before the pandemic. School and work moving online made it even more necessary to have a computer. I believe that is one of the reasons why our organization has grown so much in the past year. Providing computers for free opens up so many *opportunities* that weren’t available before.”



Ryan Gersava
VIRTUALAHAN, PHILIPPINES

What's Needed: *For Possibilists*



Rashida Namulondo
THE SOPHIE MUWANIKAINSTITUTE
OF ART FOR CHANGE, UGANDA

A strong personal network and access to thought-leaders

95%

of respondents said that connection to relevant people for their work (senior changemakers, advisors, experts, etc.) is very important. And 89% said that having connection to international peer-to-peer networks was important or very important.

The chance to learn and grow through personal and professional development

90%

of respondents said developing specific skills for advancing the initiative and mentoring from senior experts is very important.

Being seen and valued as individuals

89%

selected personal financial resources plus recognition and visibility as very important.

“As a leader, I believe *my growth* is important to be able to lead not only my team and initiative, but also my community. Understanding who I am, building my integrity, emotional intelligence, and so many aspects of my life keep me awake at night. I need to be a better version of myself than yesterday to be able to hold space for my community as they too transform and grow, and as we all collectively work towards change.”

What's Needed:

For their initiatives



Dylan Zajac
COMPUTERS 4 PEOPLE, USA

Help improving their products and services, as well as financial security for their organization

95%
of respondents noted ensuring the quality of products and services provided by their initiative and ensuring financial health of the organization as very important.

A strong global and local network and more collaboration

94%
of respondents said that increasing collaborations with other projects, institutions and governments was very important.

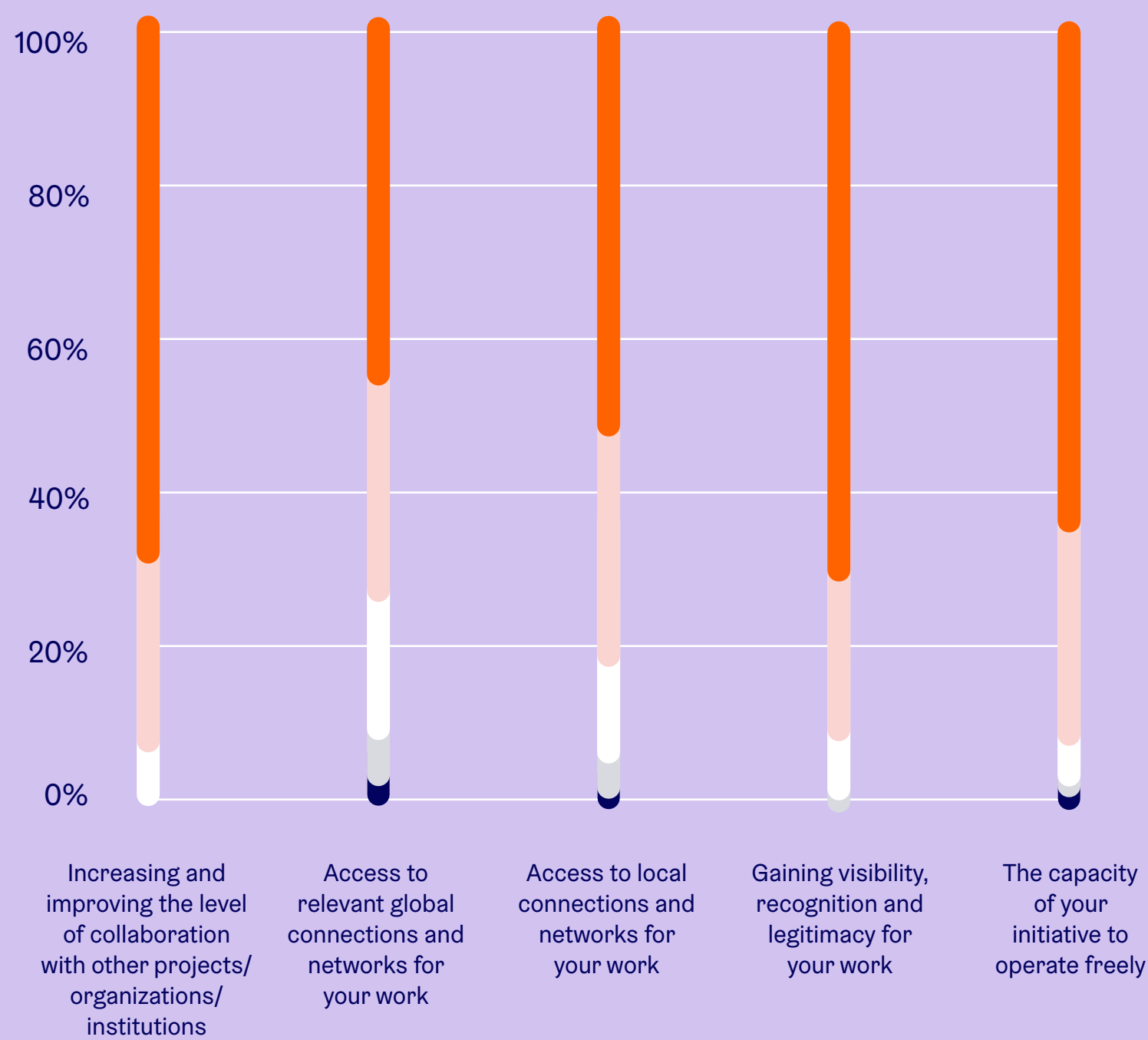
Access to funding and scaling opportunities

93%
of respondents said that access to funding, increasing impact and scaling opportunities was very important.

“Now that we are donating 15–20 computers per week, we desperately need to acquire *funding* to hire two staff members. Currently we are fully volunteer run. Ethan Oliver and I work fulltime. As Executive Director, I work 50-60 hours per week.”

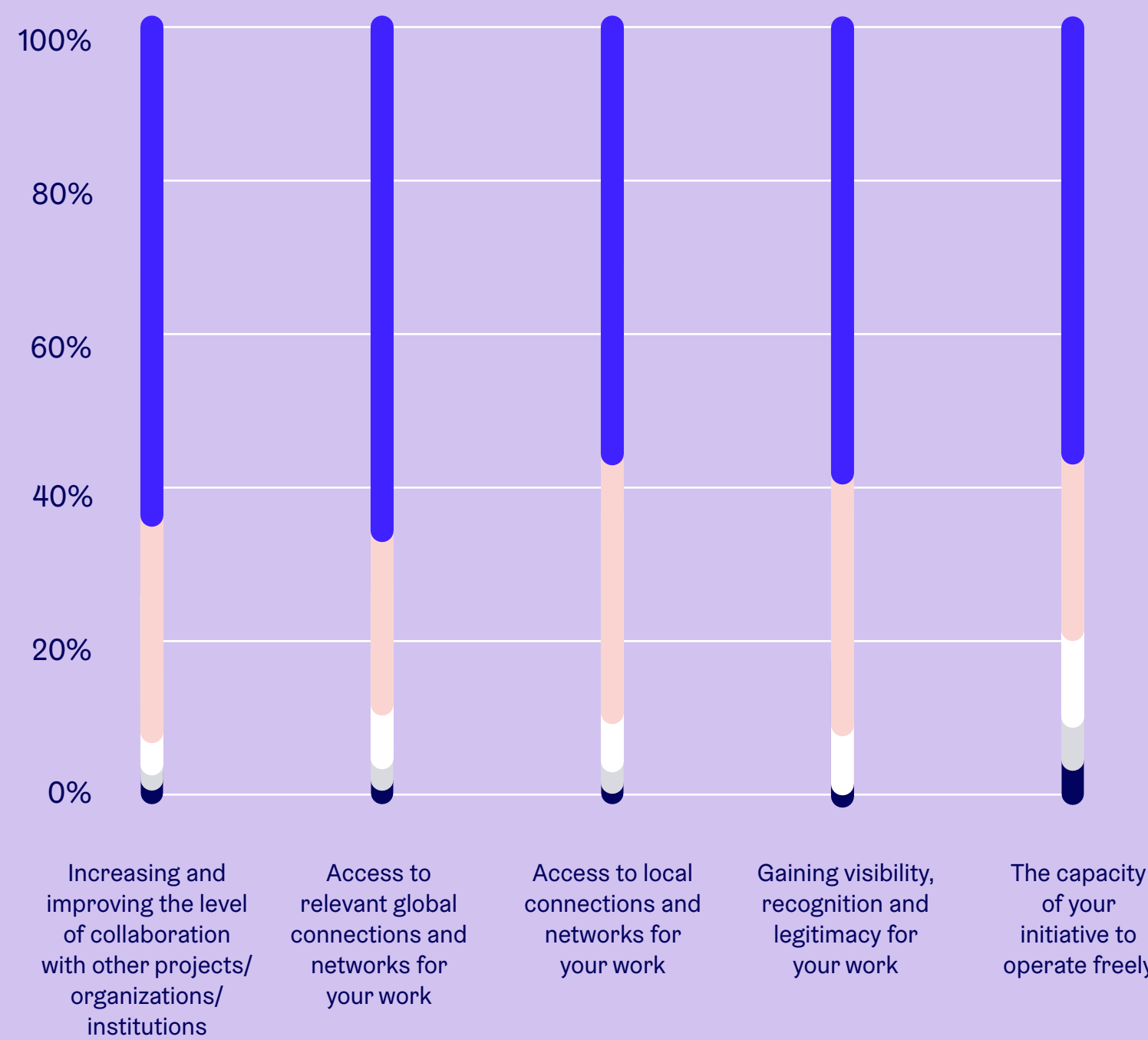
What's Needed: *For their initiatives*

Impact of the initiative



Very Important Important Neutral Unimportant Very unimportant

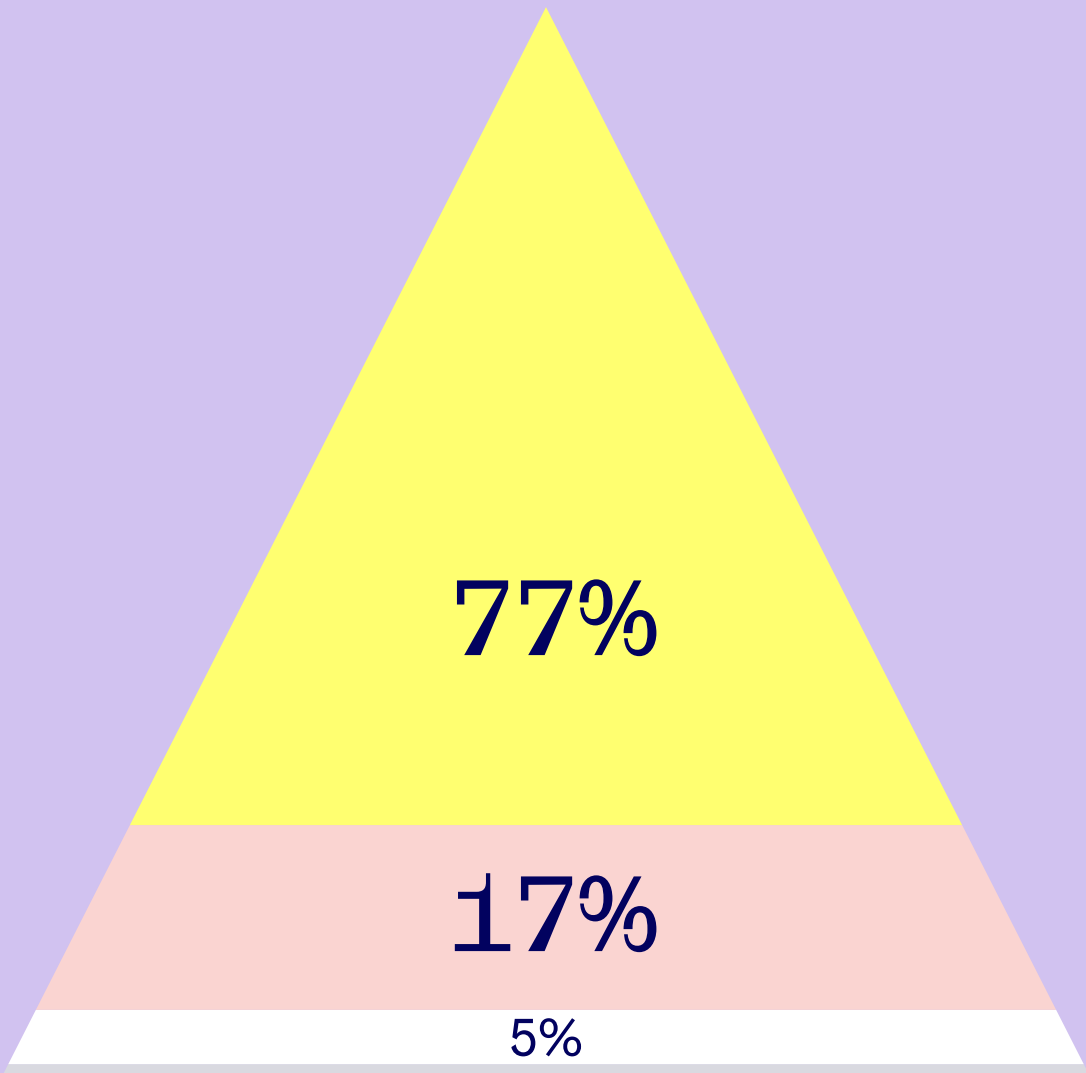
Collaboration, networking and visibility



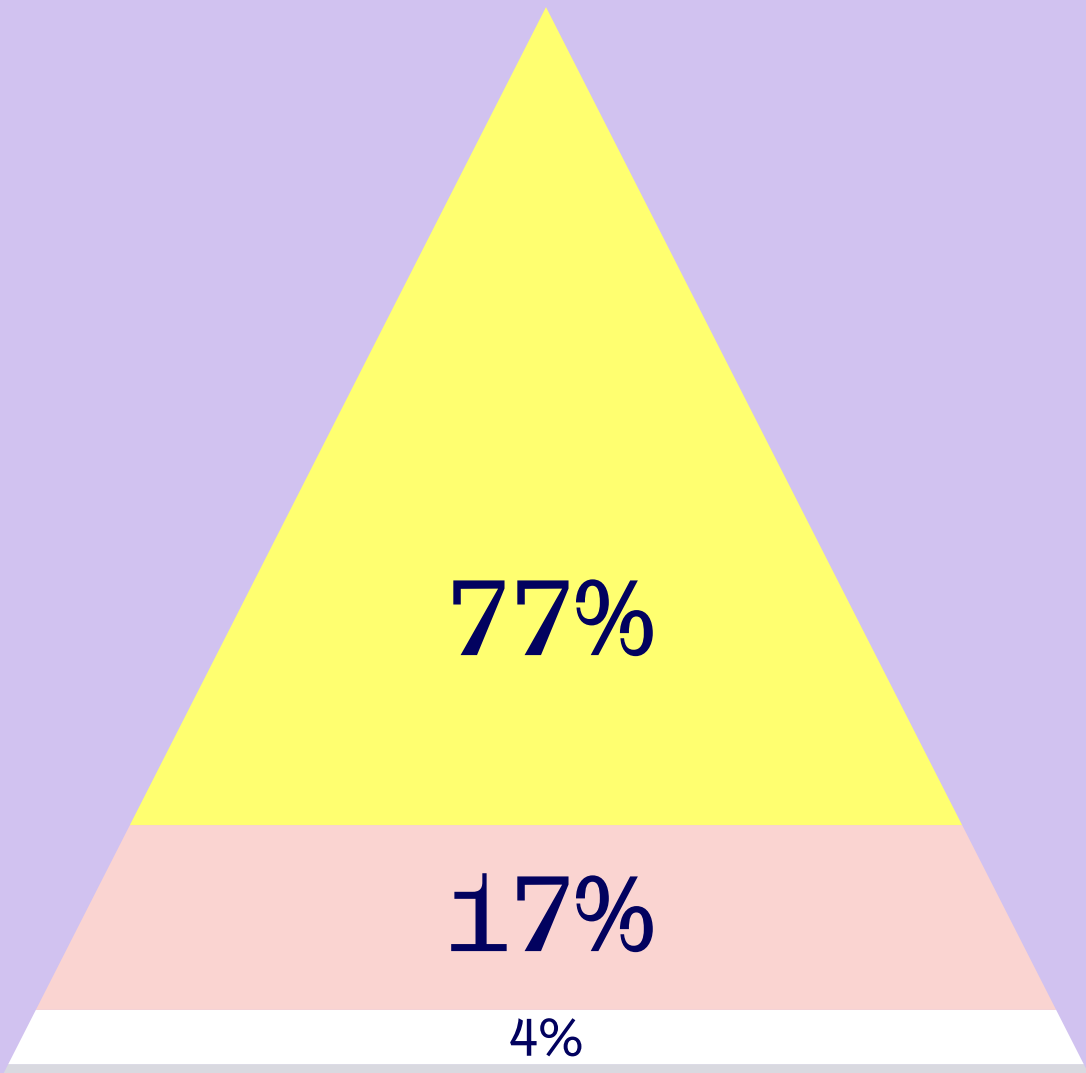
Very Important Important Neutral Unimportant Very unimportant

What's Needed: *For their initiatives*

Financial security and access to funding



Ensuring the financial health/stability
of your initiative by generating
revenue, gaining funding



Access to funding

Very Important Important Neutral Unimportant Very unimportant

With all that *passion, commitment,*
motivation and *creativity*, imagine
what young changemakers could do if
they were supported in really
meaningful ways?

Recommendations

This is how we help young changemakers and their initiatives go from surviving to thriving.

1. Focus on the person, not just the initiative.

Young social innovators want to be seen, heard and valued as individuals. As a global support network, we must acknowledge that young social innovators can only create impact for their communities if they are thriving as individuals. Therefore the components of support programs for youth social entrepreneurship need to be adjusted to not only incorporate ways of strengthening initiatives, but to also acknowledge and provide personal-level support. The focus of our work should be fostering a life-long changemaking mindset that is not bound to the success of a specific organization or venture.

2. Ensure the personal financial stability of young social innovators.

Ensuring the personal financial security of young social innovators is critical. They currently face high levels of demand and low levels of financial security. Support programs must take this into account and work to counteract this. In addition to offering concrete funding opportunities, we must work to change our perceptions and actions regarding financial access for youth working on social change initiatives. Young changemakers are doing important, hard work and deserve financial compensation. Organizations who engage young social innovators as speakers or promote their work, even be it micro-engagements, should ensure they are fairly compensated for their time.

3. Prevent burnout of young social innovators.

Young social innovators are experiencing high levels of burnout. They are under immense and continuous pressure to perform, while also feeling an overarching sense of duty and responsibility. We need to reflect on what this means for their long-term health and well-being.

As a sector, we must acknowledge this and take sweeping action to remedy it. In addition to offering well-being support, we must consider how our support programs might be placing additional or unnecessary pressure and/or demands on young social innovators.

Acknowledging multiple simultaneous or similar demands might be a first step towards better coordination between support programs, organizations, and networks.

4. Support the initiatives of young social innovators to grow, improve their quality, and be financially stable.

Young social innovators emphasized their need for more support in developing quality products and services, scaling, and the need for more financial stability within their organization. To meet these needs, we should offer regular trainings and interdisciplinary learning opportunities that allow young social innovators to deepen the understanding of their work and learn from other state-of-the-art solutions addressing similar challenges. We can help them scale by connecting them to like-minded peers and initiatives that complement their work, while also strengthening their global and local networks through mindful strategic partnerships. We should rethink funding processes in order to lower the barriers of access, particularly for mid-stage organizations who find themselves struggling to attract institutional funders, and develop more useful frameworks for assessing the financial health of initiatives.

Recommendations

This is how we help young changemakers and their initiatives go from surviving to thriving.

5. Build upon the strong local – international connection of young social innovators.

The participants in The Possibilists study act as bridges between macro global issues and the way these manifest locally in communities of different sizes and types around the world. They can effectively communicate local challenges internationally, while at the same time translating global matters into concrete local action. In order to make progress on reaching ambitious goals such as the SDGs, we need to better leverage the embeddedness of young social innovators in both their global and local worlds. In addition to creating international formats for networking and connection, we must also create spaces where local-specific challenges can be discussed. As a global community, we need to honor the importance of the local in driving deep and sustainable social change.

6. Leverage the strong motivation of young social innovators to make a difference.

Even in the face of crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, we see young social innovators around the world stepping up with constructive solutions for new challenges. Their resilience, innovation and adaptability are vital resources for their communities and for building healthy societies in the future. The strong intrinsic motivation of the Possibilists make them incredible peers and inspirational role models for other young people. We must appreciate and acknowledge this widely so that they become multipliers and continue empowering other youth to become change agents in their own communities.

7. Reduce barriers in our own programming and support diverse young social innovators.

Systemic inequalities are one of the main barriers for social innovators and their work. We need to put an explicit focus on reducing these barriers in order to achieve real diversity, inclusion and belonging. It starts by looking at our own programming and considering what requirements or formulations might exclude certain people from feeling addressed or welcome. Once we have looked within and worked to deconstruct our own organizational biases, we can begin to look outward. In order to overcome exclusion, we must actively seek out those who are often underrepresented. This means doing outreach in marginalized communities and remote areas. Even if this requires greater organizational efforts in terms of funding and time, ensuring equitable and diverse representation among young changemakers is essential for developing effective solutions for all.

8. Connect young social innovators with relevant decision-makers.

The future-oriented ideas and perspectives of young social innovators should be at the core of devising long-term strategies and influencing leadership at multiple levels. The wish of youth to have a voice, play a role, and achieve social change should be fostered and amplified. As a community, we need to facilitate access to decision-makers and grant young social innovators access to places of power and influence. We need to keep working to amplify the voices and credibility of young social innovators as key stakeholders and contributors.

The Way Forward

Young changemakers are willing to take on the world's greatest challenges to create a better future, but they can't do it alone.



Rashida Namulondo
THE SOPHIE MUWANIKAINSTITUTE
OF ART FOR CHANGE, UGANDA

“I think we are pace setters, our job is to challenge certain things and the status quo. We have to *research and develop new ways of seeing and doing things*, while also looking back at what other changemakers have done and carry on the torch for where there is still work to be done. I believe sometimes as changemakers we may not live to see the change we strive for. Simply because our work is bigger than us.”



Jan Stassen
MUSEUM OF VALUES, GERMANY

“To reach my desirable 2030 future, I must act now. The future has been entrusted to me, I need to be bold and bright. If not now, when? I do all my projects because someone needs to do it. If not *me, who?*”

“I hope that we are just the “early adopters”. My hope would be that all of us develop the ambition to *co-shape the future*. The future doesn't happen to us, we are active agents and copilots on this massive and beautiful planet that we call home. So, I'm playing my part in co-shaping and hope more people will, too.”



Maria Clara Magalhaes
BE.LABS, RECIFE, BRAZIL

Self Reflection

“While it is our intention to honor and celebrate the important work that *young changemakers* are doing, we certainly do not want to celebrate or glorify their suffering. Nor do we want to contribute to the narrative that youth are under obligation to save the world. This study is meant to highlight that the rate of individual sacrifice that we as a society are expecting from young changemakers is highly abnormal and must be addressed. While young innovators prove time and time again that they are capable of truly incredible things, they should not have to withstand incredibly negative working conditions. Therefore let us not sit back silently and offer them our congratulations, but rather step in and step up to *support them*.”

This study is only the beginning.
Young social innovators around the world have spoken and now it's our chance, and our duty, to respond in meaningful ways. Real and long-term sustainable change will require all stakeholders to participate.

We're in. Can we count on you to *join us*?

Find out how at thepossibilists.org/solutions

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Methodology

The survey questions were developed through repeated exchange among the partner networks involved in The Possibilists and were based on their previous experiences working with young leaders and social innovators.

The survey was transferred into an online format using the Paperform platform. The respondents could choose between an English, Spanish, and French version of the survey to fill out anonymously. The survey took approximately 20-30 minutes to complete and respondents were also offered some ‘thank you tokens’ for their efforts.

The data gathered was cleaned and prepared for analysis by ensuring the consistency of responses, preparing the variables for analysis, and partially translating the Spanish and French data for the closed questions (the qualitative answers in Spanish and French were analyzed in original). The analysis was focused on a descriptive overview of the data and identifying first correlations between different variables, especially between the demographic variables and the aspects that stood out in the first analysis (the issue of financing, well-being, etc.). The results of the first analysis were discussed with the partner networks and with the academic partner, the Social Entrepreneurship Center at the Vienna University of Economics and Business, repeatedly in the process of finalizing this report.

In May 2021, we also conducted 10 supplementary qualitative interviews with selected young social innovators in which they responded to nine more in-depth questions about their lives and their work. This qualitative part of the study was conducted via phone and e-mail correspondence and it complemented and contextualized the results of the survey.

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