

# PERSPECTIVES ON YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN OPERATIONALIZING PEACE AND SECURITY AT A NATIONAL LEVEL

In partnership with:



**NYU**

**SCHOOL OF  
PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

© July 2022

A research report produced as part of a research-based practicum organized by the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) and the Center for Global Affairs of the School of Professional Studies at New York University (NYU).

GNWP thanks the Center for Global Affairs of the School of Professional Studies (CGA) at NYU for the partnership that led to this publication.

Authors: Dennis Aveta, Alonna Despaigne, Jen Rauch, Cynthia Saxena, Nikki Stoumen & Sara Zabihi, Center for Global Affairs, School of Professional Studies, NYU

Academic Supervisor: Dr. Anne Marie Goetz, NYU

Substantive Editor: Katrina Leclerc, GNWP

Project Advisors: Katrina Leclerc and Agnieszka Fal-Dutra Santos, GNWP

# INTRODUCTION

This research report summarizes findings of a rapid study of variations in the ways young people, ages 15-30, especially young women, are engaged in country-level planning on issues of peace and security across six country case studies: the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Iraq (including the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, or the KRI), Jordan, Nigeria, the Philippines and Tunisia. The research findings provide a preliminary indication of some common concerns expressed by young people who are engaged in peace activism. These concerns include the ways government officials seek to engage youth in national peace and security initiatives and policy development. Particular attention was paid to how young women are encouraged to participate and the ways their specific concerns are addressed within youth-led peacebuilding organizations and networks, in both official Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) processes and by organizations involved in implementing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) resolutions.

The study was carried out by six graduate students from New York University's (NYU) Center for Global Affairs, in partnership with the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) in the context of the NYU-GNWP research practicum program.

# CONTEXT

The Youth, Peace and Security agenda has gained considerable traction since the adoption of the groundbreaking United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250 on YPS in 2015. This growing awareness of the impact of conflict on young people, and their increasingly important role in promoting and maintaining international peace and security, has been recognized by the UN Security Council ever since. Resolution 2250 is a pioneering international policy framework unanimously adopted in December 2015 and advances the role of young people in countering violent conflict, including conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

As of 2020, there are an estimated 1.8 billion youth (between the ages of 15 and 30) around the world. Six hundred million youth (aged 15 to 30) – a quarter of the world's youth – are estimated to reside in countries affected by armed conflict or organized violence. This means that approximately one in four young people, or 23 percent of the global youth population, is affected by conflict in some way.

Prior to global attention on young people's experiences in conflict, in October 2000, the international community adopted UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Resolution 1325 was unanimously adopted by the UN Security Council and was followed by nine other resolutions (UNSCRs 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, 2242, 2467, 2493) that constitute the WPS agenda. This framework focuses on the gendered impacts of violence and war, promoting inclusive and democratic peacemaking and pivoting from gender inequality to gender justice. National Action Plans (NAPs) are a tool adopted by governments, civil society, multilateral institutions and others to institutionalize such agendas. They serve as a blueprint that includes a framework, sequence of actions and goals that governments and organizations can use to coordinate, implement and track implementation. Both YPS and WPS resolutions have been operationalized and implemented in various countries and popularized through NAPs.

That said, some countries have chosen to focus on alternative approaches to policy development for the implementation of the YPS resolutions. In certain conflict-affected countries, insecurity is focused on regional insurrections by terrorist and rebel groups, while in others it is more focused on conflict along their borders. In all six of the countries analyzed, with the exception of Tunisia, leadership has come from young people engaging in peace and security policy. Several cases were supported or welcomed by governments, which in turn created national-level machineries and mechanisms such as coalitions or NAP planning committees, as seen in Table 1. It is important to note that the national machineries were created in response to youth activism efforts.

**Table 1: YPS AND WPS NATIONAL-LEVEL INSTITUTIONALIZATION MECHANISMS**

Country	WPS NAP	YPS NAP	Youth Coalition
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	Yes, 3rd NAP in progress	In progress	Yes
Iraq	Yes	In progress	Yes
Jordan	Yes	*	Yes
Nigeria	Yes, 2nd NAP in progress	Yes	Yes
Philippines	Yes, 2nd NAP in progress	In progress	N/A
Tunisia	Yes	N/A	N/A

\*Interviewees reported that the Amman Youth Declaration, while not local, serves as guidance in place of a YPS NAP.

This study paid particular attention to whether young women's concerns are adequately expressed in national YPS processes. In most cases, there was relatively limited mention of young women in YPS national level policies and of youth concerns in WPS policies, as Tables 2 and 3 illustrate:

**Table 2: YPS NAPs AND OTHER OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS: DO THEY ADDRESS YOUNG WOMEN'S (AND GENDER) ISSUES?**

Country	Limited Mention	Some Mention	Significant Mention	Comments
<u>Jordan</u>				The <u>Amman Youth Declaration</u> has a dedicated section on gender equality and the need to address gender-specific hardships in peacebuilding and countering violence. The document does not detail what these hardships are and does not specifically mention young women in the other three sections.
<u>Nigeria</u>				Mentions young women increasingly becoming radicalized and joining extremist groups, such as Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and ISIL.  Notes young women's and men's role in popular protests.  Recommends re-orientation of the security apparatus to prevent sexual exploitation of young men and women in internally displaced people (IDP) camps.

Limited Mention      Some Mention      Significant Mention

Philippines  
(draft in process)

“Part of the design of the [YPS] NAP is to get participants’ insights on the gendered dimension of each pillar of [UN] Security Council Resolution 2250,” as shared by a young woman government consultant.

**Table 3: DO EXISTING WPS NAPs ADDRESS YOUTH (YOUNG WOMEN’S) ISSUES?**

Country	Limited Mention	Significant Mention	Comments
<u>DRC</u>			Significant (30) mentions of young women: inclusion in peace processes/conflict or security decision-making and leadership positions; addressing violations to fundamental human rights; defending human rights; combatting sexual violence; and including young women with disabilities.
<u>Iraq</u>			Young women are mentioned only in terms of prohibition of child marriage (under 18), in the context of social objectification as a barrier to security for women and girls experiencing gender-based violence.

	Limited Mention	Significant Mention
<u>Jordan</u>		Young women are mentioned throughout the NAP but are not the focus or a standalone consideration. Almost all mentions are referenced in the strategic goals and outcomes as an additive – “and young women” – in parentheses.
<u>Nigeria</u>		Young women mentioned (once) in terms of violence against women and girls and exploitation. The NAP addresses "women and girls" for all other issues.[1]
<u>Philippines</u>		No mention of young women in either NAP. Addresses "women and girls" with main focus on the area of protection from gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence, and limited mention of reintegrating "women and girl" combatants. No mention of early parenthood, which is significant given that young women are disproportionately impacted.
<u>Tunisia</u>		No mention of youth or young women. The NAP addresses "women and girls" only. However, there is a large focus on violence and sexual violence, as well as women's participation through initiatives on gender parity in public office.

[1] The distinction between “young women” and “girls” is important in the context of this research and overall YPS principles. In this context, the demographic of “girls” is understood as girl child and young adolescent girls.

# METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

The methodology included conducting 30 interviews with regional and national peace activists in the six countries over a period of three months. Reviews of existing National Action Plans and other policy documentation were conducted with the goal of exploring youth perspectives, and especially young women's considerations, on the value and credibility of official processes to engage youth in peace work. The researchers also attempted to assess which mechanisms and modalities provide for the most effective youth engagement but were unable to extrapolate further given the lack of consistent data across the six countries. Limiting factors included the number and types of public consultations, available data, and participants' ages, genders, ethnicities, among others. Thus, information is limited on engaging youth in consultations and national-level peace and security operationalization exercises. There remains a lack of consistent indicators and measurements for assessing 'effective' or 'meaningful' youth engagement and the impact of YPS resolutions.

There were some limitations to the research, given that the YPS agenda is relatively new and official mechanisms are evolving. It is difficult to apply a comparative analysis to the six contexts, as they differ significantly in terms of the types and stages of conflict by which they are affected; the ways in which youth are impacted; the nature of their governance systems and democratic processes; the size and strength of civil society human rights organizations; the risks involved in engaging in protest and oppositional activity; and many other factors that affect the quality of youth engagement. Other limitations include lack of disaggregated data on the number or genders of people participating in YPS consultations, policy development and ambiguity around how to measure the impact or effectiveness of YPS efforts. While the researchers spoke some of the languages of interviewees, there were also cases where language barriers hindered communication in the interviews.

# YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY CONCERNS AND PRIORITIES:

In all six countries, interviewees mentioned a lack of interest among youth to engage with official YPS processes, a worrying prospect for an agenda intended to be youth-driven. With the intent of better understanding this phenomenon, interviewees were asked to outline the security concerns youth have identified and the priorities they would deem important to address in peacebuilding programming. Interviewees listed a variety of economic, social, cultural and governance concerns raised by youth during consultations and interactions in both official and unofficial YPS spaces.

These concerns include claims of elitism in official outreach efforts – sometimes connected to inadequate opportunities for and access to funding, potential security risks stemming from participation, cynicism and mistrust of government and authorities, and issues of tokenism or exploitation related to perceived insincerity of decision-makers' desire to engage with youth.

## Funding for Youth-Led Peace Organizations

Access to funding is a necessity for youth aiming to develop meaningful YPS programming. However, interviewees mentioned significant obstacles for youth-led organizations seeking financial resources. Echoing concerns raised by young peacebuilders in other countries analyzed during the research, one activist from the DRC identified the issue of funding constraints with a

failure on behalf of financing organizations to fully realize the capacity of young peacebuilders: "So [there are] a couple challenges regarding funding, youth programs are less funded. I don't know why. But that's the reality. And the other challenge is the misconception about the youth capacities today" (Young man activist from DRC).

## **Danger, Targeting of Critics, and the Risks of Participation**

Ensuring youth are safe from harm is critical to maintaining and increasing youth participation in peacebuilding. However, in all six countries interviewees suggested young people face threats to their safety from both government security forces, and armed groups. Reflecting on the ongoing practice of 'red tagging' in the Philippines, which labels as 'communists' those who criticize the current President Duterte's Administration, one activist highlighted the need for change, asserting: "And protection really, I mean why are we antagonizing young people? Young people are at the frontlines... young people are there, working, why not create a more enabling environment?" (Young woman civil society activist and government official from the Philippines).

## **Uneven Digital Access: Poverty Prevents Connection**

Additional factors contributing to waning youth participation over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to interviewees, include a lack of access to digital spaces, and Zoom fatigue for those that do have access, as well as perceptions of urban bias and instances of political disengagement.

Touching on issues of digital access, one activist in the DRC explained: "We must include rural young people, but how? They have no phone, no internet, and no resources. Poverty is preventing connection" (Young woman activist from DRC).

## **Employment for Peace**

In line with findings from the 2018 Independent Progress Study: The Missing Peace, youth strongly prioritize employment opportunities. Putting into context the importance of employment for youth in Tunisia, one activist explained: "First, always jobs. They want work. The strikes [protests] we have – 90% of them are youth looking for jobs" (Young man activist from Tunisia). Not only are employment opportunities important for establishing economic independence for young people, but they also serve as effective tools for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programming to both reintegrate ex-combatants and help prevent future radicalization efforts.

## **Corruption, Cynicism, and Exploitation**

Concerns about fighting corruption stem primarily from histories of failed initiatives, empty promises and perceived exploitation of youth by government officials, which have spurred sentiments of cynicism and mistrust.

Capturing some of this cynicism that youth have towards engaging with political actors and governments, one young woman activist from Iraq detailed how young people purposefully refrained from voting in the October 2021 elections due to concerns that their participation merely contributed to legitimizing corrupt individuals – thus unwillingly involving young people in giving authority to discredited leaders.

Along with identifying concerns about corruption, the youth peace activists interviewed explained how past experiences with bureaucrats at various levels of government have left young people feeling exploited by political elites who claim to care about youth issues while campaigning but abandon such concerns once in power. Summarizing such experiences of tokenism, one interviewee explained: “They want to use the youth for their support for their campaigns. But talking about youth is not the same as talking with youth.

They are using the youth for opportunity. If we have elections, they will talk to them and after that, nothing” (Young woman civil society activist and government official from Jordan).

## Young Women’s Concerns and Priorities

According to interviewees, the safety concerns of young women largely overlapped with most of the non-gender-specific youth concerns. Issues raised included instability, unemployment, lack of funding options, lack of education and corruption. However, the following concerns were referenced frequently as gender-specific challenges faced by young women that are not adequately expressed in or addressed by YPS mechanisms:

**Table 4: WHAT YOUNG WOMEN REPORTED AS NEEDS**

Employment and Economic Freedom	Access to Education	Reducing Corruption
Security and Gender-Based Violence	Sexual and Reproductive Health	Participation and Exclusion from Peace Initiatives

The young women activists interviewed frequently raised security threats as a concern, particularly in instances where they have been critical of their respective governments. In DRC, Iraq, Nigeria and other contexts, youth involved in street protests against corruption and police brutality have faced daunting and disproportionate push-back from State actors. Young women face the added risks of harassment and sexual violence, which was widely reported by interviewees across all countries as a concern, both while directly participating in peace activism, as well as traveling to and from convenings. Researchers observed that young women, in particular, are at risk of or suffer from sexual violence and exploitation. Such violence may result in involuntary pregnancies, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infections and other complications; they also face stigmatization and ostracization by community members. LGBTQI+[2] interviewees in Tunisia also mentioned the increased risk of street harassment, as well as marginalization at school, in the workplace and in their home.

With regard to participation of young women, despite YPS NAPs and civil society initiatives across the six countries, researchers found vastly

uneven inclusion of young women and their gender-specific concerns within official YPS processes (see Table 2 above). However, interviewees reported that women tend to be more included in leadership and decision-making contexts in civil society than in the governmental or private sectors. There is a perception that civil society was more sensitive to issues of gender equality. Researchers found slim data from official YPS consultations or youth coalition meetings in the DRC, Iraq, Jordan, Nigeria or the Philippines regarding the percentage of participants in NAP consultations that are women, or on specific arrangements to provide an accessible and safe space for young women to participate.

Researchers observed strong efforts to ensure young women were well-represented in both membership and leadership positions in DRC, Iraq, the Philippines and Tunisia. However, significant obstacles exist for young women accessing leadership positions in peace organizations in Nigeria and Jordan. Gerontocracy and ageism in leadership positions of WPS organizations was mentioned as a barrier in Jordan and Tunisia, with several interviewees reporting feeling marginalized and overlooked by older and more established women peace activists.

[2] The intended use of the terminology 'LGBTQI+' is inclusive of all members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex community, including individuals who may identify across the diverse gender and sexuality spectrums.

One interviewee stated: "...the response we get from older women: ... 'this is our work, we have worked hard for this' and...we should find our own thing. They do not want to collaborate with us" (Young woman activist from Jordan).

Issues of gerontocracy and ageism were reported as a problem in both the YPS and WPS spaces. This qualitative research found that there was a tendency among peace activists to assume that young women's concerns with regard to peace and security would be addressed in the WPS NAPs.

However, this is not necessarily the case. Across the case study countries, some WPS NAPs did not address young women's concerns at all, oftentimes not mentioning youth or young women and instead using the exclusive language of "women and girls". By implication, neither YPS nor WPS processes were making the effort specifically to elicit young women's perspectives and experiences.

## OUTSTANDING FACTORS IMPACTING YOUTH PEACEBUILDING:

In addition to the concerns referenced above, several local factors and social dynamics impact youth participation and decision-making capacity in government and civil society. These include socio-cultural issues, such as the power and influence of religious groups, matters of sexual and reproductive health and rights, and non-conforming sexual and gender identities.

Further, emerging factors such as State-mandated regulation and control over digital technologies, population flow dynamics through forced and voluntary migration, and climate change have presented unique challenges for youth. Though it should be noted that feedback on these issues were not prompted by specific questions but rather raised at the initiative of interviewees across the various countries.

## Religion

Religious institutions play a powerful role in mobilizing youth in times of conflict; they can enable peacebuilding efforts, or conversely, can be associated with indoctrination into extremist ideologies. Although religion was not mentioned as a key determinant of peacebuilding in all six countries observed, trends about the impact of religion were mentioned in some interviews. For example, an Iraqi young woman activist explained that, despite general public commitment to peace within local communities, “no one would cross with other ethnicities or religions” to work together towards peacebuilding efforts. In this sense, religious affiliation seemed to undermine coordination efforts, creating division within the youth peacebuilding movement.

## Sexual and Reproductive Health

While not always explicitly linked to peace and security, sexual and reproductive rights and access to services are of particular significance in ensuring young women’s participation in decision-making processes, including in peacebuilding efforts.

Sexual and reproductive health was raised as an important priority of young women involved in peace work in the Philippines, specifically in relation to access to sexual education. One interviewee stated: “we have areas that have huge statistics of teenage pregnancy and that connects to education and young women dropping out of school” (Young woman civil society activist and government official from the Philippines). It should be noted that sexual and reproductive health was not raised by interviewees in the other countries, possibly reflecting the lack of safe spaces for young women to reflect on these particular priorities and needs.

## LGBTQI+

The YPS agenda offers a unique opportunity for members of the LGBTQI+ community to participate and be recognized and protected in peacebuilding work. That said, meaningful opportunities for the inclusion of LGBTQI+ youth, and sensitivity towards their concerns and challenges, appear to be limited. Though not a member of the LGBTQI+ community, an interviewee in Iraq stated that young people who already feel disadvantaged in policy spaces “would not speak up for other marginalized voices like [members of the] LGBTQI or disabled [community]” (Young woman activist in Iraq).

A similar sentiment was echoed in the Philippines. Although LGBTQI+ youth have some representation in local government youth councils,<sup>[3]</sup> it was not possible for the researcher to substantively and comprehensively assess their participation and advocacy efforts. In Tunisia, one young LGBTQI+ man stressed the need for greater legal and security protections for LGBTQI+ youth activists. LGBTQI+ representation was not mentioned in the DRC, Jordan or Nigeria, likely due to the cultural rejection of LGBTQI+ identities or rising religious sentiment in these countries.

## Digital Censorship

Although the general assumption is that youth activists are particularly adept at using social media and online platforms for mobilization and peacebuilding, growing government censorship of internet activities limits young people's meaningful participation in the digital world. A young woman activist in Jordan reported that sharing videos or exploring content functions on social media applications, such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, are limited by the government.

An interviewee in the Philippines stated: “[youth are] afraid of their group members or organization could be red-tagged because... if you're so very passionate about peace... you'll be labeled an NP member or a CPP - NPA -NDF member,<sup>[4]</sup> when you're not, you're just a concerned citizen” (Young woman civil society activist and government official from the Philippines). Digital censorship was not referenced by interviewees in the other four countries, likely due to a lack of access to electricity, wireless connectivity, or phone reception, particularly across rural communities.

## Migration

Migration and population flows impact young people's ability to engage in peacebuilding within their own country of origin, as evidenced in interviews with youth in Iraq and Tunisia. A young man activist in Iraq stated that youth are migrating out of the country because “they lost hope and trust in the government.

[3] The local government youth councils are known as Sangguniang Kabataan, which were established by the national government to represent youth within each barangay (local government district).

[4] These groups are considered to be part of the communist rebellion army, and therefore the affiliation with these groups often leads to government surveillance, targeting, or violence. The full acronyms include: Nationalist Party (NP), Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), New People's Army (NPA), and National Democratic Front (NDF).

They think... everything will belong to the rich and elite,” and a young woman activist in Tunisia said that youth “don’t want to remain in Tunisia” because “they do not have an optimistic view [of] Tunisia.” In the Philippines, interviewees expressed significant concerns about internally displaced communities.

## Climate Change

Climate change affects every aspect of the YPS and WPS agendas, likely leading to competition between populations for scarce resources. Yet, climate change was not mentioned in any of the country interviews unless prompted. When addressed, it was considered to be a problem that youth do not have the ability to solve. In Tunisia, one interviewee referred to climate change as: “something you can only think of when you are comfortable in many things – it’s something that is of course important in the long-term, but people can’t see that long-term importance when they don’t have a job, or their families aren’t well fed” (Young woman activist in Tunisia).

Another Tunisian interviewee labeled climate change as a Western preoccupation, rather than a universal peace and security-related issue, stating: “Climate change is not really a concern... people in France are talking about hybrid or electric cars... this will maybe be Tunisia in 20 years... It is the European Commission and international funders that try to make people more interested and sensitized to these issues” (Young man activist from Tunisia).

The ways in which these thematic cross-cutting issues – religion, sexual and reproductive health, LGBTQI+, digital censorship, migration, and climate change – intersect with young people’s peace and security concerns are further documented in Annexes 7-12.

# CONCLUSION

Even though the need to mitigate the sense of exclusion, powerlessness and cynicism expressed by young people is among the reasons the YPS agenda was adopted, these dynamics remain problematic. This is evidenced by the concept of “violence of exclusion” (as identified in The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security). Young women and men appear to experience similar types of marginalization from decision-making, however, young women face additional gender-specific obstacles in addressing them. The research demonstrated that the barriers to including young women in YPS processes remain significant, due to failures to consider, accommodate or compensate for the social constraints that prevent their participation or that prevent them from expressing gender-specific needs. A noticeable pattern of exclusion revealed that when young women attempt to occupy space within the YPS agenda, they are told to look to WPS activism and organizations.

However, when they raise these issues among WPS fora, young women’s concerns are not adequately addressed, and in some cases, they feel sidelined by the older women’s monopoly in leadership. Unfortunately, this has resulted in young women largely falling through the cracks in both frameworks. The paucity of attention to young women’s concerns in many existing WPS NAPs and the inconsistent inclusion of gender-specific strategies in YPS official processes provokes the question: **What does meaningful inclusion of young women in peace and security look like?**

Future research and operationalization efforts towards the suite of YPS resolutions requires addressing the concerns outlined above. To do so, the following recommendations must be prioritized:

1) **Consistent data and clearer indicators for measuring impact:** The existing research on young people's experiences in peace and conflict is nascent. To adequately assess the effectiveness of various approaches to engaging youth in national and local peace and security processes, a much stronger analysis of the conditions for 'effective' and 'meaningful' engagement should be established. Stronger data is needed on the design, composition, and in conducting consultative processes. Indicators to monitor outcomes are needed. Data must also be disaggregated by gender, race, ethnicity and sexuality to accurately identify patterns of youth exclusion and explicit accommodations required to remove barriers to participation.

2) **Young women should not be reduced to girls and should be seen as a distinct demography:** Often, generational issues are reduced to the difference between women and girls, but to address young women's specific concerns, there must be a recognition that the challenges they face as young adults under intense pressure to conform to expectations regarding gender roles and sexual preferences limit their voice and their participation, and will undermine their potential contribution to conflict prevention. The evidence of the marginalization of young women's concerns in general – but specifically the lack of mention of sexual and gender-based violence, sexual reproductive health and right, as well as LGBTQI+ issues – suggest that the current strategies are not properly addressing the needs of young women.

3) **Enable and uphold conditions for intersectionality:** More action is needed to ensure that women and sexual/gender minorities are not only equally included in consultations on YPS, but that these spaces are safe for women and LGBTQI+ people to feel they can genuinely share the full range of their concerns. Specific accommodations should be made to ensure their protection, in both cyber and in-person situations, including prioritizing their physical, psychological and emotional well-being.

4) **Localize the YPS agenda:** The most direct and efficient way to begin “decolonizing peacebuilding” is to consciously localize the YPS agenda and collaborate with organizations that are already providing essential intersectional, high-quality work. Localization, as pioneered by the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders for the full implementation of Women, Peace and Security, is vital to the agenda’s intelligibility and relevance. In order to be seen as legitimate, it must be linked directly to immediate youth priorities and local processes. The YPS agenda must be owned and operationalized by young people themselves; authorities and allies must co-create these spaces for the effective implementation of the YPS resolutions.

5) **Challenge patterns of elitism and exclusion:** Localization is a strategy to aid in combating the elite skew of YPS work (in terms of urban biases, association with the UN, technical language, digital access) through identification of appropriate forms of communication and language used by local activists. The YPS resolutions must be taken out of the halls of diplomacy and have an impact on the daily lives of youth peacebuilders.

6) **Combat projectization of donor funding:** To effectively localize the YPS agenda there must be efforts to combat projectization and short termism in donor funding and financing models. This includes providing longer-term flexible funding and core organizational support, and focusing on process and sustainability, instead of reporting. The YPS Fund should be expanded to improve the generation of innovative YPS actors – prioritizing co-creating youth funding frameworks. Additionally, ensuring the remuneration for young people’s time and expertise is included in all activity budgets.

These recommendations should be carried out in conjunction with the understanding that meaningful inclusion means listening to young people, appreciating their concerns, and acting on them in ways that are designed and directed by young people to make them feel safe, equal, and crucial in co-creation.

**gnwp** Global Network  
of Women  
Peacebuilders

In partnership with:



**NYU**

**SCHOOL OF  
PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

