



LOCALISING THE YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA, TEN YEARS IN: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Ten years ago, the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 marked a historic turning point with the launch of the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda. It sparked hope across an entire generation by formally recognising young people as proactive agents of peace, justice, and social change rather than passive victims or potential threats. It also provided a crucial normative framework for advancing youth inclusion in peace and security processes around the world.

As we commemorate its 10th anniversary, we are offered a pivotal opportunity to reflect on the progress achieved, the impact generated, and the challenges that persist. This milestone serves not only as a moment of celebration but also as a call to renew and strengthen global commitments in support of young peacebuilders - particularly those driving change at the local level.

In this spirit, interns from the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS) and the United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY) have joined forces once again to produce a 9th season of the youth-led *Peace Corner Podcast*, under the theme: “*Youth, Peace and Security: Turning 10 and Still Figuring It Out!*”. Episodes explore the tension between political promises and lived realities on the ground. It examines the YPS Agenda’s tangible impact, the structural barriers to its implementation across global, regional, and local contexts, the risks young peacebuilders face, and the persistent gaps that hinder the agenda’s full realisation. Featuring the voices of young peacebuilders and experts from across the globe, the podcast addresses issues ranging from gender, climate change, and protection to the role of art and the contributions of young refugees in safely building peace and social justice. Together, these stories reveal youth experiences - shaped by hope, frustration, and an unwavering commitment to peace - behind the policy language.

One theme has emerged consistently: despite the global recognition of the YPS Agenda, its transformative potential remains unevenly realised - especially at the local level. Localisation continues to be one of the greatest challenges to effective implementation. As the peacebuilding field faces growing pressure - from worsening global conflict, shrinking civic space, and declining financial and political support - there is an urgent need to shift power, agency, and resources to those most affected by conflict, many of whom are young people.

While localisation has long been a priority in humanitarian discourse - most notably through the “Grand Bargain” commitments made at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, which symbolically coincided with the adoption of the YPS Agenda - youth perspectives have too often remained on the margins, or directly excluded from these conversations. This must change. The 10th anniversary of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda offers a timely opportunity to rethink current approaches and reimagine locally-led peacebuilding through the voices and leadership of young people.

The following recommendations are grounded in insights from this season of the *Peace Corner Podcast* and broader youth-led peacebuilding practice. Addressing key barriers to localisation, the recommendations aim to support a more inclusive, context-sensitive, and locally rooted implementation of the YPS Agenda. They offer pathways to translate the YPS pillars into meaningful local action. In this critical moment of reckoning and transformation for the field of peacebuilding, creative and sustained youth-led efforts are needed to maintain and strengthen momentum. Now more than ever, youth perspectives are

essential to building innovative, resilient, and sustainable solutions for peace.

- **Acknowledge the diverse and often informal ways in which young people engage in peacebuilding**, beyond traditional frameworks. Expand the language and scope of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda to reflect these varied practices, particularly in contexts where structural and material barriers limit formal participation.
- **Recognise and integrate art as a valid and legitimate peacebuilding tool**. Creative expression offers an inclusive, non-threatening platform for world-making for marginalised communities structurally denied the space and rights to express themselves and their struggles. It is important to support youth who use storytelling, performance, and visual arts to resist violence and challenge repression.
- **Embed intersectionality in all peacebuilding efforts and strategies**. The YPS Agenda must reflect how the intersection of multiple social power dynamics - gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation, among others - shapes the experience of conflict and peace. To build social change and justice, peacebuilding must be rooted in local knowledge, lived realities, and community-defined priorities.
- **Redefine protection from top-down procedures to locally shaped and youth-led practices**. Develop participatory models rooted in care, solidarity, dignity, and inclusion, and ensure they are adequately resourced, culturally relevant, and co-created with those most affected.
- **Prioritise the localised socio-economic inclusion of youth**, recognising them not as challenges but as essential drivers of community-led progress and transformation. Empowering young people and shifting narratives at the local level are key to addressing inequality and enhancing sustainable change.
- **Systematise peace education in both formal and non-formal settings**. Promote youth-led methodologies and socio-emotional learning, while empowering local actors to tailor these approaches to their specific regional, national, and community contexts. Recognising young people as key agents of change, peace education equips them with the awareness, confidence, and tools to actively embody and lead transformative processes.
- **Support diaspora-driven localisation**. The transnational position of diaspora youth creates a bridge between silenced local communities and the international scene, effectively amplifying grassroots voices and advancing rights-based peacebuilding. Hence, it is key to recognise them as agents of change and support their engagement in reshaping narratives and sustaining global-local connections.
- **Recognise and resource youth-led environmental peacebuilding as a critical connector between the YPS and CPS agendas**. Across diverse regions, young people are restoring degraded land, defending ecosystems, and creating new forms of social cohesion through environmental action. These efforts reduce conflict risks, restore livelihoods, and respond to climate pressures with resilience and care. Yet, youth-led environmental peacebuilding remains underfunded, underrepresented in global policy, and disconnected from institutional peace and climate agendas. Bridging this gap requires conflict-sensitive climate finance, better representation of marginalised regions and voices, and formal recognition of youth-led environmental initiatives as peacebuilding in their own right.
- **Advertise and teach about the YPS agenda**. Teach young people that their voices can be heard and that they can participate in decision-making and discussions. While youth engagement has increased everywhere, the YPS agenda is not well-known by existing organisations and sometimes by the younger generation itself. Using advertisements, social media communications or any other adapted tool, youth will become more aware of the agenda and will therefore feel like their participation is not just a tick-box, it is a genuine move towards them to share their views.