

Advancing the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

○ **Brief description of the project**

UN peacekeeping operations have long recognized the significance of youth populations and have engaged young women and men in the implementation of mandated tasks ranging from supporting inclusive political processes, to the protection of civilians, through conflict prevention and in strengthening effective, responsive and accountable institutions. After decades of experience engaging youth, this area of UN peacekeeping was elevated to a strategic priority in the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) following the establishment of the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) agenda through Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015). In doing so, the Council identified five pillars for action: prevention, protection, participation, partnerships, and disengagement and reintegration. Two subsequent YPS resolutions were adopted. S/RES/2419 (2018) recognized youth's role in preventing conflicts and called on all relevant actors to include young people in all aspects of peace processes. S/RES/2535 (2020) acknowledged young people's contributions to the "sustainability, inclusiveness and success of UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts." It also recognized the challenges faced by youth including "persistent inequalities that put young women at particular risk." Resolution 2535 also urged UN peacekeeping operations to implement context-specific strategies on YPS. Out of the twelve UN peacekeeping operations, six mission mandates¹ include reference to the significance of the YPS agenda and three missions² have policies and planning frameworks that feature YPS.

Furthermore, in March 2023, the Office of Internal Oversight Service (OIOS) published its "Thematic Evaluation of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda: Youth Participation" focusing on the efforts of DPO, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, peacekeeping operations and special political missions in expanding meaningful youth participation³. The evaluation noted that progress towards advancing YPS implementation has been slow due to: (i) limited and inconsistent resources; (ii) limited awareness and capacities; (iii) lack of an implementation road map; (iv) inconsistent planning, monitoring and reporting on activities; (v) limited data on activities, outcomes and impact and (vi) the need to clarify strategies to increase youth participation, including through more engagement with local youth-led organizations.

Based on these findings, OIOS recommended that DPO prioritize establishing dedicated capacities and expertise, at both field and UNHQ levels, to ensure integration of the YPS agenda into policy and practice documents (including guidance to missions) and improve knowledge management and communication on guidance and training available to YPS focal points.

As DPO's YPS focal points at UNHQ, DPET and OROLSI jointly prepared this project proposal as extra-budgetary funding is required in order to implement the YPS agenda and OIOS recommendations as well as to achieve YPS commitments made in A4P+.

○ **Expected outcomes, outputs and proposed activities**

Outcomes	Outputs	Proposed Activities
Implementation of the YPS agenda (SCR 2250, SCR 2419 and SCR 2535)	Established network of dedicated YPS focal points with technical expertise to inform strategies, coordinate mission YPS efforts and facilitate youth engagement	Provide policy guidance to internal and external partners on the implementation of the YPS agenda

¹ MINURSO, MINUSCA, MONUSCO, UNFICYP, UNISFA and UNMISS

² UNMISS, UNMIK and UNFICYP

³ E/AC.51/2023/7

Fulfill YPS commitments made in A4P+ priorities 1 (collective coherence behind a political strategy) and 3 (capabilities and mindsets)	Strengthened partnerships with youth organizations and the facilitation of their participation in various national and local initiatives particularly on conflict prevention and mitigation	Provide operational guidance to support the development of mission strategies and activities based on best practices with implementation support from UNHQ
Address OIOS recommendations to DPO and PKOs contained in its YPS thematic evaluation	<p>Improved knowledge management and communication on guidance and training available to YPS focal points</p> <p>Improved planning, monitoring and reporting of YPS activities including through the collection of age-disaggregated data and impact evaluations</p> <p>Increased engagement with youth-led organizations</p>	<p>Support the integration of the YPS principles into relevant policy and guidance documents</p> <p>Create an online platform for UN peacekeeping YPS focal points to keep apprised of the latest resources available to sustain their expertise and inspire innovative initiatives across mission components</p> <p>Collaborate with UN peace and security pillar YPS focal points to development YPS implementation roadmap</p>

- **Implementation timeline**

12 months

- **Explain how the project will further the implementation of the A4P+ priorities.**

Youth is a prioritized demographic in A4P+ and is integrated in priorities 1 and 3. With regard to priority 1 (collective coherence behind a political strategy), this project will improve the provision of coordinated guidance to support the development of mission strategies informed by YPS commitments and within the context of SCR 2535. Dedicated YPS capabilities and a modest budget will accelerate mission efforts to engage youth organizations and facilitate their participation in various fora including dialogues influencing peace processes, institutional reform, and community violence reduction, in line with priority 3 (capabilities and mindsets).

- **How have gender aspects been included in the design and implementation of the project? How does it help the Department to implement their Women, Peace and Security and Gender Parity commitments?**

Gender considerations were included in the design of this project and will be central to its implementation. Young women in conflict-affected countries confront challenges which, when ignored or misunderstood, sustain marginalization, insecurity and injustice. By integrating the intersections of gender and youth, this project will further WPS implementation.

- **Proposed budget**

Item	Brief Description	Total Amount
Operational funds	Design field-based projects dedicated to implementing YPS mandates and commitments	\$75,000.00
Training	Develop technical YPS capacities across mission components through existing online courses	\$24,000.00
Publications	Create YPS knowledge products and advocacy materials	\$2,000.00
Travel	Travel to PKOs to advance YPS implementation through technical advice on coordination and strategic planning	\$15,000.00
Consultant	Undertake a best practices and lessons learned study to evaluate funded projects	\$20,000.00
Coordination Officer (P3), DPET based	Lead Departmental coordination and technical advice on YPS strategic plans, guidance, evaluation, and training as well as collaboration with internal and external partners	\$215,260.00
Associate Officer (P2), OROLSI based	Support guidance and operational activities including on project design, strategic communications and knowledge hub content	\$174,260.00
Programme Support Costs (13%)		\$68,317.60
Total:		\$593,837.60