



Permanent Mission of Finland
to the United Nations



Investing in Youth-Led Organizations to Advance the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda: A Data-Driven Approach

Draft Concept Note for Side Event at ECOSOC Youth Forum 2019

*9 April 2019, 3:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.
Conference Room E*

Agenda

3:00 p.m. Opening Remarks

- High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (tbc)
- Representative from the Government of Finland (tbc)

3:20 p.m. Presentations by Youth-Led Organizations

- Ms. Abiodun Rufus Unegbu, Executive Director of the Leadership Initiative for Youth Empowerment (Nigeria)
- Mr. Youness Ben-Abbou, International Project Coordinator of Chantiers Sociaux Marocains (Morocco)

3:40 p.m. Panel Discussion

- Mr. Solvi Karlsson, Program Manager – Children and Youth, Search for Common Ground
- Mr. Michael McGill, author of the independent evaluation report for the Youth Solidarity Fund
- Ms. Abiodun Rufus Unegbu, Executive Director of the Leadership Initiative for Youth Empowerment
- Mr. Youness Ben-Abbou, International Project Coordinator of Chantiers Sociaux Marocains
- Moderator: Ms. Cecile Mazzacurati, Head of Secretariat for the Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security, United Nations Population Fund/Peacebuilding Support Office

4:10 p.m. Q&A

4:30 p.m. Closing

Background

Youth-led civil society organizations provide a unique contribution towards preventing conflict and consolidating peace. These organizations have a deep understanding of local conditions and meaningful community relationships, allowing them to work with populations that may be difficult for others to access. Moreover, young people implement innovative solutions to challenges and are the most able to mobilize their peers.

The Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security, mandated by Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) and recognized in Security Council Resolution 2419 (2018), recommended that an investment be made in young people, such that they are viewed as equal and essential partners for peace. This included the provision of flexible funding designed with the specific needs of youth-led organizations in mind, and that any funding support include capacity-building to increase their financial sustainability and the impact of their work. The Progress Study made use of data from the report on Mapping a Sector: Bridging the Evidence Gap on Youth-Driven Peacebuilding (2017), produced by the United Network of Young Peacebuilders and Search for Common Ground. The report developed a broad overview of youth-led organizations working in peace and security, including their activities, achievements, strengths and needs.

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) has supported youth-led organizations that foster peaceful and inclusive societies since 2008 through the Youth Solidarity Fund (YSF). Seed funding and technical support are given to projects, led by and focused on young people, that demonstrate innovative and effective approaches to intercultural or interfaith dialogue. Recent editions have been supported by the Government of Finland. An independent evaluation report was produced in 2018, of ten youth-led organizations supported by YSF in 2016 and 2017, which includes lessons for similar youth-focused donor programmes.

Objective

With participation of Member States, UN entities, technical experts as well as young people, the event will focus on the data-driven evidence for investing in youth-led organizations working in the field of peace and security. It will also be a broader call to reflect on the need for a results-based approach, and for entities to convene around monitoring and evaluation for youth engagement.

Guiding questions for presentations and discussion

1. How are youth and youth-led organizations engaging in the peace and security sector?
2. From the evidence collected, what are the specific needs of youth-led peacebuilding organizations? What are some lessons learned from the data collected?
3. How can donor programmes better support young people and youth-led organizations?
4. What are the challenges in collecting data and evidence to strengthen youth-led peacebuilding organizations?
5. How can different stakeholders work more closely together in order to collect further data on this topic? Can lessons learned in different sectors (e.g. women, peace and security) be used as best practice for youth-led peacebuilding?