

The Kaleidoscope of Peace:



an intergenerational Approach to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda from Italy to the Middle East

Notes from a three-months dialogue and exchange



ACTIVITY REPORT

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The Kaleidoscope of Peace: an intergenerational Approach to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda from Italy to the Middle East. Notes from a three-month dialogue and exchange.

The Kaleidoscope of Peace is a 3-month project promoted by Un Ponte Per (UPP), in Partnership with Centro Studi Difesa Civile (CSDC) and Women International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)-Lebanon section, and funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, within the framework of the third Italian Women, Peace and Security (WPS) National Action Plan (NAP). It involves three countries: Italy, Lebanon and Iraq. The general objective is to contribute to the development of policies that supports the active role of women in the peace processes in Italy and Middle East, through intergenerational dialogue and with the protagonism of civil society.

This report provides basic elements of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agendas used for project activities, along with the first outcomes of the web exchange and intergenerational dialogue.

We publish it with the aim of supporting further developments in the collaboration among partners as well as good practices exchanges in the civil society communities of the three countries at large. In doing so, we hope to maximize the impact of the Italian NAP implementation at national and international level.

July 15th - October 31st 2020

By Luisa Del Turco

with the contribution of Renato Cursi – Youth Peace and Security section, para 4-6

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WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

- **Resolution 1325 (2000)** - Reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.
- **Resolution 1820 (2008)** - Recognizes sexual violence as a tactic of war and a matter of international peace and security that necessitates a security response.
- **Resolution 1888 (2009)** - Strengthens efforts to end sexual violence in conflict by establishing a Special Representative of the Secretary-General and team of experts on rule of law and sexual violence in conflict.
- **Resolution 1889 (2009)** - Establishes indicators for the monitoring of Resolution 1325 and requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on women's participation and inclusion in peacebuilding.
- **Resolution 1960 (2010)** - Establishes a monitoring and reporting mechanism on sexual violence in conflict.
- **Resolution 2106 (2013)** - Stresses accountability for perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict, as well as women's political and economic empowerment.
- **Resolution 2122 (2013)** - Positions gender equality and women's empowerment as critical to international peace and security, recognizes the differential impact of all violations in conflict on women and girls, and calls for consistent application of WPS across the Security Council's work.

- **Resolution 2242 (2015)** - Establishes the Informal Experts Group (IEG); addresses persistent obstacles in implementing the WPS agenda, including financing and institutional reforms; focuses on greater integration of the agendas on WPS and counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism; and calls for improved Security Council working methods on women, peace, and security.
- **Resolution 2467 (2019)** - Positions conflict-related sexual violence as firmly rooted in the broader women, peace and security agenda; stresses justice and accountability efforts; calls for support and protection to women's civil society organizations; and calls for attention to the issues of children born of rape.
- **Resolution 2493 (2019)** - Calls for full implementation of all previous resolutions on women, peace and security; requests the UN to develop context-specific approaches for women's participation in all UN-supported peace processes; and urges Member States to ensure and provide timely support for the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in all stages of peace processes, including in the mechanisms set up to implement and monitor peace agreements.
- **Resolution 2538 (2020)** - Calls for greater action to bolster the role of women, both uniformed and civilian, in all levels of peacekeeping.

Adapted from UNWOMEN.org

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

1. Women Peace and Security international Agenda and the role of Civil Society

The role of Civil Society is deemed increasingly relevant in the global normative framework for Peace and Security. This has expanded over the last two decades due to the adoption of the Women Peace and Security Agenda and, more recently, of a correspondent Agenda for Youth. Regarding the WPS international agenda, civil society has proved crucial in all aspects since the very origins. Thanks to the visionary and timely activism of civil society (networking¹ and campaigning²), inspiring women's peace initiatives at grassroots in 2000 reached the heights of the Security Council, at the highest decision-making level in peace and security.

Indeed, in the landmark Resolution n.1325 adopted on 31st of October, reference was made to "local women's peace initiatives" as well as "indigenous processes of conflict resolution", to be supported when negotiating and implementing peace agreements. Moreover, the role that civil society plays at international level became evident so the text also envisages consultations with local and "international women's groups", when Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women. Nevertheless the Security Council has been resistant to the term "civil society" for quite a while.

In the second Resolution WPS (1820/2008) dedicated to sexual violence, also "women-led organizations" are to participate in consultations (as appropriate) to develop effective mechanisms for providing protection from violence, including in particular sexual violence (in refugee camps, as well as in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration processes, and in justice and security sector reform)³.

¹ The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (NGOWG). Formed in 2000 to call for a Security Council resolution on Women, Peace and Security (WPS).

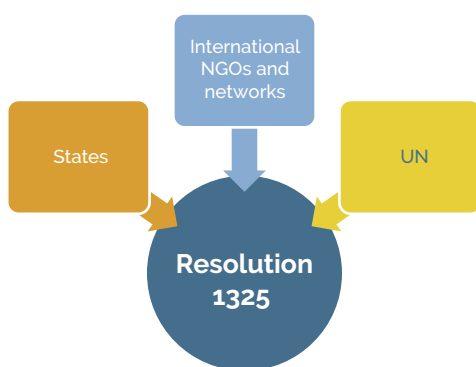
² E.g. "Women Building Peace: From the Village Council to the Negotiating Table" : international campaign to promote women's role in peacebuilding. "Women Waging Peace Network": launched in 1999 to connect women peacemakers from conflict areas around the world with each other and with policy shapers.

³ UNSCR 1820/2008, OP10.

PeaceOne year later in a following resolution, supporting “women’s organizations and networks” was considered essential in the consolidation of peace to promote the equal and full participation of women. Beside members states and donors, also civil society was included, for the first time with “non-governmental organizations” mentioned as such. The NGOs “advisory capacity” was also recognized, with a reference to the “various civil society actors”¹.

From Resolution 2242 (2025) on, this kind of reference became standard, while language features were shaped by the general move towards women’s rights and protection: in a 2013 Resolution civil society included not only women’s organizations but also “survivors of sexual violence”, and “local civil society networks supporting them”.²

More recently - according to a new resolution and consistently with the development of the Youth Peace and Security agenda - civil society entities to be promoted and supported are not just “local, grassroots, women-led organizations” and “survivor-led organizations”, but also “girls- and youth-led organizations”.³



The Women Peace and Security Agenda was born thanks to a fruitful synergy - “a tripartite relationship”⁴ - among different stakeholders, including United Nations entities, States and CSOs as well. All along the 20 year-long development of the WPS Agenda, CSOs supported monitoring and implementation, playing multiples roles (from advisor to watchdog, and implementing partners), gaining a prominent role in the resolutions’ provisions.

From 2005, when the first NAP was adopted, Civil Society became relevant also at national level, as illustrated in the following paragraphs.

¹ UNSCR 1888/2009, Preamble and OP26.

² UNSCR 2106/2013, OP 19.

³ UNSCR 2467/2019, OP 19.

⁴ “If 1325 has broken ground on many levels, is because of a very effective tripartite relationship between CSOs, the UN and Governments”. S. Anderlini, Conference “Putting policies into practice. Monitoring the Implementation of SCR 1325/1820/1888/1889: The Role of Civil Society”, FOKUS, UN-INSTRAW, MoFA. Oslo, Nov 11, 2009

2. National Action Plans on Women Peace and Security

The National Action Plans on WPS have been conceived as implementation tools for States. Today more than 80 NAPs are in place around the globe¹. They help detail the actions, determine responsibilities, allocate resources within a defined time frame, and implement their commitments to the WPS agenda with a context specific, tailored approach.

They are usually more outwards oriented in countries acting as third parties, interested in contributing to international peace and security (through peacekeeping, peacemaking, peacebuilding, relief and recovery). In conflict-affected countries instead, NAPs provisions related to the national context and legislation are particularly relevant, with - for instance - provisions related to refugees also referring to IDPs. There, international missions too often play a role.

This report provides a comparative analysis of the NAP of these three countries - Italy, Iraq and Lebanon - which look at the WPS agenda from different perspectives and contexts, although with some strategic elements in common (including dedicated budget, detailed implementation matrix, involvement of CSOs). It aims to identify possible complementarities and synergies for national WPS policy developments and implementation.

In doing so, the report adopts a CSO perspective, exploring the work that major NGOs and their network and advocates have been playing in supporting the process related to the NAP, from the drafting to the monitoring and evaluation phase. Their support to national institutions' accountability on WPS proved crucial to adapting each agenda to the specific country needs both in conflict and post-conflict situations and in international peacekeeping and peacebuilding as well.

¹ As of August 2020, 86 UN Member States (45% of all UN Member States) have UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans (NAPs). WILPF analysis. For more info see <https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states>.

2020 marks 15 years since the adoption of the first National Action Plan on WPS (by Denmark), but still there is a long way ahead to full implementation of the WPS international Agenda. The project opens up to new ideas and approaches, involving the youth and including both young women and men to listen to their concerns and wishes. NAPs also provide a unique opportunity for different national stakeholders (Ministries, Armed Forces, scholars, international agencies, experts, practitioners) to compare their priorities and perspectives. Intergenerational dialogue can bring added value to all the components and contribute to future developments for the good functioning of the whole system.

ITALY - Background

Italy developed its first NAP on the eve of this decade, at the end of the year marking the 10th anniversary of 1325¹.

The current NAP period of implementation was originally 2016-19, later extended to 2020. The draft of the new one, which will be the fourth, started last June and is now ongoing.

That the Italian government will adopt a NAP on WPS was publicly announced already in 2007. The news triggered advocacy action at national level, still at first in the form of individual initiatives, with limited impact.

¹ Date of adoption 23th December 2010.

Then synergies developed among a very narrow but committed number of CSOs and experts, followed by some sensitization and advocacy initiatives. When the first NAP was to be drafted, dialogue with the national institutions became concrete, and the momentum was raised when it was just about to be finalized. That led to the presentation of an advocacy paper in a parliamentary context, asking for the minimum standard to be respected (timelines, responsibilities, indicators, clear goals and objectives, dedicated budget). The impact on the final text was minimum and the attention of politics and media - gained with that event - was quite short-term.

The CSOs confidence towards the possibility of fruitful involvement in the process critically decreased.

During all this time the process was slowed down by several obstacles.

A lack of political will, but also political instability that abruptly stopped the first relevant experience of advocacy (after the fall of the government). Beyond that, Italy showed little engagement, even in monitoring at EU level. On the part of civil society organisations there was narrow sensitivity and interest on the issue, also due to a lack of funding and resources available for peace-work in general. Mainstreaming peace and security in the work of women's groups on the one hand, and gender in CSOs peacebuilding activities on the other, was also a challenge. Nonetheless, valuable support for specific initiatives had been provided occasionally by relevant actors: UN Agencies, Universities, MPs, journalists.

Today significant progress has been made, with a relevant impact on the current NAP structure, content and results. The change was also possible thanks to the creation of a dedicated civil society Platform, able to gather some ten different entities already active or interested in the field of women, peace and security, that provided strong support in the drafting of the current NAP¹.

¹ GIPP, thematic group on "Gender, Interventions, and Peace Processes".

Meanwhile the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Human Rights of the MOFA (CIDU) – which acts as a focal point for the NAP – renewed its structure in 2016, showing a major commitment to the Plan and its developments. Consultations with civil society organizations become more regular and meaningful, and the interplay among the different stakeholders more fruitful. All along the process the role played by international CSO networks has been decisive¹.

The current NAP

The current NAP looks undeniably much improved compared to previous ones, in terms of the overall approach and structure. The first two Italian NAPs coupled data and description with very general commitments. Definitely too long (up to 700 pages), they also lacked some crucial aspects, such as timelines, clear lines of responsibility and a dedicated budget.

The third Italian NAP is instead more structured and concise, with an elegant brochure presentation as well². After a general part recalling the ultimate aims and approach, the operational part includes an implementation framework based on seven Goals, based on different criteria. Three of them essentially correspond to the main pillars of the international WPS agenda: Participation³, gender Perspective⁴, and Protection⁵. There is no specific pillar dedicated to prevention. A couple OF PILLARS ARE dedicated to specific stakeholders (Armed Forces and Police as prominent in peace missions⁶, and one entirely dedicated to CSOs)⁷; two are more activity based (one about training⁸, one on communication⁹).

¹ A substantial support came from the Gender Peace and Security working group of the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO). <http://eplo.org/activities/policy-work/gender-peace-security-2/>

² https://cidu.esteri.it/comitatodirittiumani/resource/doc/2017/09/brochure_cidu_2017_eng_hr.pdf

³ Goal 1 "Strengthen the role of women in peace processes and in all decision-making processes".

⁴ Goal 2 "Continue to promoting a gender perspective in peace operations".

⁵ Goal 5 "Protect human rights of women and girls, in conflict and post-conflict areas

⁶ Goal 4 "Further enhance women's presence in the national Armed Forces and within national Police forces, by strengthening their role in decision-making processes related to peace missions".

⁷ Goal 6 "Increase synergies with civil society, to implement UNSCR1325".

⁸ Goal 3 "Continue to ensuring specific training on the various and cross-cutting aspects of UNSCR 1325(2000), in particular to personnel taking part in peace operations".

⁹ Goal 7 "Strategic communication and result-oriented advocacy".

A certain weakness in some technical aspects persists: the correspondence between goals and commitments looks sometimes uncertain, while the Plan lacks in SMART indicators¹ and in an effective monitoring system (that is substantially based on self-reporting). Balancing priorities, the current Plan confirms its major focus on military operations, with little reference to civilian missions. That is undoubtedly due to the role that the Italian Armed Forces are playing in international peacekeeping and their relevant achievements in the WPS domain, even regardless of the framework of the NAP (with an articulated internal structure and specific activities at field level)². The Plan also support capacity building of women and their CSO groups, "to engage in prevention and response effort for national peace processes and reconstruction"³.

Thanks to CSO's advocacy, reference to a civil society peacebuilding network⁴ was included, as well as training activities extended to civilians and Italian NGOs. An explicit reference to the role of women as agents of change, and to the transformative power of UNSCR 1325 were also inspired by the CSO Platform, which supported conflict transformation with a non-violent approach. The Italian NAP was not initially supported by funding. A provisional budget on women peace and security was later provided by an amendment to the 2017 Budgetary Law⁵. So, even if the NAP does not make any reference to budget, it had a great impact when it came to implementation.

The most relevant activities remain related to military peacekeeping, still outside the NAP-based budget. A great effort is now also devoted to peacemaking with a new Italian international mediation initiative in this field (i.e. Mediterranean Women Mediators Network)⁶.

Thanks to a CSO request, the National Action Plan of Italy is now financing CSO projects in the field, targeted at women and local partners of conflict and post-conflict areas as well. The Kaleidoscope of Peace is among them.

¹ E.g. Goal 6, Activity 6, indicator: "Evidence of activities".

² See Vinciguerra R. (edited by) Donne, pace e sicurezza. L'esperienza delle Forze Armate italiane, Informazioni della Difesa, 2018.

³ Goal 1, action 2.

⁴ Under Goal 2 there is a specific commitment to involve the "Table for Civil Peace Interventions" the peacebuilding CSOs network devoted to advocacy on Civil Peace Interventions.

⁵ Overall amount 2 million euros, 1 million for the first year and one for the following two years.

⁶ Mediterranean Women Mediators Network (MWMN). <https://womenmediators.net/>

LEBANON - Background

Lebanon adopted its first National Action Plan (NAP) in 2019 to be implemented for the 2019-2022 period.

The country has been affected by different conflicts over the last decades (the Lebanese Civil War, that lasted from 1975 until 1990, the 2006 34-day conflict with Israel). In the past decade, Lebanon has also been grappling with the spillover effects of the Syrian Civil War, and currently hosts 1.5 million Syrian refugees. The United Nations Peacekeeping force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)¹ has been present for decades (1978), with a multi-renewed mandate. When in late 2017 the Prime Minister asked to draft a NAP, the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCL an official institution affiliated with the Presidency of the Council of Ministers) was charged with the drafting. To ensure a participatory approach a Steering Committee was created, comprising six government ministries, three civil society organizations (namely ABAAD-Resource Centre for Gender Equality, Women In Front, and the Institute for Arab Women at the Lebanese American University), and six UN entities serving as a technical advisory board (including UN agencies and UNIFIL). NAP process also included best practices from other countries and consultation with non-Lebanese stakeholders (from Palestine, Syria and Iraq), consultations with academics, religious leaders and the youth. In the implementation process additional local resources for peace were finally involved and can be further utilized. These include civil society organizations already pioneering the development of the WPS agenda at the international level² or working on peacebuilding and reconciliation³.

For the process to be not just more inclusive but also effective and efficient, some recent initiatives – as well as pre-existing ones⁴ – could be taken into account (proceeding of conferences⁵, advocacy papers⁶).

¹ United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon.

² E. g. Women's international League for Peace and Freedom (Lebanon section). <https://www.wilpf.org/>

³ E.g. Permanent Peace Movement <https://www.peaceinsight.org/conflicts/lebanon/peacebuilding-organisations/ppm/> ; Fighters for Peace <http://fightersforpeace.org/> .

⁴ "Beirut Call for Action: Prioritizing women, peace and security on the Arab agenda" (2016). Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World at the Lebanese American University and the Centre for Women of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in collaboration with the Danish Center for Gender, Equality and Diversity. <https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/publications/files/beirut-call-for-action-arab-women-peace-security-agenda-english.pdf>

⁵ E.g. the Canada-funded Fighters for Peace conference "The role of Women in Peacebuilding and Reconciliation – UNSC 1325", held in February 2020.

⁶ "A gendered disasters response plan", Charter of demands by feminist activist and women's rights organizations in Lebanon august 2020. <https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20arab%20states/attachments/publications/2020/08/cso%20lebanon%20charter/updates/charter%20of%20demands%20english%20149.pdf?la=en&vs=4201>

A more inclusive approach would be decisive for implementation as well, that is one of the main challenges today along with coordination of the different contributions (including funding from international agencies and donors to maximize financial capability).

The NAP itself also opens to new developments since is to be "viewed as a living document that can be reviewed and revised by responsible national institutions as they see fit".

The Lebanese NAP

The NAP highlights a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach in implementing the identified objectives.

The structure of the NAP is based on Strategic objectives reflecting the four pillars of UNSCR 1325 (i.e. Participation in decision-making at all levels, Prevention of conflict, Prevention of and protection of women and girls from gender-based violence, Relief and recovery), with an additional strategic objective concerning the national Normative Framework.

Specific attention is devoted to increasing women's full participation in local and national governance structures and in the security and defence sectors, in decision-making processes in political, diplomatic, and economic domain and in conflict prevention, negotiation and mediation as well.

As in other conflict countries, the Lebanese NAP contextualizes the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda by grounding the discussion in Lebanon's national legal and strategic frameworks to ensure advancing women's rights in the personal, political, and legal realms.

It also put WPS actions into the international women's and human rights framework (including CEDAW and Beijing Platform of Action) as well as to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (in particular Goal 5 on gender equality and Goal 16 on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies).

¹ Lebanese NAP 2019-2022, p. 18.

The Lebanese NAP is unique in that it devotes a strategic pillar to Prevention of Conflict with forward looking provisions related to the inclusion of a gender sensitive curriculum on peace education and human and women's rights in universities and schools; capacity building for national stakeholders; awareness raising at community and individual level on peacebuilding targeted to girls, men and boys as well; capacity building for women to form early warning networks at community level. Concerning implementation, the National Commission for Lebanese Women will serve as the coordinator of the NAP working to drive forward action between various actors, and collaborating with all national institutions to carry - out regular reporting on the progress of set goals and objectives. Additionally, multiple ministries and governmental committees and commissions are tasked with implementing different objectives.

Five Specialized National Coordination Committees were formed that include wider representatives (Women in political and Public life, Women in the Economy, Women in Security and Defence sector, Gender Based Violence, Conflict Prevention and Peace Building). A budget was estimated according to the costing workshop that was held by the National Commission for Lebanese Women in cooperation with UN agencies and the participation of the relevant stakeholders including ministries, public institutions and civil society organization. Accordingly, a budget has been allocated for each strategic priority. The budget will be financed by the government along with the support of the international community.

IRAQ - Background

Several Wars and economic sanctions had a strong impact on women in the last decades, even before Iraq faced the occupation by Daesh, the so-called Islamic state, in the northern and western areas of the country.

As consequence, millions of families have been forcibly displaced, and 1.5 million people are still unable to return.

Many women and girls have been subjected to violence and early marriages and about 3000 Ezidi women kidnapped by Daesh are still missing.

Concerning civil society, women's organizations and activists were already involved ten years ago in local and international advocacy and campaigns - also in collaboration with international organizations entities - to pressure the government for the adoption of a NAP.

Data collection and shadow reports on the condition of women in the country were also produced, as well as a draft proposal for the Plan.

As a consequence, Iraq produced the first NAP in the Middle East.

The adopted NAP acknowledges to have been developed in cooperation with the Iraqi NAP1325 Initiative (I-NAP1325 Initiative), an initiative of women's rights organizations and networks across Iraq and Kurdistan.

The NAP is said to reflect "the political will of the two Governments to cooperate with the women's rights civil society organizations for the benefit of all women". It indicates that the overall objective to implement, build and sustain peace and security needs to be pursued enhancing partnership with civil society (and judiciary as well).

It contains many references to women's organisations, women's networks, CSOs broadly, and local NGOs to assist in specific activities. CSOs are also mentioned regarding the monitoring and evaluation process.

The Iraqi NAP

The NAP was developed in a participatory process by the Federal Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, with a Cross Sector Task Force, composed of representatives from ministries, Members of Parliament, legal experts, and INAP 1325 initiative.

Iraq's National Action Plan was launched in February 2014 for the period 2014-2018. The Iraqi NAP offers an extensive introduction where CSOs are repeatedly mentioned and their contribution in the advancement of women's rights as well as their role as a central partner for the NAP implementation acknowledged (in the introduction, in the overall objectives and specific objectives as well).

Women's participation and their struggle to maintain social order and democracy is widely recognized, along with a critical tendency to regression in women's representation, discrimination and marginalization (discrepancy with high level Kurdish standards).

An in-depth analysis of the Iraqi patriarchal system and its implication on women's rights is followed by corresponding suitable solutions in the text of the NAP, whose substantive portion seems relatively small compared with the introductory narrative.

Iraq's NAP is organized into six principles/pillars, mainly accordingly to the pillars outlined in UNSCR 1325 (Participation of women in decision making processes, Protection security and Prevention, Promotion of women's rights) with few additional ones (Social and Economic Empowerment, Legislation and Law Enforcement). A specific section is dedicated to implementation, including the overall objective, a set of specific objectives, as well as principles and pillars (comprising Resources mobilization, Monitoring and Evaluation).



Special Contingency Plan for UNSCR 1325

After the terrorist attacks by Daesh in the Northern and Western areas of the country a more expanded network called Iraqi Alliance for 1325 was formed. It called for the development of a Contingency Plan based on the NAP and for measures, procedures and programs that could contribute to reduce violations, to resolve that crisis and unite national and international efforts for emergency response.

Consequently, the Contingency Plan put protection of women refugees and IDPs, abducted women and survivors of violence as the first objective and main focus.

Representation of women at all decision making levels in national and regional institutions for conflict prevention, management and resolution is the first purpose of the Plan, that also supports the role of women in communities that have seen armed conflicts in conflict prevention and peacebuilding at all levels.

A mechanism for the Implementation of the Contingency Plan was put in place, with the formation of a special operation room to manage the implementation of the plan and develop processes to meet the current needs and achieve its goals.

The Iraqi Alliance for 1325 then followed the development of INAP priorities for 2016, and is still monitoring its implementation. Advocacy work has resulted in the development of sector-specific ministry action plans which have been combined into a Master Plan¹. The Master Plan thanks all supporters and donors that have contributed to the successful implementation: local and national organization and institutions, UN agencies, embassies and international organizations². The adoption of a second National Action Plan is foreseen, with dialogue and discussion already started and supported by the European Union³.

¹ For all the National Policies see the website of the Civilian Voluntary Alliance of the National Initiative for INAP - Iraqi of Resolution 1325: <http://iraqnap1325.org/index/master-plan.html>

² The national consultations for the NAP were supported by the Euromed Feminist Initiative and Founded by The Norwegian Foreign Ministry for the first phase and the Dutch Foreign Ministry for the second phase.

³ See the two-day National Civil Society Conference on 3-4 February 2020 in the framework of the 'Madad for Women' project funded by the European Union through the EU's Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the EU 'Madad Fund'. The conference was also supported by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). <http://www.efi-ife.org/civil-society-conference-held-discuss-localization-iraq-2nd-nap-uns-1325-0>

Also in Iraq precious input are coming from CSOs and could be taken into account for the review of the final draft of the second NAP (among possible revisions: combination of Prevention and Protection into one pillar, additional Pillar on Legislation, development of Media Plan, inclusion of a reference to Peaceful Coexistence Reconstruction and Sustainable Peace).

3. The way ahead

Thanks to this project civil society actors, including national civil society organizations, grassroots organizations, activists, actively working on Women Peace and Security, were allowed to share a number of good practices to be taken into account for future policy development and implementation.

In **Italy** the discussion was centred on a conflict "third party" perspective, and many comments were related to the approach to be used for projects to be developed in conflict areas or targeted to people of conflict affected countries.

The exchange suggested that action be: grassroots based and multicultural, intersectional and gender-relational, peacebuilding oriented and matched with human security, built on partnership with local actors. The importance of training targeted to both local and international staff was strongly emphasised, as well as networking and dialogue among different civil society actors.



Some aspects were also deemed relevant inside the organizations: the importance of common values (ie nonviolence) and shared language among staff at all levels, consensus decision making, intergenerational dialogue, conflict management/transformation capacities to deal with conflict dynamics both formal and informal at all levels (intra, inter-personal included). Among the major concerns: persisting barriers among actors at different level (governmental/ intergovernmental, non-governmental, academia), shrinking space of civil society, competition, lack of coordination, gap in financing between projects and phases (emergency- medium and long term).

In Iraq the focus was more on implementation at national level and the current challenges, including legal support for people and communities coming from the ISIS controlled areas, children born in that context and displaced children.

Concerning women, the focus was on refugees and IDPs, domestic violence, the right to education for girls. In terms of Participation, concern was raised over the control exerted by political parties.

A social movement of women born within the anti-corruption protests in October 2019, called "She revolution", brings to this debate the voices of young women who are politically and socially active, defying threats and attacks by several armed groups.

They underline the importance of preparing a sound ground for building peace by confining weapons in the hands of the state, demobilizing militia and making use of international tools for non-proliferation of light and medium weapons.

There is a strong need for a comprehensive reform of the security system, taking into account the gender perspective, to confront violent extremism and structural violence embedded in Iraqi institutions.

In Lebanon women agreed on the urgent need to change the political system that marginalizes women and men alike, with discrimination against women rooted in the national legislation.

There were different positions: some lobbied for political participation, others prioritized equality.

Freedom from domestic violence deemed strategic including justice and reparations. Equality of the personal status law for Lebanese women from different religions is a priority, as well as the agency of women at home, the decision over their bodies and family matters (including divorce and alimony, heritage, marriages, children custody). Security concerns were brought in the discussion by women from conflict affected areas (Tripoli). The risk of women's political participation affected by political part influence was also considered. The questions of unregistered children, and refugees (from Palestine and Syria) were raised from different sides. Raising awareness about gender issues is deemed crucial both locally and at the level of governmental bodies. At Beirut port there is a strong concern for the political and economic situation of women as well as for the impact on women of the recent explosion. Emphasis was put on the role that young women of the "revolution" could play if informed and involved in the WPS agenda. An appeal was made to support the empowerment and political participation of activists from the suburbs and outside Beirut and rural areas and their political participation was carried on. The need for protection and support (including psychological) for women in times of COVID 19 was a shared concern for all participants of the three countries.

The virtual meetings offered women of Italy, Iraq and Lebanon the opportunity to exchange advocacy experiences at national level and build a common ground for shared advocacy plans. Some possible synergies among the different countries can be foreseen at different levels: further sharing of best practices among civil society for more effective field action and advocacy towards the institutions; military and civilian peacekeeping from the two complementary perspectives of troop-contributing and host countries; academic and non academic exchange on training and research on WPS with comparative approach. Some other points common to both WPS and YPS Agendas were collected during the project activities, that are further explained in the last section (recommendations).



NAPS - COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS MATRIX

	Objectives	Indicators	Monitoring	Budget	CSO involvement
ITALY 2016-2020	<p>Goals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen the role of women in peace processes and in all decision-making processes 2. Continue to promoting a gender perspective in peace operations 3. Continue to ensuring specific training on the various and cross-cutting aspects of UNSCR 1325(2000), in particular to personnel taking part in peace operations 4. Further enhance women's presence in the national Armed Forces and within national Police forces, by strengthening their role in decision-making processes related to peace missions 5. Protect human rights of women and girls, in conflict and post-conflict areas 6. Increase synergies with civil society, to implement UNSCR 1325 7. Strategic communication and result-oriented advocacy 	<p>The NAP identifies general indicators. According with the NAP provisions indicators could have been revised. The NAP also indicates potential implementing actors (including CSOs)</p>	<p>The open-ended Working Group (OEWG), led by the Inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights (CIDU), is responsible of the implementation of the Plan, including application and monitoring in coordination with CSOs and other relevant actors. Annual progress reports are issued mainly based on self-reporting</p>	<p>A provisional budget on Women Peace and Security was provided by an amendment to the 2017 Budgetary Law (overall amount 2 million euros, 1 million for the first year and 1 for the following two years).</p>	<p>The NAP was developed in consultation with CSOs. A platform of more than 10 Italian CSOs "Gender, Interventions and Peace Processes" was involved in the processes. CSOs participate in the OEWG consultations (to be held at least every four months)</p>
LEBANON 2019-2022	<p>Strategic priorities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation in decision-making at all levels 2. Prevention of conflict 3. Prevention of and protection of women and girls from gender-based violence 4. Relief and recovery 5. Normative framework 	<p>The NAP identifies several indicators, both qualitative and quantitative, for each output and related interventions, outlined in the implementation matrix, as well as potential responsible institutions</p>	<p>The NAP indicates that the implementation matrix, on which multiple ministries and governments committees and commissions are tasked with implementing different objectives, will serve as a monitoring and reporting framework. A national baselines data should be developed to assist during the 4 years. A final evaluation will take place during the fourth year of implementation</p>	<p>The estimated subtotal cost for the implementation of the NAP 1325 is USD 13,699,640/LBP 20,549,460,000 over four years.</p>	<p>Three major CSOs participated in the drafting (ABAD-Resource Centre for Gender Equality, Women In Front, the Institute for Arab Women at the Lebanese American University). NAP's implementation according to the text "requires close coordination among different entities including civil society".</p>
IRAQ 2014-2018	<p>Pillars</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation 2. Protection and Prevention 3. Promotion 4. Social and Economic Empowerment 5. Legislation and Law Enforcement 6. Resources mobilization and 7. M&E <p>Each Pillar has a general objective, and then a set of strategic objectives with corresponding specific actions</p>	<p>For each action, Iraq's NAP provides expected results, indicators, as well as responsible actors</p>	<p>NAP includes result oriented and transparent reporting and allocation of fund nationally and internationally. CSOs, women's organizations, and beneficiaries are actively involved. All actors and I-NAP1325 Initiative effectively supported the monitoring process</p>	<p>The NAP has a budget that facilitates the mobilization of resources on national and international level as it allocates concrete estimated amounts for each activity under pillar for each year.</p>	<p>The plan was written in cooperation with a network of CSOs (Iraqi NAP 1325 Initiative). The CSOs role has been crucial for implementation (see chapter 5 of the Report on implementation 2018)</p>



RESOLUTION 2250 - A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Participation: the resolution asks governments to increase the participation of young people in decision-making at all levels in local, national, regional and international institutions and in mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict. It also stresses the need for the Security Council to consider young people's needs during its missions.

Protection: the resolution requires governments to ensure the protection of civilians, specifically including youth, at times of armed conflict and post-conflict, including protection from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence. It also demands countries to end impunity by bringing to justice those who commit genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes against young civilians.

Prevention: the resolution calls on governments to support youth's engagement by creating spaces in which young people are recognised and provided with adequate support to implement violence prevention activities. The document also stresses the need to create policies for youth that would positively contribute to peacebuilding efforts, including for their social and economic development.

The Security Council also calls on all relevant actors to establish mechanisms to promote a culture of peace and discourage youth from all acts of violence.

Partnership: the resolution urges governments to establish and strengthen partnerships with relevant actors by increasing political, financial, technical and logistical support to the UN bodies engaged in promoting peace, development and equality; considering the Peacebuilding Commission's advice and recommendations on how to engage young people during and after conflict when developing peacebuilding strategies; and engaging community actors and empowering local people(s) including youth, families, women, religious, cultural and education leaders in countering violent extremism and promoting social cohesion and inclusion.

Disengagement and Reintegration: the resolution encourages all actors engaged in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) to consider the impact of these processes on youth as well as the needs of young people affected by armed conflict.

Aspects to be considered include: opportunities and policies in the fields of education, employment and training in preventing the marginalisation of youth and promoting a culture of peace.

UNOY, 2016

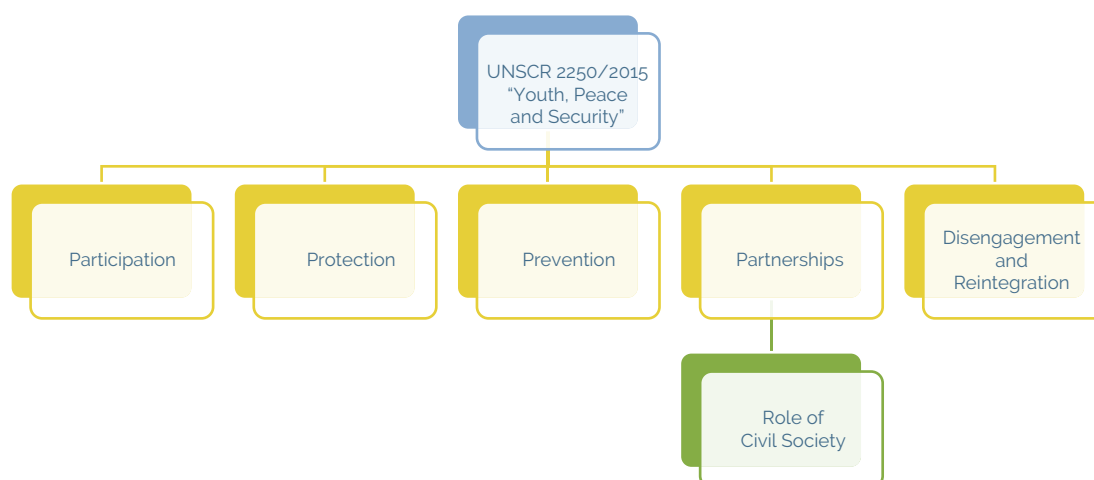
YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY

4. The Resolutions on Youth, Peace and Security and the role of civil society



Resolution no. 2250, the first one dedicated to "Youth, Peace and Security" (YPS), was adopted unanimously by the United Nations Security Council on 9 December 2015, driven by several converging factors.

The Resolution - in analogy with the first Resolution on Women Peace and Security - follows a broad preamble with an organization of contents by pillars, which in this case are 5 (participation, protection, prevention, partnerships, disengagement and reintegration), and includes a formal request to the UN Secretary General to promote a study on the positive contribution of young people in peace processes and conflict resolution¹.



¹ UNSCR 2250/2015, OP16 (one of the three paragraphs under the Pillar of Partnerships).

In the YPS agenda (now composed of 3 Resolutions) the role of civil society has been explicitly recognized since the first Resolution and has been reiterated by the two subsequent Resolutions.

Civil society, in a broad sense, is the protagonist of the fourth pillar of this agenda, that of "partnerships" (see box above). Indeed, within this framework, the UN Security Council encourages "Member States to involve local communities and relevant non-governmental organizations in the development of strategies to counter the narrative of violent extremism, which can lead to terrorism, including through the empowerment of young people, families, women, religious, cultural and educational leaders, and all other relevant civil society groups, adopting targeted approaches to counter the recruitment of this type of violent extremism and promoting social inclusion and cohesion"¹.

The second YPS Resolution already in the preamble recognizes "the importance of civil society, including community based civil society, youth, the private sector, academia, think tanks, media, women, and cultural, educational and religious leaders in increasing awareness about the threats of terrorism and more effectively tackling them"².

In the text of the Resolution, in addition to reaffirming that "youth and youth led civil society can also play an important role in efforts to peacebuilding and sustaining peace"³, the Security Council expresses "its intention, where appropriate, to invite civil society including youth led organizations to brief the Council in country specific considerations and relevant thematic areas"⁴.

¹ UNSCR 2250/2015, OP16 (one of the three paragraphs under the Pillar of Partnerships).

² UNSCR 2419/2018, Preamble.

³ Ibidem, OP 10.

⁴ Ibidem, OP 18.

With the latest resolution dedicated to the YPS agenda, the Security Council encourages "Member States, regional and subregional organizations to develop and implement policies and programs for youth and to facilitate their constructive engagement, including through dedicated local, national and regional roadmaps on youth, peace and security, with sufficient resources, through a participatory process, in particular with young people and youth organizations and to pursue its implementation, including through the monitoring, evaluation and coordination with young people"¹. The Security Council encourages "Member States to consider increasing, as appropriate, funding for the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda", including accessible resourcing for youth-led and youth-focused organizations", specifying that this financial support should be promoted by making these resources accessible to both youth-led and youth-focused organizations².

The Security Council also confirmed its intention, already expressed in the previous Resolution, "to continue to invite civil society including youth-led organizations as well as young peacebuilders to brief the Council in country-specific considerations and relevant thematic areas and include interactive and inclusive meetings with local youth, youth-led organizations and young peacebuilders, in the field during Council missions"³.

Finally, the Security Council requests the UN Secretary General "to ensure that, within existing resources, capacities and expertise to engage young people and youth organizations in peacebuilding and sustaining peace at the local, national, regional and international levels and programmatic activities are in place for the accelerated implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda"⁴.

¹ UNSCR 2535/2020, OP 14.

² Ibidem, OP17.

³ Ibidem, OP18.

⁴ Ibidem, OP 25.

5. YPS Agenda national experiences

Certainly the legal and political system set up with the adoption of the three Resolutions on "Youth, Peace and Security" entails that each Member State of the United Nations today is called upon to respect the provisions of these Resolutions, which were all adopted unanimously.

Civil society organizations can therefore address their governments and public institutions by appealing to this legal basis, which was rapidly built up in an international political climate apparently favorable to the development of this agenda.

Youth-led organizations wishing to develop national advocacy around the "Youth, Peace and Security" agenda also have the opportunity to learn from the good practices of organizations based in other countries, either by participating in the activities of international civil society networks or simply by learning from the materials uploaded online by these entities. Two concrete and recent good practices can be offered by Nigeria and Finland respectively.

They are very different countries but both in their own way were pioneers in this field. Nigeria, starting from a demographic situation where 70% of the approximately 200 million residents are under thirty years old, adopted the so-called "Not Too Young To Run Act" in 2018. This law, which has significantly lowered the legal age for being elected for national public office, was adopted at the end of a long campaign, supported by international and Nigerian civil society in the UN too¹. While civil society advocacy in Nigeria has focused on the pillar of participation, in Finland youth organizations have promoted a dialogue with national institutions towards the adoption of a national programme with a broader vision for the implementation of the "Youth, Peace and Security" agenda. Finnish organizations have been working towards this goal for years, raising awareness through surveys, promoting research through focus groups and involving institutions through the organization of high-level events with an international dimension².

¹ Etim E., Duke O., "A Critical Assessment of the 'Not Too Young To Run Act' and Democracy in Nigeria", *International Journal of Research Culture Society*, Volume 3, Issue 1, January 2019.

² First International Symposium on Youth Participation in Peace Processes, 5-6 March 2019, Helsinki Summary Report. Consulted on 21/09/2020: https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/YPPP-Symposium-Summary-Report_Helsinki-March2019-Final.pdf

In **Italy** three organizations (Centro Studi Difesa Civile, Movimento Nonviolento, Un Ponte Per...) created a national network on "Youth, Peace and Security" in 2017¹. The goal of "Rete italiana Giovani, Pace e Sicurezza" (Rete GiPS) is, on the one hand, to raise awareness and develop partnerships on the YPS agenda in the Italian society and, on the other hand, to promote a dialogue between civil society organizations and Italian institutions in order to develop together the implementation of the YPS agenda in Italy. The network is still active and it is open for membership candidatures from both organizations and individuals, provided that they are interested or active in this field and that they adhere to the network's statute. Indeed, the founding members agreed that the network's mission is to promote a positive vision of peace, to be understood as peace by peaceful means, based on nonviolence, human security, non-discrimination and the respect of human rights as understood by the UN conventions. The network's members, therefore, are asked to endorse this vision and mission. "Rete GiPS" has already organized public events in Italy involving activists, scholars, national UN Youth Delegates and representatives from the national institutions (Foreign Affairs Ministry²). Selected representatives also participated on behalf of the network in international events on disarmament³ and YPS⁴. "Rete GiPS" is now exploring the opportunities provided by active participation in projects, such as the present one, a stronger presence in social media⁵ and outreach to international networks (the network has sent its candidature for membership to UNOY Peacebuilders⁶ at the end of September 2020).

This Italian network is somehow following the example of the Finnish youth organizations, with a long-term process to raise awareness and foster dialogue towards a national action plan for YPS.

1 1st national seminar on YPS in Italy: <https://www.pacedifesa.org/2017/05/19/seminario-giovani-pace-e-sicurezza/>

2 2nd national seminar on YPS in Italy: <https://www.pacedifesa.org/2018/04/10/giovani-pace-e-sicurezza-lagenda-internazionale-e-le-opportunita-in-italia-2/>

3 International Symposium on Nuclear Disarmament (2017): <http://www.pacedifesa.org/2017/11/15/il-centro-studi-difesa-civile-al-simposio-internazionale-sul-disarmo-nucleare/>

4 Lisbon Forum on YPS (2018): <http://www.pacedifesa.org/2018/12/03/presenza-del-csdc-al-lisbon-forum-2018/>

5 Rete GiPS's Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/RetelItalianaGiovaniPaceSicurezza/>

6 United Network Of Young Peacebuilders: <https://unoy.org/en/>

Indeed, Rete GiPS is currently organizing an event to celebrate the 5th anniversary of UNSCR 2250/2015 (9/12/2015-9/12/2020). On this occasion a national online survey on YPS in Italy will be launched and the results, which may support the drafting of a future national action plan, will be presented on the 4th anniversary of the Italian network on YPS (May 2021).

Lebanon, already with a history of conflict and civil war, has seen a resurgence of militarism with the ongoing war in Syria since 2011.

Furthermore, forecasts for the Lebanese economy worsened over the 2010s for several reasons, including a dysfunctional political system at the national level.

In October 2019 all these factors triggered a series of civil protests, also known locally as "October Revolution".

Youth and women were among the main actors of the nonviolent protests that caused the resignation of the government at the end of October¹.

After some weeks of relative calm, protests resumed in January 2020, just before a new national government was formed.

Protests were then limited by the measures adopted to counter the spread of covid-19 pandemic, but they resumed once again after the lockdown measures were suspended. Furthermore, the explosion in the harbor of Beirut on 4 August 2020, which killed over 200 people, injured over 6500 and left some 300.000 homeless, worsened the economic situation of the country and fueled further protests against the political system in Lebanon. Faced with this mounting instability, the action of women and young people supporting grassroots activism against militarism and in favor of a nonviolent transformation of the conflict in Lebanon becomes even more important.

In **Iraq**, for security reasons, the space for civil society organizations to engage in peacebuilding issues is often limited.

¹ An account of the October Revolution by WILPF: <https://www.wilpf.org/in-lebanon-the-revolution-is-a-woman/>

However, in spite of many challenges, some Iraqi civil society organizations were able to develop a peacebuilding approach¹. For instance, one of the main partner of the Iraqi Social Forum (ISF), the Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative (ICSSI) ran a nationwide, EU-funded and youth-focused project through UPP and several local partners entitled "Mesopotamian Youth for Democratic Governance, Social Cohesion and Reconciliation" which promotes human rights campaigns with a strong peacebuilding focus². Among others, youth organizations joined the ISF since its creation in 2013³. The first gathering of this national network took place in Baghdad, involving more than 140 activities organized by hundreds of Iraqis and some international activists⁴. This national network in Iraq is now connecting local networks from ten Iraqi towns. In the same way as the Italian network on YPS, the members of the ISF also opted for a nonviolent understanding of peace and they are working on their internationalization strategy⁵. Since October 2019, with a similar pattern to the situation in Lebanon, civil society is animating protests and demonstrations against the government in Iraq. However, here the most challenging episode has not been an explosion in a harbor, but the attack of some groups to the US Embassy in Baghdad and the consequent tension raised between USA, on the one hand, and Iraq and Iran, on the other hand, between December 2019 and January 2020. Several incidents on a smaller scale have followed in Iraq since then, but the protests continued and marked their first anniversary on October 1, 2020. Young people remain among the main actors of nonviolent demonstrations by civil society in Iraq, as demonstrated by the initiatives led by the "She Revolution" group⁶.

1 European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN), Civil Society Dialogue Network Discussion Paper No. 12, Civil society peacebuilding actors in Iraq (2017): http://eplo.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/EPLO_CSDN_Discussion-Paper_Civil-society-peacebuilding-actors-in-Iraq.pdf 2 Description of the "Mesopotamian Youth for Democratic Governance Social Cohesion and Reconciliation in Iraq" project: https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/rwanda/70915/mesopotamian-youth-democratic-governance-social-cohesion-and-reconciliation-iraq_vi In Italian: <https://www.unponteper.it/it/projects/mesopotamian-youth/>

3 Youth organizations and Iraqi Social Forum (2013): <https://www.iraqicivilsociety.org/archives/2124>

4 1st Iraqi Social Forum (2013): <https://www.globalpolicy.org/home/214-general/52496-the-1st-iraqi-social-forum-takes-place-in-baghdad.html>

5 Meeting of the Iraqi Social Forum in Nassiriya (2019): <https://www.unponteper.it/it/2019/05/nassiriya-lincontro-nazionale-delliraqi-social-forum/>

6 The Social and Political Roles of Girls and Women during the New Coronavirus Epidemic. A Webinar by the "She Revolution" Group (2020): <https://www.iraqicivilsociety.org/archives/11448>

6. The way ahead

This project allowed the partner organizations to collect information from young people aged 18-35 from Iraq, Italy and Lebanon and enabled young partners from these three countries to share about their vision on the implementation of the Youth, Peace and Security agenda in their respective home country. By matching the information collected through the different activities of the present project (surveys, interviews and focus groups) with the five pillars of the YPS agenda, it is possible to highlight the different needs, perceptions and expectations of young people from Iraq, Italy and Lebanon in terms of peace and security. Participation is the first of the YPS pillars and the most quoted keyword among the projects' young partners.

In countries such as Iraq and Lebanon, notwithstanding their important part in the country's demography, participation is something that young people are struggling for, together with recognition.

Peace and security are key issues in both countries, but young people are quite side-lined in the decision making process on those topics. In Lebanon divisions among groups and parties make transversal and generational processes unlikely to be effectively represented. In Iraq conflicts and instability are often used as an excuse to shrink the space of youth-led civil society organizations.

In Italy, on the contrary, channels for participation are offered also at the institutional level, but young people are becoming less relevant from a demographic point of view and consequently increasingly unable to shape the country's political agenda.

As long as the needs, perceptions and expectations of young people on peace and security are ignored, these two concepts will still be commonly understood in Italy as something related to foreign and military affairs.

Protection was mentioned especially by young people from Iraq and Lebanon as a fundamental need and precondition for the development of a YPS agenda in their country.

Being woman and young emerged as two factors increasing the perception of the need for protection.

Participants from these two countries highlighted the importance of protecting young activists and human rights defenders.

Participants from Italy referred to the need of protecting some specific groups of young people that are often victims of violence and exclusion because of their ethnic origin, gender, disabilities or sexual orientation.

Furthermore, young people expressed their understanding of "prevention" as provision of quality education, training and employment opportunities, including the provision of education and training on peace, human rights, a culture of tolerance and non-discrimination.

Prevention of violence was also often mentioned by the project's young participants, with specific references to gender-based violence and violent extremism.

Even if many young people from Lebanon who joined the present project are active in international networks, such as WILPF, civil society actors from both this country and Iraq emerged as being more internationally isolated than Italy. For Italian respondents the availability of projects fostering mobility and strategic partnerships, such as the ones funded by the European Union, are seen as an important tool for the development. In spite of the regional and international challenges affecting them, youth-led organizations from Lebanon and Iraq proved to be well rooted at the national and local level.

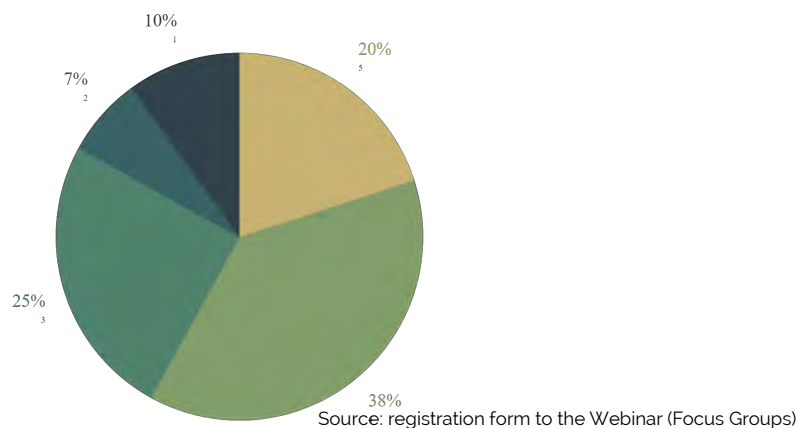
Young people from Iraq highlighted the importance of offering effective policies for the disengagement of former young combatants, highlighting the fact that if one wants to reintegrate young people who left the militias it should be able to offer attractive and sustainable alternatives.

In Italy, beside its application to radicalized youth, the pillar of disengagement and reintegration can be applied to young people who got engaged with organized crime, but unfortunately there is not much awareness yet on the potential of this YPS pillar in the country.

The different tools aimed at the young stakeholders of the present project were built with different and complementary purposes.

On the one hand, the survey was meant to collect information on young people's awareness, knowledge, needs and perceptions on WPS and YPS. On the other hand, the interviews and the focus groups within the webinar tried to explore also the expectations of young people on the potential of designing and implementing the WPS/YPS agendas in their country.

To what extent do you think that gender and age influence the way people address conflicts? (5: highest extent; 1: minimum extent)



The project's survey on the WPS and YPS agendas, answered by over one hundred young people from Iraq, Italy and Lebanon aged 18-35, showed that in these three countries the WPS agenda is slightly more known than the YPS one.

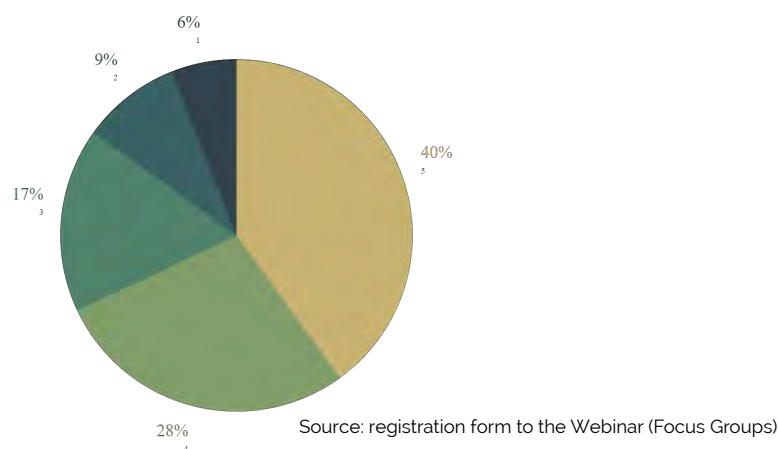
However, in all the three countries, less than half of respondents affirmed that they know well these two agendas, with the only exception of the WPS agenda in Italy, known by more than half of respondents.

In Italy, young respondents to the project's survey framed their vision on "peace" in terms of rights, both individual and social, freedom, inclusiveness, non-discrimination and sustainable development. In Iraq and Lebanon, within the answers to the same question, there was a stronger focus on "stability".

In these two countries, young respondents expect public institutions to be the main actors in charge of citizens' security.

On the contrary, the action of international organizations in these countries is considered mild and ineffective when it comes to peace and security. Young respondents from Iraq and Lebanon also mentioned the risk that international organizations may limit themselves to organizing seminars and conferences, without really changing the reality of peace and security at the grassroots level.

Do you think that conflicts have a specific impact on women and youth? If yes, to what extent? (5: highest extent; 1: minimum extent)



This project, just like the YPS resolutions themselves and some international researchers¹, registered the importance of national and international partnerships for the sustainable progress of the YPS agenda.

Indeed, intersectionality, especially in terms of age and gender, is key for the future development of both the WPS and YPS agendas.

¹ Ortiz Quintilla Romeral, "Resolución 2250 del Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU: Juventud, Paz y Seguridad, Institut Català Internacional per la Pau", Policy Paper n. 14, (2016): https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2016-11/2016.09%20-%20UNSCR2250%20-%20Romeral%20Ortiz%20Quintilla%20-%20PolicyPaper_14_CAST.pdf; ALTIOKALI, Grizelj Irena, "We are here: An integrated approach to youth-inclusive peace processes", (2019): <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Global-Policy-Paper-Youth-Participation-in-Peace-Processes.pdf>

The example provided by evaluation of NAPs on WPS is often promising in this sense. However, if one wants to stay true to its commitment to the promotion of youth agency, when it comes to the role of young people there must be room for creativity, even in the field of peace and security.



1 "Translating Youth, Peace & Security Policy into Practice - Guide to kick-starting UNSCR 2250 Locally and Nationally" (2016):<https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2016-11/2016.11.22%20-%20Translating%20Youth%2C%20Peace%20%26%20Security%20Policy%20into%20Practice%20-%20Guide%20to%20kick-starting%20UNSCR%202250%20Locally%20and%20Nationally.pdf>

WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY – YOUTH PEACE AND SECURITY

	YOUTH in Women, Peace and Security	GENDER in Youth, Peace and Security
Normative	The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda set out in UNSCR 1325 (2000) and subsequent WPS resolutions the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda with its UNSCR 2250 (2015), and more recently the Sustaining Peace agenda through UNSCR 2282 (2016), all call for highly inclusive planning, programme design, policy development and decision-making processes for conflict prevention, resolution and recovery.	Resolution 1325 and its subsequent resolutions partly inspired the push for Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security. Often policies and programs focused on young people in peace and security contexts do not fully recognize and successfully leverage the potential and actual contributions of young women. Despite the contribution that UNSCR 1325 made in terms of highlighting the tangible, active and constructive role women play in advancing the peace and security agenda, it has not fully documented the distinct realities, potential and realizations of young women.
Experience	The Global Study on Women, Peace and Security (2015) highlighted in its findings that peace processes inclusive of civil society have a greater chance of success, and societies with higher gender equality markers were proven to be more stable and less at risk of conflict. The same logic of inclusive processes and agency extends to the YPS agenda. Peace and stability cannot be built without young women and young men, and it cannot be built for them without them. Adolescent girls and young women face a double discrimination due to their sex and age, falling between the majority of youth-focused peacebuilding and prevention programmes, and women-targeted peacebuilding interventions. These challenges are not new, as a study pointed out in 1995: "Action in support of women often focuses on those who have passed the stage of youth, not fully integrating the concerns of young women and adolescent girls."	While UNSCR 2250 aims to highlight and explore the transformative role young people play in building a peaceful world, implementation should be done in a manner which recognizes how gender shapes young people's realities, perceptions and actions. In the short and medium term, efforts should include, for example, gathering age- and sex-disaggregated data, developing age- and gender-responsive targets and indicators, as well as incorporating age- and gender responsive strategies and tactics in peacebuilding planning processes. In the longer term, the objective is for both the YPS and WPS agendas to become fully integrated and internalized throughout all elements of the peace and security work, rather than being considered as separate or parallel (or even competing) agendas.
Shortfalls	Peace strategies inspired by UNSCR 1325 have been more likely to focus on and invite mostly older women. Understanding the structural and technical barriers to young women's participation should be an essential part of both the YPS and WPS agendas.	The failure to apply an age and gender lens in the realm of peace and security results in a failure to understand the diversity of experiences of young people and in particular of young women. This consequently results in "the loss of opportunities to more effectively support the protection and development of young people and the overall well-being of their societies".
Conclusion	The WPS agenda should not treat the YPS agenda as a separate thematic area of work, but instead recognize the need for full engagement of young women in the WPS agenda while reinforcing that youth equally applies to young women and young men. The YPS lens is complementary to WPS work, and an age-responsive approach only strengthens the inclusivity and relevance of WPS work.	Applying a youth lens in the WPS agenda, as well as a gender lens in the YPS agenda, ensures the protection of young women's and young men's rights "so that their distinct roles and capacities for survival, community recovery and conflict prevention are not sidestepped or subsumed under programmes for children or adults"



7. Common ground and synergies between the WPS and YPS Agendas: the Italian experience

Despite women making up roughly half of the global population, and young women and young men between the ages of 15-29 currently counting for approximately 25 per cent of the global population, both women and young people have been excluded from the realm of peace and security policies up until the new millennium¹.

"The Kaleidoscope of peace" project explores the complementarities of the WPS and YPS agendas, looking at their intersection from a civil society perspective.

Based on some common pillars (namely Protection, Participation and Prevention), both agendas seek to address the challenge of sustaining peaceful societies through an inclusive comprehensive approach.

To help put the previously excluded groups (women and young people) into the picture and maximize the transformative impact they may have, some national experiences and initiatives have been collected, hearing the voices of the people directly involved.

Looking forward to further developments in all countries, the Italian experience is here briefly described.

Italian Civil Peace Corps

In the Italian NAP on WPS there are useful references to youth: their engagement in communication activities is foreseen (goal 7.3), and an explicit mention of the Italian Civil Peace Corps experience is included (even if limited to their training on Gender Peace and Security)².

The CPC experience looks **very** promising and innovative as a new model for civilian interventions valorising the role of the youth.

¹ See UNOY "Complementary Agendas: Women and Youth Building Peace" (2016). <https://unoy.org/en/complementary-agendas-women-and-youth-building-peace/>

² Action 8: Facilitating the further development of GPS modules in the training course for "Corpi Civili di Pace".

Originated by an initiative of an MP and backed by the sound advocacy background of NGOs and academia¹, the Italian experimentation has only few equals at the global level (Germany and USA) and looks particularly original in its formula, for its specific target (18- to 28- year- olds).

The mandate is centred on peace work: humanitarian assistance plays only an indirect role related to refugees, while environmental issues are to be considered just for their impact on conflict dynamics. Human rights are not included as such, but as one of the aspects of peace action. Related to Principles, they were developed with a participatory process (involving experts, trainers, practitioners). The draft proposal coming from the CSO community² of trainers was then presented to and well received by the Commission in charge of the definition of the Code of Conduct. The Commission finally adopted the draft structure (dividing principles and rules of conduct) and contents with no relevant amendments. In line with the best practice of the peacekeeping/peacebuilding CSO community, Nonviolence and Non-partisanship stand at the core, leaving apart those proper to the humanitarian (ie neutrality and impartiality) and development tradition (eg solidarity). Independence clearly indicates the unique position among the actors of the scenario: the hybrid nature of CPC combining a mandate from the national institutions and volunteering in CSO projects. The role of CPC is acknowledged in the new law on the international missions of Italy, including their role on an equal footing with armed forces and police officers³.

¹ See Mascia M., Papisca A., (2017) "Civil Peace Corps: New Inspiration for the Italian Foreign Policy, Peace Human Rights Governance", 1(1), 117-156.

² E.g. Peace Brigades International, NonviolentPeaceforce, Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict.

³ See Law 145/2015 on the Participation of Italy in International Missions.

Furthermore the new law on international cooperation¹ (which includes references to peace and gender) make reference to them and consider peace not just as a long term/final goal (as in the tradition of International Humanitarian Law norms), but a field of competence which needs to be concretely implemented as such through peace work specific tools, according to SDG 16 and the New Way of Working (linking peace, humanitarian and development work)².

Thanks to the NAP provisions, and the advocacy that originated them, all volunteers - mostly young women - have been trained on gender issues and many of them have worked successfully on WPS in the field. Within the activities implemented with the Lebanese partner Fighters For Peace (FFP), the Civil Peace Corps (CPC) volunteers were engaged in the organization of the conference "Women's role in peace-building and reconciliation processes", sponsored by the Canadian Embassy in Lebanon. The goal of the two-day conference, held in Beirut on 28th and 29th February, was to increase awareness about the National Action Plan in Lebanon, while creating networks of civil society organizations - Lebanese, but also Palestinian and Syrian ones - that operate in the field, as well as creating ties between women, youth, security-operators, academics and institutions. The role of women during and after the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990) and during the so-called "Thawra" (Arabic for revolution), during which, since October 17th 2019, thousands of Lebanese have taken to the streets, was widely debated. Two CPC volunteers were involved in filming and taking pictures during the conference. The material has then been shared on the social pages of FFP and on the conference publicity channels.

The other volunteers took part to the conference sessions, actively participating in workshop on women's role in peace-building, political participation and post-conflict reconciliation.

They also collaborated in the writing of activity reports, both by collecting materials and editing.

Their support has been crucial for the late event publicity and for the awareness activities conducted by the partner organization.

¹ Law 125/2014, general law on International Development Cooperation, No Article 28.

² See Cimino D., "The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: Solving Rubik's Cube in Policy and Practice", *Journal of International Cooperation and Development*, Vol 3, No 1, May 2020. <http://www.richtmann.org/journal/index.php/jicd/article/view/12192/11790>

8. The way ahead: recommendations from a WPS-YPS perspective

POLICIES

•**Strong and stable international normative framework**, avoiding proliferation of policies and focusing on implementation. The WPS and YPS agendas share the same logic of inclusive processes and agency and offer a solid reference that needs to be fully implemented at different levels rather than further extended.

•**National Implementation**, renewed WPS NAPs should not start from scratch and just look good, but must be built on lessons learned and challenges identified under the monitoring process, to fill the gaps between policies and reality. National implementation of the YPS agenda should take into account best practices and lessons learned of WPS.

•**Enhanced Monitoring and Evaluation system**, based on SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) indicators, to assess progress and performance and hold national and international institutions accountable for the full implementation of international WPS – YPS agendas. Independent evaluation and CSO involvement are crucial.

APPROACH

•**Gender approach**, take into account the different needs and multiples role of women and men, engaging men and boys in gender relations transformation, gender equality-related initiatives and in peace-work. Avoiding assumptions and stereotypes (women as more vulnerable and peaceful than men, men as prone to violence) and use context specific relational gender analysis.

- Intergenerational approach**, provide space for cooperation and dialogue both among peers and across groups of different generations, fostering dialogue, mutual understanding, cooperation and solidarity between generations (empowering youth and enabling adults to see the empowerment of young people as a positive change, not a threat).

- Intersectionality**, identify interlocking systems of power differently affecting women and youth (or young girls, sharing two determinants that are often cause of discrimination) because of their gender and age. Use WPS and YPS agendas as two mutually-reinforcing normative frameworks guiding the actions of a diverse range of actors towards positive peace and human security.

PRIORITIES

- Conflict Prevention**, is the best way to deal with conflict dynamics and is crucial to ensuring Protection and Participation as well. Early warning system, conflict analysis, are essential to addressing structural causes of conflict. Promotion of a culture of peace promoting synergies among different actors (institutions, civil society, academia) must be priority.

- Protection from gender based violence**, starting from education of the youth (including promoting male model of positive masculinity) and capacity building in conflict transformation for all. Establish transitional justice programs that provide accountability, truth disclosure and reparation, and ensure that the perpetrators do not escape punishment for crimes of sexual and gender based violence.

•**Meaningful Participation of women and youth actively involved in peace action**, as genuine expression of civil society peace constituencies, creating space and platforms of proactive dialogue for the inclusion of their perspectives in all endeavours (policy development, peace negotiations; transition processes, national dialogues, transitional justice mechanisms, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programmes, post-conflict reconstruction and electoral processes).

CIVIL SOCIETY

•**Transparency and inclusiveness** in every process of cooperation between civil society actors and governments on WPS and YPS.

This can result in more effective accountability for civil society organizations (CSOs) and prevent abuses in the selection, by governments, of civil society stakeholders and partners in peace and security initiatives (avoiding "cherry-picking", "cream-skimming", emergence of "GONGOs").

•**Ensure adequate funding** for women-led and women-focused, as well as youth-led and youth-focused organizations and their networks working on peace and security.

Public and transparent process of funding, describing the terms for access and the selection criteria, with opportunities provided in as continuous a way as possible.

A diversified, transparent and sustainable funding is key to the ownership of initiatives by Women and Youth Organizations.

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Notes from a three-months dialogue and exchange