UNOY Peacebuilders (hereafter UNOY) has a vision: A world free from all forms of violence:

- where young people **have the power** to transform conflict;
- where youth participation is **real and meaningful** for all;
- where young people actively partner for peace **without fear or threat**.

We are a global network of 100+ youth-led organisations dedicated to building and sustaining peace from the ground up. We have members in over 65 countries, working across a wide range of peace and security topics, at all stages of the conflict cycle. In 2022, our network reached almost 10 million people. Together, we are working towards ending the violence of young people's exclusion.

The United Network of Young Peacebuilders exists to:

- **Transform the power structures** that exclude young people from decision-making;
- **Build sustainable spaces** for young people to shape decisions that affect them;
- **Connect people to partner** for peaceful and inclusive societies.

In 2020, we developed a new **strategic framework (2021-2025)**, structured around five change goals embodied by the following five statements:

1. **We are protected**
2. **We are resourced**
3. **We are meaningful participants**
4. **We are equal partners**
5. **We are creative changemakers**

The purpose of this Annual Plan is to outline how we will contribute to our strategic framework in 2024.
Here we present an overview of the activities to be carried out in 2024 as per their contribution to the different change goals in our new strategy.

### 1. We are protected

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1. We are protected

Change goal: Young peacebuilders' rights to civic engagement for peace are protected

1.1 Implementing and Strengthening UNOY’s Protection Protocol

In 2022, over 1 in 4 UNOY members reported facing intimidation, threats, or violence as a result of their peacebuilding work and activism, which is a 5% increase from 2021. This can be attributed to the ongoing decline in civic space,\(^1\) which increases the risks faced by young peacebuilders.

In light of this, in 2023 we continued to promote the protection of young peacebuilders through our work, directly supporting members facing protection crises, widening the evidence base on the topic, and advocating its importance with relevant stakeholders. Building on this work, in 2024 we will finalise and disseminate the prevention component of UNOY's protection protocol for members, and further the protection resource library by including digital protection tools. Finally, we will preserve our limited staff capacity to respond to protection emergencies as they arise.

Objectives:
- To foster a culture of preventive protection measures across the network, integrated into our planning and programming;
- To continue to effectively respond to protection crises within the network;
- To strengthen young peacebuilders’ access to relevant protection resources and further their reach.

Expected outputs:
Launch the prevention protocol among UNOY teams and across the network; develop a protection report from the 2023 Annual Impact Review survey. Dissemination of existing protection protocol.

1.2. Peer Support Group

In 2022, psychological violence was reported in 3 out of UNOY's 6 regions. As such threats and violence can be mitigated through self- and community-care strategies, in 2022 we piloted UNOY’s first Peer Support Group to address this need. The Peer

\(^1\)https://civicusmonitor.contentfiles.net/media/documents/GlobalFindings2022.pdf
Support Group was facilitated by Ufra Mir, a leading peace psychologist from Kashmir, and it has been a powerful success. The tools and techniques shared in the peer support group are used often by 100% of previous participants; all of whom recommend it to other members and young peacebuilders as a really helpful platform to navigate challenges and increase emotional resilience.

While our 2022 participants benefited greatly from the programme, the difficult challenges that they’re facing persist and the safe spaces for young peacebuilders to express themselves remain few. A safe, stable, and consistent space is very powerful in challenging, unstable, and unpredictable contexts. In 2023, we piloted a global version of the peer support group that offered a continuous monthly format for emotional skill-building and expression. Due to unforeseen delays, the programme will continue into the beginning of 2024.

Objectives:
- To provide a sustainable safe space for young peacebuilders to express their emotions and discuss challenges they encounter as a result of their work;
- To foster solidarity and strengthened relationships across the UNOY network, promoting community wellbeing and self-care;
- To establish an evidence base around young peacebuilders’ wellbeing from a decolonising perspective, which illustrates different contexts where peace and security can take different meanings.

Expected outputs:
Replicate peer support group as a global framework; develop a brief that captures the wellbeing needs and assets of young peacebuilders from a decolonising perspective.
2. We are resourced

Change goal: Young peacebuilders are sustainably resourced to build peace

2.1 Peer-learning sessions

Fostering knowledge- and skills-sharing across the network has been identified as a recurrent request put forward by members in the six regions where UNOY operates. In 2023, a peer-learning strategy was developed and the first online peer-learning sessions between UNOY members were implemented. Members had the opportunities to learn from each other on a wide range of topics such as preventing electoral violence, leveraging storytelling for their peacebuilding work, fostering meaningful youth-led YPS coalitions, and implementing a gender-sensitive protocol within their organisations. In 2024, we will continue to implement online peer-learning sessions between members, building on the lessons learnt from 2023, and will publish on our website advocacy messages formulated by members attending peer-learning sessions.

Objectives:
- Foster knowledge- and skills-sharing among members across the network;
- Strengthen members’ capacities in various domains (e.g. advocacy, communication, fundraising, etc.);
- Foster increased collaborations and a stronger sense of community among members;
- Increase members’ participation and engagement across the network.

Expected outputs:
Five members-led global webinars on their areas of expertise held in English; two member-led regional webinars and/or members-led webinars held in French;

2.2 Pool of Trainers

The Pool of Trainers (PoT) is a group of young trainers dedicated to empowering young peacebuilders around the world. The PoT exists to: 1) strengthen young people’s capacity to continue their work for peace; 2) implement UNOY’s capacity development programmes; and 3) empower young trainers with training, facilitation, and nonviolent communication skills, by providing them with an inclusive and creative space to learn and network.
At the end of 2022, a new round of Trainers was recruited for the Pool. In 2023, they underwent a Training of Trainers to develop their capacities and supported in the implementation of a number of UNOY's activities. In 2024, they will continue to support the network in a number of ways. They will be involved in our capacity development activities, support the peer-learning strategy, and take part in regional activities as trainers and facilitators. They will also continue strengthening their capacity through peer learning amongst themselves.

**Objectives:**
- Strengthen the capacity of the Pool of Trainers to support UNOY's capacity development activities;
- Promote learning and networking between members of the Pool;
- Contribute to the successful implementation of UNOY's capacity development activities.

**Expected outputs:**
Peer learning for trainers from the PoT, contribution by the Pool to Peer-Learning Sessions for member organisations and UNOY's capacity development activities.

### 2.3 Subgranting programme

Directly funding members represents a shift in power, giving an equal chance to diverse youth to implement small-scale activities that address local needs. By developing youth-accessible funding since 2020, UNOY has worked to tackle the administrative and bureaucratic barriers that prevent funding from reaching most of the peace work led by young people, and to support the meaningful use of funds in sustainable projects that engage our members’ local communities.

In 2023, in partnership with Irex, six UNOY members benefited from grants and capacity-development sessions to implement projects that aim to address the needs of a wide range of young people in their local communities. Due to unforeseen delays, the publication of the learning video and report compiling lessons learned and experiences from UNOY’s subgranting programme will be postponed to 2024. Furthermore, in partnership with a new donor, UNOY will organise a fourth subgranting programme opened to all its members with the aim to provide them with youth-accessible funding to implement their own by the youth for the youth projects.

**Objectives:**
- Promote cooperation and self-leadership in the network, giving emphasis to local knowledge and expertise
- Promote creative approaches to peacebuilding, broadening the thematic scope of projects and methodologies
• Raise awareness on the lack of youth-accessible funding and its benefits
• Contribute to reshaping power dynamics in the peacebuilding funding landscape

**Expected outputs:**
6 subgrants awarded to UNOY members; publication of one learning video and report compiling learnings and experiences from UNOY’s subgranting programme.

**2.4 In-person joint Europe-MENA forum: strengthening members’ peacebuilding capacities in MENA & Europe.**

In 2024, UNOY members from Europe and MENA, will merge their regional budgets to hold a cross-regional activity. Building on the tractions around the YPS agenda in MENA as a result of UNOY members’ tireless advocacy work in the region, MENA members will share with their European peers their expertise around the YPS agenda and how to ground their peacebuilding and advocacy efforts work within such framework at a national and regional level. On their side, European members will share the knowledge gained in 2022 to address **harmful narratives** with their peers from MENA to support them tackling increasing occurrences of disinformation and hate speech in their region. Based on the spirit of mutual learning, this joint Europe-MENA forum ultimately aims to promote and sustain equal partnerships between the two regions, acknowledging and striving to address current power imbalances resulting from centuries of European (neo)imperialism.

**Objectives:**
• Foster cross-regional learnings around tackling harmful narratives and advocating at a regional level between UNOY members in Europe and MENA;
• Develop the capacities of UNOY members in Europe and MENA to contribute effectively to peacebuilding efforts in both regions;
• Foster collaboration and partnerships between member organisations from both regions.

**Expected outputs:**
Three-day in-person forum; six training modules.
3. We are meaningful participants

Change goal: Young people meaningfully participate in peace and security

3.1. Influencing policy discussions and YPS Implementation

As our advocacy power involves influencing policies, donors, institutional cultures, and attitudes to ultimately create change, in 2024, we will continue to shape the discourse and mindset around young people at global, regional, and national levels. At the global level, UNOY will continue to co-chair the Global Coalition on YPS and the Civil Society WG on YPS. Through these platforms, UNOY will also actively contribute to the Summit of the Future and accelerate efforts to advance youth-inclusive peace processes.

Regionally, we will continue to work with our African Youth Advocacy Team (A-YAT) and Asian Youth Advocacy Team (Asia-YAT), as well as support the EU YPS Coalition. Furthermore, UNOY will continue to engage with various stakeholders and Member States, including the African Union, European Commission and the ASEAN, lending a youth perspective in the prevention of violent extremism/counterterrorism, human rights, and women, peace and security fields. Thematically, we will sustain our focus on the nexus of youth, peace, and climate action, as co-chairs of the GCYPS WG on Climate, while also prioritising the protection of civic space for young peacebuilders and addressing financing challenges within the youth-led peacebuilding arena. Additionally, we will continue to proactively support the implementation of YPS agenda at both regional and national levels by facilitating dialogues among leaders of coalitions within our network.

In 2024, UNOY will further strengthen the advocacy planning and monitoring efforts of member organisations through the dissemination of various advocacy tools, including our recently launched advocacy package.

Objectives:
- Leverage UNOY’s increased visibility to bring forward youth voices and perspectives to relevant policy discussions.
- Foster regional YPS exchanges across UNOY’s network and collect inputs for the UN Summit of the Future.
- Support the adoption and implementation of meaningful policies on YPS at all levels and facilitating youth-inclusive consultations
- Continue developing UNOY’s network wide advocacy strategy for improved mechanisms of opportunity sharing and representation tracking.
**Expected Outputs:**
Co-organization of a side event and mission to the Summit of the Future; Organisation of peer learning sessions between regional youth advocacy teams and between various national coalitions led by UNOY members; Publication of mapping of youth-led organisations working on YPS-Climate Nexus; dissemination of the advocacy package with members; creation of a multimedia youth friendly platform for inputs regarding the third UN Secretary General Report on YPS; publication and dissemination of meaningful youth consultations guideline for youth and non youth stakeholders.

### 3.2 Launch of the American Youth Advocacy Team

UNOY’s existing Youth Advocacy Teams in Africa and Asia have provided a platform for young peacebuilders from the network to develop their advocacy skills, jointly strategise on the promotion of meaningful youth participation in peace and security, and promote the implementation of the YPS Agenda. Following up on the UNFPA/UNOY joint research “*Hacia una Agenda Latinoamericana de Juventud, Paz y Seguridad*” and building on the lessons learned from the Asian Youth Advocacy Team and the African Youth Advocacy Team, UNOY will launch an American Youth Advocacy Team (AmYAT) to develop and implement a collaborative advocacy strategy in the region towards relevant regional stakeholders such as the Organization of American States and the United Nations.

By allocating funds to research, institutions mapping and advocacy missions to relevant stakeholders, UNOY will actively support youth-led advocacy efforts and promote the meaningful participation of young people in decision-making processes at regional and international levels.

**Objectives:**
- Empower young peacebuilders in the Americas to raise their voices, influence policies, and promote implementation of the YPS Agenda;
- Promote the meaningful participation of young people in peacebuilding efforts in the Americas;
- Socialise the findings of UNFPA/UNOY joint research “*Hacia una Agenda Latinoamericana de Juventud, Paz y Seguridad*” at the regional level.

**Expected Outputs:**
Issue of a call for applications to join the AmYAT, development of a regional advocacy strategy, launch event of the AmYAT, mapping of relevant stakeholders, one advocacy mission to one of the mapped stakeholders.
Groundworks

Goal: Our network of grassroots youth-led organisations and international secretariat are inclusive and sustainable.

Network Development

Since 2017, UNOY has transformed its structures and working methods in order to shift power and resources, and promote greater leadership and ownership of members within the network. In 2024, UNOY will continue to strengthen current approaches and tools to best serve our member organisations. UNOY will focus on pursuing decentralisation efforts by further developing the capacities of Regional Coordinators and continue fostering peer-learning among them. It will also work on strengthening current membership by fostering members’ participation and making the network more accessible to non-English speakers. This will be done both through small funds for translation and interpretation as well as through an increased number of opportunities tailored only to non-English speakers. Current communication platforms and practices will be further strengthened and made more inclusive for non-English speakers. Finally, UNOY will continue the development and coordination with the Alumni Community to support our work through the Community’s knowledge and network.

Objectives:
- Cement UNOY’s decentralisation by further developing the capacities of RCs;
- Foster increased engagement of members in the network;
- Make the network more inclusive to non-English speaker members.

Expected Outputs:
Implementation of RC peer-learning strategy; further dissemination of the policy on preventing sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse; support development of the alumni network and explore avenues for its support to UNOY; implementation of regional action plans, reassessment of UNOY’s membership procedures.

UNOY teams’ training on gender transformative approaches

UNOY recognises gender justice and equity as essential to building a world free from all forms of violence. In our work as a global network of youth-led organisations, we are convinced that gender equality plays a critical role in ensuring young people have the power to transform conflict, engage in real and meaningful participation, and work as essential partners for peace.
UNOY has captured its commitment towards gender equality in its 2022 Gender Policy and has developed a Gender Toolkit to support all UNOY teams and members to implement practical steps to make their work more gender transformative.

However, these two documents alone are not enough to ensure a buy-in and support the IS and the ISG to mainstream gender transformative approaches within their respective areas of work. To address this, UNOY will provide a tailored training delivered by the Pool of Trainers on gender transformative approaches to members of the IS and the ISG.

**Objectives:**
- Socialise the importance of gender transformative approaches across UNOY’s teams;
- Increase UNOY’s teams’ knowledge of and capacities in implementing gender transformative approaches within their work;
- Make UNOY’s work more gender transformative overall.

**Expected outputs:**
One tailored training for the IS and ISG delivered by two members of UNOY Pool of Trainers, an individual work plan for each person attending the training.

**IS Organisational Development**

In 2023 UNOY continued its work on organisational development in order to further cement the growth of recent years. In this regard, a new, comprehensive policy on Preventing Sexual Harassment, Exploitation, and Abuse (PSHEA) was adopted alongside new travel guidelines. Furthermore, a mid-term review of UNOY’s Strategic Plan was carried out to assess progress towards Change Goals and gather lessons learned.

In 2024, the process for the development of UNOY’s next Strategic Plan (2026-2030) will start. Building on lessons learned from the implementation of the current strategy as well as on recent developments in the peacebuilding field, consultations will be held amongst UNOY’s teams as well as with external partners to lay out the initial vision for the new strategy. Furthermore, an assignment to strengthen UNOY’s HR policies and procedures will be carried out with the support of a consultant. Alongside that, work to strengthen UNOY’s information security will also be continued.

UNOY will continue to implement its communication strategy. After the successful trial of the use of social media ads for the dissemination of UNOY’s campaigns online, these will be further used in 2024 to increase the organisations’ online reach. Lastly, a new season of the Peace Corner Podcast will be published.
Objectives:
- Develop the initial vision for UNOY’s next Strategic Plan;
- Strengthen UNOY’s HR and information security policies and procedures;
- Uphold the financial sustainability of UNOY and the health and wellbeing of our teams;
- Further strengthen UNOY’s online visibility.

Expected outputs:
2 strategy retreats with UNOY’s teams (staff, RCs, ISGs), initial vision for new Strategic Plan, updated HR policies and procedures, continued implementation of the communications and fundraising roadmaps, launch of a new season of the Peace Corner Podcast.