

# Report on

## Seminars in connection to the Launch of the Regional Strategy on Youth, Peace and Security

Jordan, Amman

August 26<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024



**Swedish Dialogue Institute**  
for the Middle East and North Africa

## Executive Summary

In the last week of August, the Swedish Dialogue Institute for the Middle East and North Africa was invited to organize a seminar in collaboration with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) and UNDP during a High-Level Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS). The forum took place in Amman and was co-organized by The League of Arab States and the Jordanian Government.

In connection to the high-level forum, the Dialogue Institute organized a follow-up workshop for members of the MENA Coalition on Youth, Peace & Security. Additionally, the Institute was part of a panel on YPS during a Regional Dialogue meeting organized by UNDP Regional Programme for Arab States.

The seminars aimed at driving action and empowering youth to take the lead in promoting peace and security, by emphasizing support and collaboration, strategy implementation, and identifying regional priorities. More specifically, the activities aimed at fostering and sustaining collaborative action and dialogue, identifying mechanisms, methods and tools that can be utilized to advance and implement the YPS agenda.

Concrete recommendations included the need for adopting inclusive approaches, fostering safe spaces and platforms for dialogues, promoting new technological tools, enhancing collaboration and synergies among the Arab countries and international organizations, sharing experiences – both successes and failures – through storytelling.

The recommendations will contribute to strengthen the implementation of the YPS-agenda in the MENA-region and feed into stocktaking during the anniversary year 2025 which marks a decade since the adaptation of UNSC resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security. Further key recommendations are elaborated on later in the report.



## Detailed report

### High Level Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security

On August 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, The League of Arab States and the Jordanian government hosted a two-day forum titled *"High-Level Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security – The Arab Vision: Youth, Peace, and Security on a Global Stage"*. The forum was held under the Patronage of H.R.H Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The purpose of the forum was to launch the Arab strategy to implement the UN Security Council resolution on Youth Peace and Security. Main participants included Ministers of Youth and Sports from various Arab countries, Arab youth delegations, and representatives of civil society and international organizations. Additionally, the Dialogue Institute invited and supported members of the MENA Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security to take part in the forum.

In remarks at the forum's opening session, the Jordanian Minister of Youth, Mohammad Al Nabulsi, expressed gratitude to the committee members who developed the Arab Strategy for Youth, Peace, and Security 2023-2028, including the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA). He also acknowledged the Swedish Dialogue Institute's role in fostering intergenerational and intercultural dialogue.

#### *Session on Intergenerational and Intercultural Dialogue organized by the Dialogue Institute*

As part of the Forum, the Swedish Dialogue Institute in close collaboration with FBA, and UNDP organized a side session on intergenerational and intercultural dialogue. The session aimed at promoting intergenerational and intercultural dialogue on peace and development, providing a safe and conducive space for sharing information, experiences, and ideas. The session focused on promoting practices and tools that can give youth a greater voice in policy and decision-making.

The session commenced with welcoming and introductory remarks by Martina Berglund, Acting Director of the Swedish Dialogue Institute and Marianne Boqvist, Regional Advisor at FBA who spoke on the importance of youth inclusion and youth empowerment in the MENA-region. The opening remarks was followed by a panel and a presentation of tools developed by FBA, UN and the Swedish Dialogue Institute, that can be used to advance the YPS agenda such as [Connecting generations: a guidance note on inclusive intergenerational dialogue](#), [Youth Peace and Security: Fostering Youth-Inclusive Political Processes](#), [Implementing the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda at Country-Level](#) and [Youth, Peace and Security A Programming Handbook](#). The session was concluded with interactive workshop, with discussions on recommendations and the way forward.

Panelists and participants of diverse backgrounds elaborated on intergenerational and intercultural dialogue as tools that can foster mutual understanding, dispel stereotypes, and build trust and solidarity. The panelists discussed how people of different ages and generations can explore and build new solutions to joint challenges and bridge the potential gaps and inequalities.

It was argued that the importance of intergenerational and intercultural dialogue lies in sharing experiences and personal stories, which can facilitate in creating human connections, advance understanding and finding common grounds. It was noted that these dialogues are more than simply having people of different ages and backgrounds around the table but to engage in genuine dialogues despite the power dynamics. This can result in greater inclusion, social cohesion, and effective decision-making. The need for collaboration on the regional level to advance the work of YPS agenda and regional strategy was underscored. Participants stressed the power of storytelling, which helps in changing narratives, creating stronger mutual understanding, developing empathy, and contributing to dialogue and to creating peaceful societies.



### **Follow-up workshop with the MENA coalition for YPS**

On August 30<sup>th</sup> the Dialogue Institute hosted a follow-up workshop with the MENA Coalition for YPS. The workshop aimed to gather concrete recommendations for actions that support the YPS agenda and promote young people's participation in the MENA region. The workshop was joined by 20 members of the coalition together with colleagues from UNDP and FBA. Participants shared input on how to build momentum leading up to the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 2250 on Youth Peace and Security, and how organizations like the Dialogue Institute, FBA, and UNDP can continue their efforts in this field.

Participants emphasized strengthening networks to promote dialogue and collaboration and advocated for the creation of clear criteria to track progress on YPS initiatives. The issue of funding for youth participation was raised, often leading to concerns of representation. Leadership roles for youth must be better decentralized and there is a need for contextualizing strategies to each country and addressing barriers to youth mobility. Ensuring protection and creating safe spaces for meaningful youth participation were identified as essential to advancing the YPS agenda.





### **Regional Dialogue on Youth, Peace and Security, UNDP Regional Bureau for the Arab States**

On August 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, the UNDP in the Arab States region conducted a two-day regional dialogue meeting on YPS that brought together regional partners, and young leaders who gathered for impactful discussions on empowering young people in peacebuilding and decision-making across the Arab States.

During the workshop, the Swedish Dialogue Institute contributed to a panel discussion along with other tool developers and YPS practitioners focusing on intergenerational dialogue. The panel discussion aimed at strengthening capacity on the importance of integrating the generational aspect into activities.



## **Key recommendations**

The following **key recommendations** were put forward by the participants during the High-Level Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security, the Follow-up workshop with MENA4YPS and the UNDP regional meeting:

### **1. Youth Engagement in Peacebuilding and Decision-Making**

- Establish platforms for youth participation in peacebuilding efforts and direct engagement with decision-makers to foster sustainable development and to ensure the long-term sustainability of peace efforts.
- Form national and regional youth advisory coalitions and committees in coordination with the League of Arab States to ensure youth representation in decision-making processes.
- Encourage parallel diplomacy for youth organizations by involving them in international, regional, and local programs across multiple dimensions.

### **2. Implementation and Support of the YPS Agenda**

- Develop and implement action plans for the regional YPS strategy, including mechanisms for follow-up, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Establish an Arab regional fund to support initiatives, advocacy campaigns, and lobbying efforts related to youth, peace, and security.
- Adopt and promote an annual “Capital of Peace” in Arab countries to highlight national contributions to peace and security.
- Address the YPS agenda comprehensively, considering factors such as age, geography, gender, and disabilities to ensure inclusivity. Generational and cultural perspectives should be mainstreamed.

### **3. Capacity Building and Skill Development**

- Provide capacity-building training to strengthen youth skills for meaningful participation, including in policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation.
- Develop joint programs to address youth challenges, for example about cybersecurity.
- International organizations can play an important role in delivering skills development, especially through Training of Trainers (ToT) programs.

### **4. Advocacy, Democracy, and Civic Engagement**

- Strengthen advocacy efforts to ensure youth involvement in public policy design, using modern technical means while upholding peace and security principles.
- Support democracy efforts in Arab countries to enhance youth engagement in political and decision-making processes, promoting civic values and social solidarity.

- Promote arts and sports as tools to engage youth in achieving peace and security, fostering creativity, collaboration, and community building.

#### **5. Safe Spaces, Protection, and Inclusivity**

- Provide safe spaces for youth, through workshops, conferences, and webinars, to exchange ideas across regions and facilitate dialogue with decision-makers.
- Strengthen youth organizations working in peace and security fields, ensuring their protection, particularly for those involved in political and civil rights work.
- Ensure protection for youth involved in peacebuilding efforts, allowing them to participate freely and meaningfully in political and civil rights initiatives.

#### **6. Research, Evaluation, and Policy Development**

- Conduct scientific research and specialized studies in the field of peace and security to inform policy decisions and strategic initiatives.
- Develop high-quality interventions at the policy level, ensuring that YPS initiatives go beyond awareness-raising to include capacity-building and institutional reforms.
- Encourage collaboration between Arab countries on joint development and policy projects, promoting collective action in peace and security efforts.