FACT SHEET

DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION EDUCATION

The overall objective of disarmament and non-proliferation education and training is to impart knowledge and skills to individuals to empower them to make their contribution, as national and world citizens, to the achievement of concrete disarmament and non-proliferation measures and the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

Different groups require different pedagogical approaches and methods. What a school-age child in a refugee camp needs to know about disarmament is not the same as what is required for a border guard, or a civil servant or high school teacher.

United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education

In 2002, the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a group of experts, published the results of a study on disarmament and non-proliferation education and training. The study recognized that civil society, NGOs and the media have in many ways taken the lead in providing both formal and informal disarmament and non-proliferation education and training.

It also called upon Member States, U.N. system organizations and other international organizations to do more by preparing, adapting and disseminating a wide range of user-friendly educational materials on disarmament and non-proliferation.

In his Agenda for Disarmament “Securing our common future” the UN Secretary-General has called for the for the empowerment of the young generation with urgent investment in disarmament education and the full and equal participation of women in all decision-making processes related to disarmament and international security. Furthermore, he is raising greater awareness for new weapon technologies, an issue that forms an integral component of the course.

“I[…] the Secretary-General’s Agenda for Disarmament seeks the establishment of more education and training opportunities, in order to create a platform for the sustainable entry of young people from all parts of the world into this field.”

Izumi Nakamitsu
High Representative for Disarmament Affairs
New Delhi, 14 January 2019

The First Committee of the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly adopted without a vote on 6 November 2019 the resolution titled “Youth, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation,” which was drafted by the Republic of Korea. The resolution encourages UN Member States to promote the "meaningful and inclusive" participation of young people in discussions on disarmament and non-proliferation through dialogue platforms, internships, fellowships, scholarships and other activities. It also calls on the countries to consider developing and implementing policies and programs for young people to increase their constructive engagement in the field of disarmament and promote their role in the field (see also the Disarmament and Youth Fact Sheet).
New technologies, especially the Internet, and social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter, create unprecedented opportunities in disarmament and non-proliferation education for both the academic audience and the general public.

The Role of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs

The Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) promotes disarmament and non-proliferation education activities with Member States, non-governmental organizations and the general public through the Internet, print publications, dedicated courses, conferences and workshops, media and film screening events and public-speaking engagements.

To this end, the Vienna office is actively partnering with a number of relevant partners. A snapshot of these partnerships is provided in the picture on the left.

Since 2015, the Vienna Office of UNODA has initiated and continues to coordinate various projects related to disarmament, non-proliferation and international security aimed at raising awareness, increasing knowledge and strengthening skills, particularly for early career practitioners, with an emphasis on women. These projects have been conducted either independently by the Vienna Office or in cooperation with other organizations such as the annual joint project with the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

In support of the various initiatives by UNODA, the Vienna Office of UNODA has developed an online training platform, the “Disarmament Education Dashboard”, containing learning modules on all aspects related to disarmament, non-proliferation arms control as well as cross cutting issues such as gender and environment. It is meant to expand the number and quality of relevant training opportunities and has grown into an essential tool used by training course participants, partners, donors, as well as a growing number of organizations, and offers opportunities to create tailor-made training courses in accordance with audience demand.

1 Accessible through www.disarmamenteducation.org.