



EVALUATION REPORT FOR THE PROJECT  
“FUTURE FOR YOU(TH):  
YOUNG PEOPLE AS  
LEADERS OF LIFE SKILLS  
EDUCATION IN THE  
BALKANS”

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## Abbreviations

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ALB	Albania
AfS	Act for Society
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BHS	Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian language
BMC	Be a Man Club
FGD	Focus group discussion
GE	Gender equality
GBV	Gender based violence
HRBA	Human rights-based approach
KII	Key informant interview
KOS	Kosovo
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MESTI	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Kosovo
Program Y	Program Youth
Program Y+	Program Youth+
RS	Republic of Srpska gender
RYCO	Regional Youth Cooperation Office
SIT	Center for Counseling, Social Services and Research
SRB	Serbia
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
YMI	Young Men Initiative
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

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## 1. Executive Summary

The final evaluation of the “Future for You(th): Young people as Leaders of Life Skills Education in the Balkans” was conducted between December 2023 and March 2024. This end-term evaluation has addressed the full period of the project implementation (March 2021 – February 2024). Its scope covered all four target countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo and Albania) and main project beneficiaries (partner organizations, institutional representatives, teachers, youth, parents, movement leaders, etc.).

The evaluation process employed a mixed-methods approach with a non-experimental design. Its purpose was to assess the intervention's impact on advancing gender equality, examining shifts in cultural norms, behaviors and attitudes, and power dynamics, along with changes in participation, access to resources, and policy adjustments. It also aimed to summarize the main findings, conclusions and recommendations to inform the project's design and implementation phase.

The evaluation process was based on OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, but the priority was given to relevance, effectiveness, (immediate) impact and sustainability of the intervention. The rest of the criteria were not prioritized considering the given time frame, budget and purpose of the evaluation.

The project evaluation has embedded gender-responsive approaches and human rights frameworks from its inception. This approach was instrumental in establishing a holistic evaluation framework, with the aim of ensuring that these aspects were not treated as peripheral concerns but rather integral components of the project's core objectives and activities.

The data collection process comprised a desk review of relevant documents, semi-structured interviews with key informants, focus groups involving young individuals, and validation sessions to confirm clarity and authenticate key findings with project partners and other stakeholders. Data triangulation involved consolidating various methods and sources, thereby enhancing credibility through cross-referencing information from diverse origins.

Key limitations in the evaluation included a lack of representation from policymakers in some countries, restricted involvement of young individuals not engaged in BMCs and limited participation of young law offenders and professionals from youth at risk centers in the evaluation process. Related findings from the informants were cross-referenced with other information extracted from reviewed documents to mitigate potential bias.

### **Key aspects of the project's relevance:**

The project stands as a highly relevant intervention within the Western Balkans, addressing pressing social issues while ensuring inclusive engagement with beneficiaries. Its alignment with both local and international policies underscores its significance in contributing to the region's social transformation and European integration endeavors. By prioritizing topics often neglected in other regional initiatives, the project has made a unique and vital contribution to the regional agenda for youth cooperation in the Western Balkans. This program has proven its relevance by addressing critical topics typically overlooked in formal education curricula across target countries. By filling these gaps, the program has equipped participants with

practical tools and knowledge essential for navigating real-world challenges, thus reinforcing its relevance and impact within the region.

Key recommendations in the aspect of relevance:

To enhance the relevance of future interventions for the specific learning needs of young men, it is suggested to complement the existing capacity-building program with additional methods and approaches. This could involve engaging local influencers, athletes, and other role models whom young men can readily identify with.

**Key aspects of the project's effectiveness:**

Young men and women who participated in a greater number of project activities, including workshops or events related to campaigns, demonstrated more gender-equal attitudes towards gender roles and norms, violence, gender equality. All young people have increased their knowledge in sexual and reproductive health. Parents of BMC members have confirmed that the BMC program serves as a vehicle for continuous and holistic personal growth of their children, positively impacting diverse aspects of their lives.

School staff and professionals from juvenile correctional centers have gained qualitative content and the necessary competencies to effectively present crucial topics to youth in a non-formal manner that aligns with the needs of young people.

BMCs have progressed to comprehensive resource centers, providing safe spaces where young individuals can openly discuss their most sensitive concerns and receive professional referrals to address their diverse needs.

The project has managed to reach out to a remarkable number of people. The partners organized campaigns at the local level, resulting in the implementation of 35 school-based initiatives that reached 9,356 young individuals, and conducted 68 community-based campaigns, engaging with 20,218 citizens spanning across youth and adults alike, significantly increasing awareness on promoting peaceful masculinities, gender equality, and addressing hate speech and intolerance within the targeted demographics.

Despite challenges, such as navigating political instability, the project demonstrated resilience and effectiveness, significantly influencing community attitudes on social issues. It made a substantial impact on policy and practice regarding life skills education, underscoring its commitment to gender equality.

Key recommendations in the aspect of effectiveness:

It is recommended to establish a robust monitoring, evaluation and learning system, continuing to prioritize quality assurance measures to ensure alignment with project objectives and values. Additionally, developing behavioral change indicators is advised to track the extent to which key actors have changed their attitudes regarding gender equality, inclusivity, and human rights within the project framework.

There is a suggestion to prioritize collaboration with vocational schools to address gaps in reproductive health education, gender equality, and gender-based violence within their curriculum. Furthermore, CARE, in cooperation with local partners, should intensify the promotion of BMCs through well-planned campaigns and events, targeting youth engagement and leveraging partnerships with local CSOs, influencers and media for broader visibility.

### **Key aspects of the project's sustainability:**

The institutionalization of Program Y and Program Y+ has served as a significant driver for enhancing project sustainability. Establishing a platform for mutual learning, particularly during challenging circumstances, is a positive step towards ensuring sustainability. By partnering with agencies such as UNFPA, GIZ, and other national-level institutions, project partners and stakeholders have demonstrated a strong commitment to maintaining the strategies and commitments established, signaling readiness to take ownership and leadership at the institutional level beyond the project's lifespan. The piloting of the YMI program in North Macedonia underscores sustainability efforts through local partnerships and capacity-building endeavors, contributing to enduring positive change in communities. All project partners have strengthened their abilities to influence policy and advocate for change, further strengthening the project's sustainability and long-term impact.

### **Key recommendations in the aspect of sustainability:**

The recommendation in these aspects is to further enhance advocacy capacity building by organizing new capacity building initiatives, deepen collaborations with national and regional stakeholders, and utilize innovative approaches in campaign design to reach specific target groups. Peer-to-peer support among project partners is emphasized for effective collaboration and knowledge sharing.

## **2. Introduction**

### **Purpose of the evaluation**

The main purpose of the final evaluation has been the assessment of accountability and learning for possible future interventions in this area. It also aimed to summarize the main findings, conclusions and recommendations to inform the project's design and implementation phase.

### **Objectives of the evaluation**

- To assess the project's relevance, impact and sustainability, drawing on qualitative and quantitative project data and evidence;
- To assess the extent to which the project has achieved its objectives and results (focusing on the outcome);
- To assess the extent to which cross-cutting issues such gender equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, transparency and accountability and empowerment of marginalized groups were applied and contributed to results and achievement.

The results of the final evaluation will serve to inform CARE, the donor and the involved stakeholders about the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the implementation of the project and to enable learning, improved design, planning and implementation of future CARE projects in gathering life skills for young people and gender transforming programming.

**Primary users of the evaluation:** project stakeholders, in particular CARE Austria, CARE International in the Western Balkans, local partners, ADA and other co-donors.

**Secondary users of the evaluation:** policy makers, program designers and implementers of other organizations that engage in life skills education, gender equality, violence prevention and educational reform.

### Scope of the evaluation

This end-term evaluation has addressed the full period of the project implementation (March 2021 – February 2024), from the project start to the end of data collection during the implementation of this evaluation. Its scope covered all four target countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo<sup>1</sup> and Albania) and main project beneficiaries (partner organizations, institutional representatives, teachers, youth, parents, movement leaders, etc.). The evaluation took place in the period December 2023 – March 2024.

Evaluator's Terms of Reference has been enclosed as [Annex 6](#) to this report.

## 3. Background and Context Analysis

### 3.1 Project Background

The project "Future for You(th): Young people as Leaders of Life Skills Education in the Balkans" has been implemented in the period March 2021 – February 2024 in four Western Balkan countries. The project is being implemented by CARE Balkans and local partners in all target countries: Center E8 and SMART Kolektiv from Serbia, Center for Counseling, Social Services and Research (SIT) and Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) from Kosovo, Act for Society Centre from Albania, Institute Perpetuum Mobile from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Status M from Croatia.

Total project budget was EUR 1,384,845 (EUR 1,200,000 was received through ADA's grant while contribution by the applicant was 13% of total budget (EUR 184,845)). The key challenges the project has dealt with were peer and gender-based violence along with unhealthy lifestyles and risk of radicalization as pressing problems in schools and juvenile correctional institutions in the Western Balkans.

In 2013, through the ADA-funded project Young Man Initiative (YMI), CARE and partners started to advocate for introducing gender transformative life skills programming – such as Program Youth (Program Y) - in high schools in Serbia, Kosovo, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, to fight interpersonal and gender-based violence and improve gender equality in the region. Building on the achievements from YMI, the project this time put the emphasis in institutionalization and sustainability, working with ministries and quality assurance institutions for the accreditation of Program Y and integration of life skills education in national curriculums. This aimed to expand its implementation by piloting the tailored programs in elementary schools and correctional institutions as well as strengthening the cooperation with pedagogical and teaching universities.

Through CARE's gender transformative life skills programming that has been reflected in the Program Y and Program Y+, the project also has intended to contribute to further creating of positive and peaceful societies for young people in all project countries that embrace and promote gender equality and non-violence.

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<sup>1</sup>This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

The project planned to work directly with 65,690 participants: at least 200 representatives of decision-making government institutions; 500 high and elementary school teachers and education staff; 160 social welfare staff; 47,800 young people from 11 to 30 years old in elementary schools, high schools, universities, as well as youth in communities; at least 17,000 local stakeholders in mobilized communities and at least 30 representatives of seven local partner organizations. These stakeholders have been engaged in capacity building programs, quality assurance and institutionalization of life skills education, strategic advocacy activities, round tables and conferences, workshops and campaign activities. The project approach and methodology has been designed to gradually involve relevant stakeholders that can influence the changes in society and institutions with the goal of providing compulsory gender transformative life skills education for young people in the Balkan countries. The list of involved stakeholders has been enclosed as [Annex 5](#).

The project was extended by two months without incurring any extra costs, indicating a modification to its timeline. This extension was necessary due to the prolonged process of selecting an evaluator for the final assessment, combined by scheduling difficulties for data collection during the holiday season (Christmas and New Year vacations). The additional time was essential for thorough analysis of findings, ensuring their accuracy, and thoughtfully incorporating recommendations from CARE and local partners into the final report.

### Theory of Change

If students learn to recognize harmful gender norms and are provided safe spaces to practice questioning these constructs, then there is a greater likelihood of internalizing new ideas in the support of gender-equitable, healthy and non-violent behaviors.

#### Impact

Creating positive and peaceful societies for young people in Serbia, Kosovo, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina that embrace and promote gender equality and non-violence.

#### Outcome

Gender-transformative life skills education fostered to become an integral part of education programs at schools and juvenile correctional institutions.

No.	Outputs
1	Elementary schools, high schools and universities are equipped to effectively deliver and lead the implementation of CARE's life skills program (Program Y) to support young people in their safe transition to adulthood.
2	Juvenile correctional institutions pilot CARE's life skills program tailor-made for youth at risk (Program Y Plus) to prevent radicalization and contribute to re-socialization.
3	Communities are mobilized and take an active role in initiating the educational policy change, securing stronger public voices for youth within Future 4 You(th) Movement.
4	Governmental bodies empowered to develop strategies to institutionalize life skills programming through multi-stakeholder consultation processes.



## 3.2 Context of the project

The countries of the Western Balkans – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Serbia – share aspirations to join the European Union. However, they face substantial challenges along this path, predominantly economic, democratic development, and human rights related. Additionally, issues concerning gender-based violence, hate speech, and intolerance further compound these challenges.

Based on findings from UNDP’s “Youth Perceptions on Peace in the Western Balkans”<sup>2</sup>, hate speech online or offline was the most reported form of violence or discrimination in the Western Balkans, with an average of 12 percent of young people reporting it across the region, significantly more than was bullying. Young women reported gender discrimination and sexual harassment much more often than young men did. Out of those who had experienced violence or discrimination, only 17 percent reported this to anyone and just 58 percent felt that reporting had brought any positive results. This indicates a need for better mechanisms for youth to report experiences of discrimination and violence and for institutions to address these issues.

Since its inception, the Gender Equality Index<sup>3</sup> has diligently tracked the gradual advancement of gender equality. However, countries in the Western Balkans region still lag far behind in this endeavor. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there’s an ongoing effort to align national policies with international standards, whereas Serbia has taken significant steps towards gender equality, although remaining behind the EU average in the Gender Equality Index. Albania’s focus on youth and gender-based violence stands out, with proactive strategies engaging men and boys. Kosovo’s strategy for youth emphasizes the creation of a safe environment and the importance of non-formal education.

In terms of decision-making roles, there has been observable progress within the political sphere in the region, largely attributed to the increased representation of women in legislative and executive positions across various governance levels. This positive trend is often linked to existing legal quotas.

Serbia started implementing the 2022-2030 Strategy and action plan for creating a stimulating environment for the development of civil society, but measurable progress has yet to be demonstrated. A council for cooperation and development of civil society was established.<sup>4</sup>

In BiH social inclusion at all stages of education needs to be ensured. Youth strategies across the country should be developed and implemented. Although there are youth strategies at some levels of government, Bosnia and Herzegovina should work on a country-wide youth strategy that would ensure equal treatment of young people. Legislation on gender equality and on anti-discrimination is not harmonized across the country or effectively enforced. The Council of Ministers adopted a new gender action plan in October 2023 while a new action plan on women, peace and security remains to be adopted. Cases of femicide sparked public protests and exposed systemic shortcomings of response to gender-based and domestic violence, including in the legislative alignment with the Istanbul convention.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Youth Perceptions on Peace in the Balkans Western, p. 14

<sup>3</sup> Gender Equality Index: Measuring progress in the Western Balkans, European Institute for Gender Equality, 2023

<sup>4</sup> Serbia Report 2023, p. 15

<sup>5</sup> Bosnia and Herzegovina Report 2023, p. 12

Kosovo<sup>6</sup> has made limited progress on gender-mainstreaming, as well as on inclusive and evidence-based policy development. Several cases of femicide raised questions about the role of judges and prosecutors in the handling of cases of domestic violence and gender-based violence. As accusations of failing to protect victims and of justice actors' lack of accountability were widespread, the Ministry of Justice proposed changes to the Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code.

In the Report for Albania<sup>7</sup> it's emphasized that the 2022-2029 National Strategy for Youth was adopted in October 2022. The selection of Tirana as European Youth of Capital 2022 enhanced the local and national ecosystem for the development of youth policies. The National Council for Gender Equality in Albania approved in June 2023 the Action Plan for the implementation of 'Women, Peace, Security' 2023 – 2027 resolution. The Audiovisual Media Authority adopted a revised Audiovisual Broadcasting Code. The Code aims to improve the application of the right to gender equality, to tackle hate speech, and to address disinformation.

## 4. Evaluation Design and Approach

### 4.1 Methodological Approach

The evaluation process was based on OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, and it provided a series of findings, conclusions and recommendations. Priority was given to relevance, effectiveness, (immediate) impact and sustainability of the intervention. The rest of the criteria were not prioritized considering the given time frame, budget and purpose of the evaluation.

The evaluation process employed a mixed-methods approach with a non-experimental design. Its purpose was to assess the intervention's impact on advancing gender equality, examining shifts in cultural norms, behaviors and attitudes, and power dynamics, along with changes in participation, access to resources, and policy adjustments. This gender-focused evaluation prioritized inclusivity and participation, valuing the perspectives of those affected by the project and aiming to empower stakeholders while fostering accountability among all parties involved.

Key duty bearers covered through this evaluation were local and national policy makers and institutional stakeholders in all target countries in the field of formal and non-formal education, youth, safety and security, social support and resocialization of young law perpetrators, etc. When it comes to right holders, the evaluation approach targeted young people of different gender including youth with fewer opportunities (e.g. young people without parental care, youth in correctional centers, youth at risk, ethnic minorities, etc.).

The following **quality assurance standards** have been employed:

- All aspects of the evaluation were conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines and standards outlined by the CARE and ADA, prioritizing the safeguarding of participants' well-being and rights. The evaluation was guided by two fundamental principles: "do no harm" and "participation is voluntary," ensuring explicit consent from participants and key informants without force, allowing them the freedom to opt-in or withdraw at any point during the evaluation.

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<sup>6</sup> Kosovo 2023 Report, p. 12 and 19

<sup>7</sup> Albania 2023 Report, p. 11, 32,36, 102, 107

- Transparent communication was emphasized during both the preparatory and implementation phases to ensure that local partners and participants comprehended the purpose, risks, and benefits of their involvement. To facilitate this, joint online calls with local project partners were held during the inception phase, followed by separate preparatory calls with each local partner prior to field visits. Additionally, regular monthly online meetings were carried out with CARE programmatic staff.
- During preparatory calls with local project partners and project managers, the consultant and project team evaluated the potential vulnerability of suggested informants, participants, or stakeholders to possible harms based on various factors such as age, gender, socio-economic status, and religious or cultural background. Protocols for handling sensitive information or situations were discussed and agreed upon before commencing the data collection process.
- The confidentiality of information was principal, with strict procedures for data storage, use, and protection. All the insights presented in this report were anonymized as per the prior agreement with the informants. This careful attention to privacy, especially when dealing with sensitive information, reassured participants of their safety, encouraging openness and authenticity in their responses. Additionally, the provisions for minors, including consent from guardians and the presence of adult staff, reflected a rigorous safeguarding protocol that aligned with best practices in ethical evaluations.
- The accessibility of evaluation results through clear reporting and the development of actionable, realistic recommendations in cooperation with the project consortium has been essential for translating insights into positive changes. This approach has ensured that the evaluation did not end with the final report but continued to influence project outcomes and strategies, underscoring the commitment to creating tangible benefits for users in their coming endeavors.
- The approach has also ensured a comprehensive grasp of the socio-political context surrounding the project's implementation through meticulous respondent selection and thorough analysis of pertinent documents. To the context analysis, a relevant literature was examined. A compilation of the reviewed literature is provided as [Annex 1](#) in this report.
- Data triangulation has integrated multiple methods and sources to ensure the reliability and credibility of project assessments. By cross-referencing data from diverse origins, including monitoring tables, baseline/endline assessments, interviews, focus groups, and policy influence and advocacy assessments, this approach aims to enhance the accuracy and completeness of project evaluations.
- By facilitating collaboration and empowering stakeholders to provide ongoing feedback on employed data collection tools and defined key evaluation questions, the evaluation fostered a sense of ownership and engagement among local project partners and stakeholders.

The project evaluation was accurately designed with the **intention of embedding gender-responsive approaches and human rights frameworks from its inception**. This approach was instrumental in establishing a holistic evaluation framework, with the aim of ensuring that critical issues like gender equality and human rights were not treated as peripheral concerns but rather integral components of the project's core objectives. Here are some examples:

- The non-judgmental approach to gender identities was foundational for an inclusive and respectful evaluation environment. This sensitivity fostered an atmosphere where

participants felt safe and empowered to express their identities, contributing to the authenticity and comprehensiveness of the data collected.

- By incorporating gender-specific inquiries into all evaluation criteria, the selected evaluation approach embedded a gender perspective into complete evaluation framework. This inclusive methodology influenced the design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation, accommodating valuable insights and recommendations for developing more transparent interventions that respond to the diverse needs of young women, men, girls, boys, and others, ultimately promoting gender equality.
- To create a safe environment for all participants, including marginalized groups and all genders, the evaluator offered separate spaces for different groups to share their experiences. This approach intended to ensure that individuals could freely express themselves without fear of judgment or discrimination. However, since participants were accustomed to safe spaces from previous project's activities, this option was not utilized due to a lack of requests from participants. Throughout the preparatory calls with local partners, individuals identified as vulnerable were presented with several participation options for the evaluation, including focus groups, key informant interviews, having a team member present during interviews, providing written responses, or bringing a trusted individual for support.
- The evaluator ensured that gender-sensitive language was used in all phases of the evaluation process, including data collection, interpretation, and reporting.
- Measures were taken to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of participants, particularly when discussing sensitive topics related to gender-based violence or discrimination. This included clear guidelines on data protection and informed consent processes.
- Gender-inclusive data collection methods by recognizing and addressing the diverse experiences and needs of different genders were employed. This included ensuring gender-balanced representation among informants and participants, questioning techniques and protocols that were designed to capture gender-specific experiences, perspectives, and needs.
- During the field visits and data collection process, the evaluator was consistently supported by representatives of the project partners, with careful attention given to gender balance in forming the team. This ensured a diverse representation of perspectives, as well as fostering a collaborative and inclusive atmosphere throughout the research activities.
- Collected data were disaggregated by age and gender, facilitating the tracking of progress towards gender equality objectives and the inclusion of marginalized groups in project activities. Qualitative methods were employed to address gaps in quantitative monitoring, specifically focusing on gathering data about young people from marginalized communities. This approach was necessitated by legal limitations encountered in formal education settings, which restricted the collection of comprehensive quantitative data that includes ethnic or national background, disability, economic disadvantage, etc.

## 4.2 Data Collection and Analysis Tools

### **Data collection strategy**

The evaluation employed a variety of data collection methods to ensure comprehensive insights into the project's relevance, effectiveness and sustainability (desk review of relevant documents, policy influence and advocacy assessment, key informant interviews with project partners and stakeholders, focus groups with young people and validation groups). Each method served a specific purpose and contributed to the overall evaluation process. By employing a combination of these methods, the evaluation aimed to gather diverse perspectives, triangulate data sources, and ensure consistency in assessing the project's performance and outcome. In addition, the chosen data collection tools have facilitated the capture of gender-specific and human rights-related data.

Qualitative research in this evaluation involved field visits to project countries each lasting for 2-3 working days. Given the limited time available for data collection in each country, purposive sampling was employed to select participants who could provide diverse and relevant perspectives on the research topics. Throughout the evaluation process, informants identified in the inception report were reached out to, either due to their direct engagement in project implementation or their expertise in pertinent fields addressed by the project, such as gender equality, formal curriculum development and validation, resocialization of juvenile perpetrators, youth work, formal and non-formal education, among others.

The purposive sampling approach also aimed to identify individuals within each project country who were knowledgeable about the specific project outputs. This targeted selection ensured representation from stakeholders familiar with each aspect of the project, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of the scope, relevance, and effectiveness of the intervention. By including informants with expertise in each project output, the sampling strategy sought to provide a nuanced understanding of the project's impact across all its components.

The sampling strategy also included the inclusion of focus group members representing young people with diverse backgrounds. This approach aimed to capture the perspectives of a key demographic group affected by the project intervention, ensuring that their voices were heard in the evaluation findings. The project partners were instructed to identify diverse young people, ensuring representation from different genders and various backgrounds such as the LGBTIQ community, rural youth, economically disadvantaged individuals, ethnic minorities, and others. This directive aimed to ensure that the focus group discussions encompassed a wide range of experiences and perspectives, reflecting the diversity within the target population and providing comprehensive insights into the project's impact on different segments of society.

A rigorous data triangulation approach has been employed due to purposive sampling to mitigate biases in data analysis and ensure robust findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Data triangulation involved merging various methods and sources, such as combining data from monitoring tables and baseline/endline school assessments with insights from interviews and focus groups, along with reviewing relevant documents together with policy influence and advocacy assessments. This approach aimed to enhance credibility by cross-referencing information from diverse origins. Qualitative data provided context to

quantitative findings by explaining fundamental trends or offering personal narratives that enriched statistical outcomes.

From the mix of collected and triangulated data, a series of relevant key findings, conclusions, and recommendations were formulated. These key findings highlighted significant discoveries across different sources and methods, putting light on patterns or trends identified in both qualitative and quantitative data. The conclusions drew upon findings from various sources to establish overarching deductions, ensuring they were backed by evidence from multiple sources and data streams. Recommendations were crafted based on the synthesized findings and conclusions, proposing actionable steps or suggestions for improvement grounded in the comprehensive understanding derived from the data triangulation process.

Recognizing the challenges posed by the limited availability of some informants during field visits, the employed data collection approach offered alternative data collection methods such as online interviews or written responses. This flexibility allowed evaluator to overcome logistical barriers and ensure the participation of key stakeholders even if they were unable to attend in person.

The approved inception report estimated the number of key informants to be around 40, along with approximately 25 focus group members. This estimation was based on a combination of factors including the scope of the evaluation, the diversity of perspectives required, and the logistical constraints of the field visits. A total of 26 young individuals participated in focus group discussions, while 44 took part in in-depth interviews.

While there were no discrepancies in the target groups for focus groups, there were slight variations in target groups for key informant interviews across different countries. This was mainly due to limitations in reaching policymakers in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as young law offenders in all countries except Kosovo.

**Table: Breakdown of respondents**

Type of informants	Serbia	BIH	Kosovo	Albania	Type of interview
CARE programmatic staff	2 (2 female)				In-depth
Local project partners	3 (1 male, 2 female)	2 (1 male, 1 female)	4 (1 male, 3 female)	2 (2 female)	In-depth
University teachers	/	/	3 (1 male, 2 female)	1 (female)	In-depth
School teachers and other school professionals	3 (female)	1 (female)	1 (female)	1 (female)	In-depth
BMC members	6 (3 male, 3 female)	6 (3 male, 3 female)	8 (3 male, 5 female)	7 (3 male, 4 female)	Focus group
Parents of BMC members	2 (1 male, 1 female)	/	2 (1 male, 1 female)	/	In-depth
Peer educators	2 (1 male, 1 female)	1 (female)	2 (1 male, 1 female)	1 (female)	In-depth

Institutional representatives	/	/	3 (3 female)	2 (2 female)	In-depth
Informants that work with youth at risk	1 (female)	1 (female)	1 (female)	2 (1 male, 1 female)	In-depth
Youth at risk	/	/	1 (male)	/	In-depth

*Note: A list of all informants, anonymized for confidentiality purposes, has been included as [Annex 4](#) in this report.*

## Data analysis

During data analysis it was ensured that the collected data was free from errors, inconsistencies, and redundancies by uniformizing formatting data fields and implementing automated checks for data completeness and accuracy. Regular quality checks and audits were imposed to maintain data integrity throughout the cleaning process.

Statistical methods available in Excel were used to identify and exclude outliers in monitoring tables primarily. Data validation was performed by cross-referencing data with original records or primary sources (KIs and FGD transcripts, monitoring tables, etc.). During the data triangulation process, a comparison of data from multiple sources was implemented to verify the consistency of collected data.

Key tools for statistical analysis of collected quantitative data included Excel, which offers basic statistical functions that help draw meaningful conclusions from raw and unstructured data. Pivot tables for summarizing and analyzing large datasets were also used. Content analysis for qualitative data was performed using MAXQDA software. The recoded data was reviewed and analyzed for trends and patterns based on made codes. This involved coding, categorizing, and analyzing qualitative data, including textual and multimedia content

## Employed data collection tools

### I. Desk review of relevant documents:

This method allowed the examination of existing project documents and other relevant documents. The review process also was focused on relevant interventions in the Western Balkan countries implemented by other agencies with a view to assessing relevance and coherence of the project design and outcomes. This analysis, which delved into the social, cultural, economic, and political dynamics of the target area, laid the groundwork for understanding the context within which the project operated. Data collected throughout the project's implementation, including both quantitative and qualitative information, were analyzed also considering the context analysis findings. This allowed the evaluator to assess not only the project's outputs and outcomes but also its broader impact on the target countries and key groups of beneficiaries and stakeholders. The list of reviewed documents has been enclosed as [Annex 1](#) to this report.

### II. Policy influence and advocacy assessment of partner organizations:

This assessment has been designed for local project partners in all four target countries. It has encompassed a multi-layered review, exploring the partner organizations' endeavors



aimed at influencing policymaking, effecting regulatory changes, or amplifying advocacy campaigns within this project but also in general. It scrutinized the effectiveness of varied tactics employed, such as lobbying, coalition-building, and stakeholder engagement, while precisely examining the extent of their influence on policy development, implementation, or change primarily in institutionalizing life skills education and other fields relevant for the project (e.g. youth and gender policies, civic participation, etc.). The assessment grid outlines a multi-tiered evaluation system for an organization's achievements in areas like impact, sustainability, efficiency, engagement with stakeholders, and gender sensitivity. It ranges from "excellent" to "critical," detailing the characteristics of an organization's performance in each category. The assessment has been attached as [Annex 2](#) to this report.

### **III. Key Informant Interviews with relevant stakeholders, beneficiaries and project partners**

Key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with institutional stakeholders (e.g., ministries, juvenile correctional centers' representatives, university staff, centers for social work, etc.), project staff (project managers, local project coordinators), other stakeholders (school focal points such as pedagogues, directors, and teachers), and other beneficiaries (e.g. young beneficiaries that took part in Y+ Program, etc.). In total, 44 informants took part in depth interviews (10 male, 34 females, 0 prefer not to specify) in all target countries.

KIIs played a pivotal role throughout the final evaluation, serving as a key method for gathering qualitative insights and perspectives from individuals with specialized knowledge or experience relevant to the project's objectives. The qualitative data acquired from key informant interviews (KIIs) has served to complement the quantitative data gathered through various methods, with a primary focus on monitoring tables and narrative reports shared by CARE. This integration has enriched the triangulated data, thereby strengthening the validity of findings and conclusions, making them more robust and substantiated.

The working language for KIIs and focus groups was English unless the informants requested to use BHS. In the case of the Albanian language, the consultant sought support from CARE or local staff who were native speakers.

### **IV. Focus group discussions (FGD) with BMC members**

Focus group discussions provided a platform for BMC members that were mostly high school students to express their views collectively. This method facilitated interactive discussions and generated rich qualitative data on shared experiences and perceptions. In total, 4 focus groups with 27 young people (12 male, 15 females, 0 prefer not to specify) were conducted in all target countries. As focus groups' participants were mostly minors, the signed consents from parents/guardians were requested and submitted to the local partners. Presence of minimum two adult staff members was obligatory due to safeguarding procedures all the time when minors were present.

This data collection method aimed to identify perspectives, experiences, and insights from the young participants regarding their engagement with the project. Through guided discussions and interactive activities tailored to their demographics and interests, the focus group endeavored to extract rich qualitative data, uncovering not only the project's effectiveness (evidence in gained competences - knowledge, skills, attitudes, and achieved changes in



behavior) but also the youth voices and needs, thereby informing future strategies, enhancing project relevance, and ensuring their active involvement in shaping project outcomes.

## V. Validation group

The validation group within the context of this evaluation process referred to a gathering of the project partners whose role was to review, confirm, and provide feedback on the preliminary findings, methods, and conclusions drawn during the evaluation. The purpose of the validation group (held on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024) was also to enhance the credibility, reliability, and relevance of the evaluation by seeking input and validation from the partners.

In addition, each field visit to local partners in all target countries was concluded with a country-validation group that served to review preliminary findings based on collected data through desk review, focus group, and key informant interviews. In total, 5 validation groups were implemented (4 country-level in person and 1 online for reviewing the key findings once all data had been collected and analyzed). In each country, the validation groups, comprising 6-8 members, were selected from local partner organizations and included additional stakeholders who had not participated in previous data collection phases. On the other hand, the online validation group exclusively consisted of partner organizations, without the involvement of other stakeholders.

### 4.3 Risks, Limitations and Mitigations Measures

During the inception phase, a series of risks and limitations were identified. From this initial list, certain risks and limitations materialized during the implementation of the evaluation. Mitigation measures that were employed to address these challenges are also outlined.

**Lack of informant responsiveness:** Online interviewing options were provided, and efforts were made to engage informants through multiple channels, ensuring broader participation and minimizing disruptions. The total number of interviews and focus group members conducted exceeded the initially planned number outlined in the inception phase.

**Prolonged data collection and insufficient time for data collection and analysis:** Commencing data collection in January 2024 and continuing until mid-March resulted in a delay in the completion of the final evaluation report. However, timely communication with CARE facilitated the effective management of this delay, enabling comprehensive data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

**Limitation in findings:** Based on Evaluator's ToR the priority was given to relevance, effectiveness, (immediate) impact and sustainability of the intervention. The rest of the criteria were not prioritized considering the given time frame, budget and purpose of the evaluation.

**Interpretation bias:** Biases in interpretation, whether from the evaluator, informants, project partners, or participants, could potentially influence the analysis and conclusions drawn from the data. Structured data triangulation was employed by utilizing a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, implementing triangulation to verify and validate findings across various data sources.

The following limitations emerged during the implementation process and were not anticipated during the inception phase.

**Limited representation of policymakers:** In Kosovo and Albania, representatives from relevant ministries and city authorities actively participated in the data collection process, engaging in key informant interviews and validation groups. Efforts were made to enhance the involvement of policymakers in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to ensure a more comprehensive evaluation. However, these efforts were unsuccessful. To address this gap, a thorough examination of relevant policy documents in these countries was conducted, alongside proxy interviews with partners and other stakeholders knowledgeable about the policy-making process and its challenges and achievements.

**Limited participation of young people not involved in BMC:** The focus groups predominantly included young people with diverse backgrounds who were actively engaged in BMC activities. This resulted in the exclusion of other young individuals who participated in some activities but were not as active as those predominantly present in the focus groups. As a result, the sample of young people consulted in this evaluation is not illustrative of the diversity of youth views and perspectives in the region. This gap was partially addressed by consulting baseline/endline school assessments, which provided data not only on highly motivated participants in target schools but also on other young people.

**Insufficient data disaggregation for marginalized groups:** The monitoring data did not offer the capability to disaggregate beneficiaries according to their characteristics such as ethnicity, vulnerability, etc. This limitation comes from legal restrictions in target countries concerning minors, as soliciting such information without parental consent is not allowed. To address this limitation, alternative data sources were utilized, including data from interviews, focus groups led by the evaluator and the most significant change stories collected by CARE. These methods provided a certain understanding of the vulnerabilities faced by the target groups.

**Limited data against some project indicators:** The lack of available data on juvenile correctional institution professionals' enhanced skills for working with at-risk youth, as well as data on the behavioral and knowledge improvements of youth regarding healthy lifestyles, gender equality, and violence, posed challenges for the data analysis. To address this, reliance was primarily placed on baseline/endline assessments' results and proxy interviews. These interviews were conducted with informants who maintained close contacts with youth beneficiaries including school professionals, youth at risk centers' staff, peer educators, and representatives from local partners.

**Limited participation of young law offenders in evaluation process:** This happened primarily due to legal restrictions on accessing juvenile correctional centers, requiring special permits for entry. Consequently, only one interview was conducted directly with a young law offender at the juvenile correctional center in Lipjan, Kosovo. To address this limitation, proxy interviews were arranged with trusted individuals who maintain regular contact with young law offenders, such as peer educators from BMCs and social workers that work in various youth at risk centers. These individuals offered valuable insights into the experiences and viewpoints of young offenders, compensating the gaps in direct participation to a certain extent.

## 5. Findings

### 5.1 Relevance

<b>Relevance</b>
To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities and the relevant sectoral policies of the target countries and proven to be feasible?
<b>R1. The project demonstrated a strong relevance by directly addressing the priorities and needs of young people, as outlined in relevant international sectoral policies, with a particular emphasis on youth and gender-related issues.</b>
Through a comprehensive analysis of relevant documents in the field of youth and gender, it was shown that the project has been aligned with the following documents and strategic objectives. It directly addresses the priorities and needs of young people, as outlined in those sectoral policies, with a particular emphasis on youth and gender-related issues.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Austrian Development Cooperation's (ADC) Regional Strategy for the Western Balkans which prioritizes gender equality as a foundational issue.</li> <li>2. EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, with a significant contribution to safeguarding physical and psychological integrity while also enhancing political and civil rights.</li> <li>3. Regional Cooperation Council's findings<sup>8</sup> which mention that integrated educational and social welfare programs for at-risk youth are highly effective in preventing extremism.</li> <li>4. The project is aligned with several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably SDG 3, focusing on health, with specific emphasis on SDG 3.7 regarding access to information on sexual and reproductive health. Furthermore, it pertains to SDG 4, which underscores inclusive and quality education, as well as SDG 16, concerning the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence. Additionally, the project contributes to SDG 5 by working towards achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.</li> <li>5. The project is relevant to United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security and UN Resolution 1325 and UNSCR 2242 on Women, Peace, and Security.</li> <li>6. The project has been strategically aligned with CARE's 2030 Vision, which encompasses the organization's long-term goals and aspirations for achieving sustainable development and gender equality by the year 2030.</li> <li>7. The project has been directly linked to the Istanbul Convention, an international treaty aimed at preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.</li> </ol>
<b>Note: More details and evidence on the finding have been enclosed in <a href="#">Annex 7</a>.</b>

<b>Relevance</b>
To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities and the relevant sectoral policies of the target countries and proven to be feasible?
<b>R2. The project demonstrated a strong relevance by directly addressing the priorities and needs of young people, as outlined in relevant national sectoral policies, with a particular emphasis on youth and gender-related issues.</b>
The national sectoral policies highlight a concerted effort by the respective governments to address key issues affecting young people, particularly in the areas of violence prevention, gender equality, public health, and mental health. These policies emphasize the importance of establishing support networks, preventing discrimination, and providing adequate services to vulnerable populations, including youth and the LGBT+ community. Moreover, the legislative framework, underscores the commitment to combating gender-based violence and discrimination in all forms. By conducting a thorough analysis of relevant national sectoral policies in target countries, the <b>project has shown significant relevance</b> by directly addressing the priorities and needs of young people, with a particular focus on youth and gender-related issues.

<sup>8</sup> Initiatives to Prevent/Counter Violent Extremism in South East Europe, p. 6

Serbia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>National Strategy for Youth</b> for the period 2023-2030</li> <li>2. <b>Strategy for Prevention and Combating Gender-Based Violence against Women and Domestic Violence</b> for the period 2021-2025</li> <li>3. <b>Public Health Strategy</b> in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2018-2026.</li> <li>4. <b>Mental Health Protection Program</b> in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2019-2026.</li> <li>5. <b>Law on Gender Equality</b> and the <b>Law on Prohibition of Discrimination</b></li> </ol>
BiH	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Youth Policy of RS</b></li> <li>2. Various <b>strategic documents of the City of Banja Luka</b></li> </ol>
Kosovo	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Education Strategy 2022-2026</b></li> <li>2. <b>Program for Gender Equality 2020-2024</b></li> <li>3. <b>State Strategy for Youth 2024-2032</b></li> <li>4. <b>Strategy on the Prevention of Violent Extremism and Radicalization Leading to Terrorism.</b></li> <li>5. <b>Law on Gender Equality</b></li> <li>6. <b>Program for Gender Equality 2020-2024</b></li> </ol>
Albania	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>National Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2029</b></li> <li>2. <b>National Action Plan for Equality, Inclusion and the Participation of Roma and Egyptians</b></li> <li>3. <b>Local Action Plan for Gender Equality in Tirana 2022-2024</b></li> <li>4. <b>National Strategy for Combating Violent Extremism and Action Plan</b></li> </ol>
<b>Note: More details and evidence on the finding have been enclosed in <a href="#">Annex 7</a>.</b>	

<b>Relevance</b>
To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities?
<b>R3. The project addressed the priorities and needs of various beneficiary groups, including high school students, teachers, school professionals, juvenile law offenders, other at-risk youth, and professionals working with at-risk youth.</b>
<p><b>High school students</b> have perceived the program's uniqueness as essential because without it, they would rely solely on internet searches for information, particularly on sensitive topics such as sexual and reproductive health, drug abuse, and responsible use of social media. BMCs have grown into youth hubs that promote gender equality and serve as platforms for preventing extremism, discrimination, hate speech, bullying, and violence. The baseline and endline school <b>assessments' findings highlighted the urgency of targeted interventions for young men to address regressive attitudes, especially concerning homophobia.</b> Alarming trends in psychoactive substance use emphasize the influence of peer norms, while mental well-being challenges underscore the need for holistic support. Variations in reproductive health knowledge and gaps in check-up practices call for ongoing education programs. Violence-related findings highlight a level of understanding among young individuals, but concerns persist, underscoring the necessity for extended and intensified prevention programs.</p> <p><i>Finding people who are cool with talking about stuff like sex and gender equality is tough. But meeting folks like BMC coordinators and peer educators, who are open-minded, really made me realize how important it is to have those conversations. (Feedback from a young focus group participant in Albania)</i></p> <p><b>School professionals</b> (teachers, psychologists, pedagogists, etc.) and other <b>professionals working with at-risk youth</b> widely recognize Program Y and Program Y+ as valuable resources for their work with beneficiaries. As per their feedback, these programs deliver relevant content on significant subjects for young individuals and present a well-defined methodology for staff to effectively engage with their beneficiaries through non-formal educational techniques.</p> <p>The <b>youth at risk</b> involved in the Project (Program Y+) have shared that the program has offered a safe environment for them to openly express their emotions and opinions on topics they find significant. In most</p>

cases, these project activities have been the sole initiatives aimed at addressing such aspects within the educational and social support programs provided to beneficiaries in juvenile correctional centers

For **academia**, the project has established a platform facilitating interactive discussions where students engage in topics directly relevant to the courses offered during the semester, including gender equality and gender-based violence. By integrating these topics into the curriculum, the project enhances the educational experience by offering practical insights and fostering critical thinking skills among students. Additionally, addressing issues like gender equality and gender-based violence within academic settings contributes to creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, preparing students to become informed and socially responsible members of society.

**Note: More details and evidence on the finding have been enclosed in [Annex 7](#).**

## Relevance

To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities?

### **R4. The life skills education program created and implemented by the partners has proven its relevance by effectively addressing critical topics often overlooked in formal education curricula.**

In countries like Serbia, Kosovo, BiH, and Albania, the absence of life skills education in formal curricula, especially in vocational schools, is a prevalent issue. Despite the recognition of young people's needs in various sectoral policies related to education, gender and youth, there **remains a significant gap in addressing these topics within the educational system**. This gap is particularly obvious in vocational schools across these countries, where general subjects such as biology, human rights or civic education may be lacking or not adequately implemented. As a result, young individuals in these project countries may not have access to essential life skills education, hindering their holistic development and preparation for adulthood.

The project successfully bridged the gap in life skills education within different types of curricula in the project countries. Understanding the importance of meeting the diverse needs of young individuals, the project implemented tailored life skills education programs. These programs, such as Program Y in schools and Program Y+ for youth at risk, directly tackled key challenges faced by young people, including sexual and reproductive health, peer violence, gender equality, and inclusion. By customizing the curriculum to address these topics, the project ensured that educational content resonated with students' daily experiences.

Moreover, close collaboration with educational authorities, schools, and stakeholders facilitated the integration of these programs into formal curricula. Through advocacy efforts, the project promoted the inclusion of life skills education as a fundamental aspect of formal education. This approach aimed to institutionalize the programs and ensure their sustainability beyond the project's duration.

*The project's significance is in addressing taboo topics like GBV often overlooked in Albania. As someone from a patriarchal background, for me the project was very relevant and effective as it has emphasized the importance of challenging gender stereotypes and addressing sensitive issues such as sexuality and substance abuse, filling critical gaps in traditional education systems. (BMC Coordinator in Albania)*

**Note: More details and evidence on the finding have been enclosed in [Annex 7](#).**

## Relevance

To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities?

### **R5. BMCs have demonstrated remarkable relevance by actively contributing to the advancement of gender equality, the prevention of extremism and violence, and the cultivation of safety and security within local communities.**

BMCs play a crucial role, offering much-needed support beyond the scope of promoting gender equality and preventing extremism and violence. Usually, BMCs represent the sole option available for such activities within the community, highlighting their irreplaceable significance as central hubs for youth engagement and development.

The BMC environment has served as a **safe space for young people involved**. Youth have particularly valued the safe and judgment-free environment provided by BMCs, where they can freely express themselves and set their own agenda. They serve as crucial platforms where young individuals can openly discuss their most intimate concerns without fear of criticism from adults or peers, especially those related to reproductive health and sexuality, gender norms, stereotypes and other topics that are often stigmatized or overlooked in other settings. Many young people openly discussed their sexuality, posed specific questions about contraceptives, sought psychological support, and challenged gender norms within their families, classrooms, and social circles.

Especially after the mass murder of children in a school in Belgrade, the **need for greater safety was particularly evident among youth**, as well as among their parents and teachers. The topics addressed in BMC workshops have been highly pertinent, as they contribute to enhancing safety measures by reducing violent behaviors.

*BMC for me is the initial occasion where we've had the chance to select the topics, we wish to discuss without guidance from a teacher on what to do or how to proceed. Typically, it's been the sole environment where we, as young individuals, can freely express our thoughts without fearing rejection, judgment, or hostility. (Feedback from a young focus group participant from Kosovo*

**Note: More details and evidence on the finding have been enclosed in [Annex 7](#).**

## Relevance

Are there any gaps or limitations in the project's design or implementations that affect its relevance?

**R6. Despite encountering external challenges, the project has maintained its relevance to key target groups by adapting its delivery to alternative spaces while addressing the same needs as initially designed.**

The identified external gaps and limitations during project implementation have not affected the project's relevance; instead, they have slightly impacted its effectiveness.

The piloting of Program E in Belgrade's "Filip Filipovic" elementary school was discontinued in September 2022 when a parent objected to the program's inclusion of topics related to gender equality. The objection arose from the parent's belief that such topics were associated with the promotion of LGBTIQ rights, which the parent did not approve of. It's noteworthy that during this period, there was amplified tension and hate speech directed towards the LGBT community due to the Belgrade Euro Pride ban. The piloting was completed as planned with a series of lessons learned and recommendations drafted.

At the Graphic Vocational School in Belgrade, Program Y was consistently implemented until May 2023, when a tragic shooting occurred at Vladislav Ribnikar School, resulting in the deaths of 10 individuals. Consequently, the program was suspended and has not resumed since with no explanation. Students from this school have persisted in participating in BMC activities conducted at alternative facilities.

In the last school year, the Ministry of Education in Serbia did not grant permission to implement Program Y in schools, prompting the relocation of program activities to out-of-school facilities except St. Sava Grammar School in Belgrade (School of Excellence) that has kept implementing program within their facilities. Similarly, the Pedagogical Institute of RS denied permission for Program Y implementation in schools during the last school year, leading to the relocation of program activities to the City Youth Centre in Banja Luka.

In Kosovo in September 2022, education protests erupted over low salaries, leading to approximately 350,000 children being unable to attend school. Consequently, partner organizations postponed workshops planned for schools. However, the return of educational workers to schools the following month prevented delays in project implementation.



<b>Relevance</b>
Are there any gaps or limitations in the project's design or implementations that affect its relevance?
<b>R6a. The current design of the capacity building program has proven to better meet the learning needs and preferences of young women compared to young men.</b>
Based on the endline school assessment's findings young women have shown greater improvement in attitudes across all assessed aspects. Additionally, in all cities, young women reported a significantly higher level of learning achievements during the workshops compared to young men.
This could suggest that the intervention was particularly relevant for young women or that they were more receptive to changing their views on gender roles. Also, across all cities, young women reported learning significantly more than young men during the workshops. The workshop environment might align better with the learning preferences of young women, incorporating collaborative activities and discussions.

<b>Relevance</b>
What is the project's added value?
<b>R7. The project's alignment with the strategic objectives of partner organizations within its covered areas underscores its relevance for local partners. Moreover, it has enhanced the policy influence and advocacy capacity of these partners, facilitating the potential upscaling of similar projects in the future.</b>
The policy and advocacy assessments conducted with all project partners have provided robust <b>evidence of the project's relevance in boosting partners' advocacy potential for further advocacy initiatives.</b> Through this process, partners were able to identify the ways in which the project has strengthened their capacity to advocate for policy change and influence decision-making processes related to life skills education (e.g. developing proposals and recommendations for the policymakers based on current sectoral policies, acquiring approaches in mobilizing community, raising visibility in online and offline sphere, lobbying techniques, etc.).
Through collaborative efforts involving young people, educators, CSOs, and other stakeholders, the partners have fostered a collective movement aimed at driving positive change and advancing the project's objectives. The advocacy aspect of this movement provides added value not only to the current project but also to future initiatives undertaken by partners. By leveraging the momentum and knowledge gained, partners will navigate policy landscapes more effectively, address challenges, and drive meaningful change. This collaborative network will foster dialogue, share best practices, and amplify voices advocating for gender equality, youth empowerment, and other important issues on the regional level.
In addition, the project has been integral and complementary to the partner organizations' missions, serving as a focal point for their activities and aligning closely with their core objectives.
<i>The project is also in line with the strategic priorities of our organization, as outlined in our four-year strategic plan. Our primary goals focus on the prevention of GBV and peer violence. Therefore, the project's objectives and activities directly support and contribute to achieving these strategic priorities, emphasizing our commitment to creating a safer and more inclusive environment for all individuals involved which I see as the project's added value for our CSO. (Perpetuum Mobile, BiH)</i>
<i>Our organization places equality and participation at the forefront, with education serving as a fundamental overarching priority. Through the project we have experienced significant growth and development, positioning us as pioneers in the region on critical issues like gender equality, addressing toxic masculinity, and combating discrimination. BMC has become our main brand in the region. (Center E8, Serbia)</i>

<b>Relevance</b>
How well did the project fit within the youth agenda in the country and current regional trends regarding youth?
<b>R8. The project is in line with the regional youth cooperation agenda in the Western Balkans but distinguishes itself by addressing overlooked topics such as healthy lifestyles, gender equality, and all forms of violence.</b>
<p>Through the youth exchanges facilitated by the program, beneficiaries have been afforded valuable opportunities to confront prejudices, stereotypes, and diverse perspectives firsthand. Interacting with peers from neighboring countries within the region has offered them unique insights into similar challenges faced elsewhere, enriching their understanding and broadening their horizons. <b>Many regional initiatives concentrate on reconciliation endeavors</b>, yet this project distinguishes itself by tackling topics such as peer relationships and gender-based violence, which are frequently neglected by others. Employing a bottom-up approach, young individuals design campaigns centered around these vital issues.</p> <p>The <b>project has complemented the EU's efforts in the Western Balkans</b> by aligning with its priorities in youth development. While the EU invests in various areas such as education, entrepreneurship, and civic activism, the project has specifically focused on empowering young people to actively participate in life skills education and grassroots activism. By providing platforms for youth engagement, promoting gender equality, and addressing issues such as gender-based violence, the project has supported the EU's efforts of fostering cooperation and personal development among youth in the region.<sup>9</sup></p> <p><i>This project's focus on peer relationships and gender-based violence aligns well with the regional agenda of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) in the Western Balkans. RYCO aims to promote reconciliation, cooperation, and understanding among young people in the region. By addressing these crucial topics, the project contributes to regional goals of fostering dialogue, tolerance, and mutual respect among youth across the Western Balkans. Additionally, the bottom-up approach employed by the project resonates with RYCO's emphasis on youth empowerment and grassroots initiatives to drive positive change in the region. (Act for Society's representative, Albania )</i></p>

<b>Relevance</b>
How well did the project fit within the youth agenda in the country and current regional trends regarding youth?
<b>R9. The implemented activities have been highly relevant for achieving the anticipated outcomes outlined in various national youth-oriented policy documents.</b>
<p>The successful implementation of the projects' outputs has been highly <b>relevant and likely instrumental in achieving the outcome of fostering gender-transformative life skills education</b> in schools and juvenile correctional institutions. By equipping educational institutions with the necessary tools and trainings to deliver Program Y, <b>schools are now capable of supporting young individuals in their critical period of transitioning into adulthood</b>. This contributes directly to the development of life skills that can help challenge gender stereotypes, obtain healthy lifestyles and encourage personal growth.</p> <p>The pilot of Program Y+ in juvenile correctional institutions provides the distinct requirements of at-risk youth. It not only endeavors to prevent radicalization but also facilitates the re-socialization process. This tailored approach is essential for individuals in vulnerable circumstances and holds the potential to greatly influence their successful integration into society following their time at the correctional institution.</p> <p>The <b>mobilization of communities</b> and their active involvement in educational policy change strengthens the public support for youth initiatives like the Future 4 You(th) Movement. This societal engagement is vital for sustaining and amplifying the impact of life skills education, making it more relevant and tailored to the actual needs of young people.</p>

<sup>9</sup> WeBalkans.eu portal/<https://webalkans.eu/me/themes/culture-and-youth/youth/>



**Empowering governmental bodies** to create strategies for institutionalizing life skills programming ensures that these practices are not merely temporary projects but become embedded within the educational system. The multi-stakeholder consultation processes ensure that these strategies are inclusive and representative of the needs of all stakeholders, leading to more effective and sustainable change.

In conclusion, these outputs have directly supported the project's aim by creating a supportive ecosystem for gender-transformative life skills education, involving educational institutions, correctional facilities, communities, and governmental bodies. This holistic approach not only provides immediate benefits for young individuals but also lays the groundwork for systemic change that can influence generations to come.

## Relevance

How well did the project fit within the youth agenda in the country and current regional trends regarding youth?

### **R10. The program has verified its adaptability across diverse social and cultural contexts, making it highly suitable for replication throughout the region.**

The evaluations, progress reports, school baseline/endline assessments and conducted interviews reveal that the **created program model is resilient and adaptable**. It not only mirrors the rationale behind the intervention but also accommodates the capacities of partner organizations and the changing dynamics of institutions. Endorsements collected from beneficiaries, school personnel, juvenile correction facilities, and policymakers, confirm the program's potential for expansion across the Western Balkans.

The capability of educational institutions to deliver Program Y creates a foundational framework that **can be adapted to local educational environments elsewhere**. This standardized yet flexible framework facilitates replication across different settings, ensuring that the transition to adulthood for young people is supported in a manner consistent with diverse regional cultures and norms.

The tailored approach of Program Y + in juvenile correctional institutions illustrates the **program's capacity to adapt to more challenging environments** and meet the needs of youth at risk. By focusing on preventing radicalization and contributing to re-socialization, this program version demonstrates the model's versatility and addresses critical social issues, proving its adaptability and relevance.

The **active role of communities in initiating educational policy change** underpins the program's adaptability. As communities are diverse, the fact that they can mobilize and advocate for such changes indicates that the program can be tailored to meet their specific social and cultural requirements. The empowerment of youth voices within the Future 4 You(th) Movement reinforces the program's adaptability by ensuring it is shaped by the very individuals it aims to benefit.

The **engagement of governmental bodies** in developing strategies to institutionalize life skills programming shows that the program is not only adaptable but also has the potential to be imbedded in the regional policy frameworks. Through multi-stakeholder consultation processes, the program can be refined and adapted to meet national and regional educational standards and cultural sensibilities, facilitating widespread adoption.

The relevant outputs demonstrate the **program's ability to be shaped to fit various educational and institutional contexts**, engaging a wide range of stakeholders in the process. The adaptability documented in these processes is exactly what makes the program so suitable for replication throughout the region, as it can be customized to align with the local social and cultural dynamics while maintaining its core objectives of fostering gender-transformative life skills education.

## Relevance

To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities?

**R11. The project has demonstrated its relevance by fostering positive changes in young people's empowerment and attitudes towards gender roles and GBV particularly among young women.**

By tailoring its approach to meet the needs of its participants and effectively challenging harmful stereotypes, the project has made significant strides towards promoting gender equality and youth empowerment. Young women have experienced more change in attitudes regarding gender roles across all project countries in comparison to young men regardless the level of their participation.

Based on the findings from the baseline/endline assessment, it is evident that the project has had a significant impact on attitudes towards gender roles and gender-based violence, particularly among young women. Despite varying levels of participation, young women across all project countries have experienced notable changes in their attitudes, demonstrating a decreased approval of violent behavior towards marginalized groups such as LGBTIQ.

The most prominent progress, in comparison to the baseline, has been noted in confidence in competencies, ranging from 5% to 19% across most cities, in both the subsamples of young men and women. The increases from baseline to endline suggest that the program has effectively encouraged young people to be more proactive about their sexual health.

More substantial progress has been made among young women across all cities, ranging from 2% to 15%, indicating a decreased approval of violent behavior towards homosexuals. Attitudes of young women toward gender-based violence are more negative, as expected.

Unlike young women, who have shown statistically significant progress in certain cities, young men continue to exhibit less gender-equitable attitudes. The project's relevance is underscored by the prevalence of homophobic attitudes among both young men and women, emphasizing the urgent need for interventions to challenge and mitigate such views. Particularly concerning is the high prevalence of negative attitudes towards individuals of homosexual orientation, especially among young men. Additionally, the data reveals alarming levels of approval for gender-based violence among certain segments of young men, highlighting the necessity for comprehensive education and awareness initiatives to combat such harmful attitudes. Despite most young men and women condemning gender-based violence, targeted interventions are crucial to address and dismantle approval within specific demographics.

## 5.2 Effectiveness and immediate impact

### Effectiveness and immediate impact

To what extent have stakeholders (school staff, parents, representatives of institutions, etc.), beneficiaries (youth) as defined gained new knowledge and changed their behavior?

**E1. In all project countries, young men and women who participated in a greater number of project activities, including workshops or events related to campaigns, demonstrated more gender-equal attitudes towards gender roles and norms.**

The endline assessment results<sup>10</sup> conclude that attitudes towards gender are generally more equal across most cities. Attitudes on gender roles indicate that between 37-60% of young men agree with the statements in the questionnaire. This implies that a significant percentage of young men hold unequal attitudes about gender roles. In most cities, the highest agreement is observed with the statement that a man should have the final word about decisions in the home.

Statistically **significant progress has been observed in Banja Luka and Pristina**. In general, a **significant percentage of young men still hold unequal attitudes about gender roles**. In most cities,

<sup>10</sup> Endline assessment report, p. 13-16

the highest agreement is observed with the statement that a man should have the final word about decisions in the home. On the other hand, **individuals who participated in more activities**, whether workshops or events related to campaigns, **developed more gender-equal attitudes towards gender roles and norms, emphasizing the positive impact of the program.** Also, the endline report confirms that the progress may not always achieve statistical significance, but it remains consistent and is evident across all cities.

Similarly, according to the feedback from participants in the focus groups, it's evident that **those who have been more engaged** in the activities have succeeded in shifting their attitudes to be more respectful towards gender roles and gender norms.

*Considering the profiles of our beneficiaries—children and youth at risk, including victims of violence, those with behavioral difficulties, learning challenges, social vulnerability, or with a parent in prison—we've observed boys taking on roles traditionally not assigned to them, such as responsibilities in the kitchen, cleaning, or gardening. This shift may be attributed to the influence of the workshops. We actively encourage such changes and their involvement in activities that challenge stereotypical gender roles. (Psychologist in the Daily Center for Children at Risk from BiH.)*

### **Effectiveness and immediate impact**

To what extent have stakeholders (school staff, parents, representatives of institutions, etc.), beneficiaries (youth) as defined gained new knowledge and changed their behavior?

**E2. In all project countries young men and women that participated in more project's activities, whether workshops or events related to campaigns, are demonstrating attitudes that are notably less biased or prejudiced against individuals of homosexual orientation.**

The results of the end-line assessment<sup>11</sup> indicate that attitudes towards people of homosexual orientation are generally more equal across most of the cities. Statistically, **significant progress has been observed in Pristina.** In general, **homophobia is prevalent among young men.** Approximately 70-82% young men express hypothetical shame at having a gay son. In Banja Luka, Pristina, and Tirana, only 5-6% of young men claim they would be open to having a homosexual friend. Notably, a higher percentage in Belgrade (26.3%) is receptive to such friendships. Young women's attitudes toward homosexuals are more open in Belgrade compared to other cities. Around 63% of young women in Belgrade express willingness to accept a homosexual as a friend, whereas in Tirana, Banja Luka, and Pristina, the percentages are 59%, 31%, and 32%, respectively.

The effect of participating in activities organized by the BMC on homophobia underline a **positive shift towards a more inclusive and accepting attitude**, suggesting that respondents are demonstrating positions that are **notably less biased or prejudiced against individuals of homosexual orientation.** Through promoting inclusivity and fostering understanding, the program has played a role in establishing a supportive atmosphere that diminishes prejudice and nurtures a generation characterized by empathy and respect for various sexual orientations. Similarly, according to the feedback from participants in the focus groups, **it's evident that those who have been more engaged in the activities** have succeeded in shifting their attitudes to be more respectful towards LGBT community.

*During the program, I've personally experienced a shift in my perspective on certain issues. For instance, I used to hold negative views towards the gay population. However, through discussions and activities, I've come to a more neutral stance. While some of my friends may still have prejudices, I've realized the importance of respecting others' beliefs and recognizing the humanity in everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation. I now choose not to support discriminatory behavior and advocate for acceptance and understanding. (Feedback from a young male focus group participant from Serbia)*

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<sup>11</sup> Endline assessment report, p. 18-20

<b>Effectiveness and immediate impact</b>
To what extent have stakeholders (school staff, parents, representatives of institutions, etc.), beneficiaries (youth) as defined gained new knowledge and changed their behavior?
<b>E3. In all project countries young men and women increased their knowledge about sexual-reproductive health, contraceptives and sexually transmittable infections.</b>
Based on the endline assessment results <sup>12</sup> , we can conclude that knowledge about sexual and reproductive health is relatively low. In most cases, the percentage of correct answers in this area varies between 25% and 65%, indicating that a significant portion of survey participants lacks answers to the set questions.
<b>The average improvement in reproductive health knowledge, compared to the baseline, ranges from 4% to 21% across most cities.</b> <sup>13</sup> Results in Belgrade are somewhat better than in other cities.
Statistically <b>significant progress has been observed in Belgrade and Tirana</b> in the subsample of both young men and women, while in Pristina, statistically significant progress has been observed only in the subsample of young men. Although significant progress has been made across most cities, the data suggest that both young men and women in Banja Luka need to receive more education on the topic of sexual reproductive health in future programs.
Based on the feedback gathered from participants in the focus groups and interviews conducted, it's evident that <b>the project activities bridged the gaps in providing information and improved beneficiaries' knowledgeable about sexual and reproductive health, contraceptives, and sexually transmitted infections.</b> These gaps were largely due to the absence of formal educational programs, especially in vocational schools, and the persisting high levels of stigma surrounding these topics.
<i>Our daughter's engagement in extracurricular activities has exposed her to crucial topics rarely discussed in conventional settings. This has boosted her confidence to express herself while broadening her understanding of the important topics. As parents, we prioritize addressing overlooked issues like mental and sexual health with her, encouraging her to navigate societal challenges with resilience. Our journey together has taught us the importance of emotional expression, meaningful conversations, and mutual support within the family. (BMC participant's parent from Kosovo)</i>

<b>Effectiveness and immediate impact</b>
To what extent have stakeholders (school staff, parents, representatives of institutions, etc.), beneficiaries (youth) as defined gained new knowledge and changed their behavior?
<b>E4. In three of four project countries young men and women that participated in more project's activities, whether workshops or events related to campaigns, are demonstrating improved attitudes toward violence.</b>
The results of the endline analysis suggest that <b>individuals who actively participated in campaigns and events tend to have improved attitudes towards gender-based violence.</b> <sup>14</sup> While this trend is consistent in most cities and statistically significant in Pristina. Also, the same analysis indicates that individuals who participated more in workshops and campaign events exhibit less violent behavior in a relationship. These findings are statistically significant in Banja Luka and Belgrade.
The identified gaps persist in attitudes towards violence, as evidenced by the continued prevalence of certain beliefs among youth. Verbal insults are still perceived as non-violent by approximately 7-29% of young men and 8-21% of young women. Moreover, between 16% and 36% of young men, and 5% to 10% of young women, justify physical punishment by parents. Approximately 20-30% of young men and 12-24% of young women still consider retreating from a fight as shameful. Furthermore, 31-47% of young men believe violence is sometimes necessary and should not be discussed, with a lower percentage of young women (5-18%) holding similar views.

<sup>12</sup> Endline assessment report, p. 22-26

<sup>13</sup> Endline assessment report, p. 26

<sup>14</sup> Endline assessment report, p. 30

The endline study concludes that that attitudes towards violence of young individuals amongst those who participated more in workshops and campaign and events are more mature across most of the cities. Statistically significant progress has been observed across all cities. However, **in Belgrade, there has been an increase in less healthy attitudes towards violence.** It's crucial to contextualize this within the repercussion of a school shooting where 10 lives were tragically lost. Following this incident, violence has become a central focus for various stakeholders including schools, media, CSOs, and policymakers. Consequently, young people have expressed feeling overwhelmed by the constant emphasis on this topic. This sentiment is further supported by the observations of a school pedagogue and focus group participants from Serbia.

*Among the topics covered, violence appears to be the least favored among students, likely because there are already numerous programs addressing this issue. Contrariwise, gender equality, the abuse of psychoactive substances, and promoting healthy lifestyles gathered the greatest interest among students. This preference suggests a strong inclination towards discussing topics that are both relevant to their lives and not as widely covered in existing programs. (School pedagogue from Serbia).*

Based on the insights shared by participants in the focus groups and interviews, it's clear that the project intervention has effectively tackled issues such as gender-based and peer violence.

*The participants' maturity notably improved throughout the project, suggesting its positive impact on their development. There's a sense that peer violence has decreased within the school, with violence levels decreasing from 1st to 4th grade of the high school, likely influenced by the project's interventions. The project has provided additional assistance to teachers and other professionals in their daily work, reinforcing their efforts in promoting a safer and more nurturing environment for students. (School social worker from BiH)*

#### **Effectiveness and immediate impact**

To what extent have stakeholders (school staff, parents, representatives of institutions, etc.), beneficiaries (youth) as defined gained new knowledge and changed their behavior?

#### **E5. Parents of BMC members have confirmed that the BMC program serves as a vehicle for continuous personal growth of their children, positively impacting diverse aspects of their lives.**

The parents of BMC members unanimously **have agreed that they observed significant changes in their children's emotional intelligence, behavior, social interactions, and academic engagement because of their participation in the program.** The positive changes observed by parents in their children's soft skills, self-confidence, and sexual and reproductive health knowledge, attributed to their participation in BMC activities, are notable. **However, there is a notable absence of mention regarding improvements in gender equality and the reduction of biases towards the LGBT community, indicating a potential oversight or lack of emphasis on these areas.**

*Supporting my child's goal setting and determination is a priority for me as a mother. Thanks to the BMC project, my child has overcome insecurities, gained confidence, and openly discuss her aspirations, preparing her for future challenges, which brings me immense joy and pride. (BMC participant's parent from Kosovo)*

*As a parent of a student who participated in the Y program, I've noticed significant positive changes. My child has become more resilient and has developed critical thinking skills, especially through peer education—a unique contribution that I, as a parent or their teachers, cannot provide. He is very much into speaking with his friends and relatives about equality (gender, sexual, etc.) as something this is good which wasn't the case before. (BMC member's parent from Serbia)*

<b>Effectiveness and immediate impact</b>
To what extent have stakeholders (school staff, parents, representatives of institutions, etc.), beneficiaries (youth) as defined gained new knowledge and changed their behavior?
<b>E6. School staff and professionals from juvenile correctional centers have gained qualitative content and the necessary competencies to effectively present crucial topics to youth in a non-formal manner that aligns with the needs of young people.</b>
The initiative has encouraged <b>significant progress in educational methodologies</b> , fostering <b>personal and professional development amongst teachers and other educational professionals</b> . In total <b>659 teachers</b> from elementary and high schools are now certified for Program Y implementation in all target countries. The Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions have generated a multi-layered and predominantly positive impact on the educational community. <b>62 teachers and other professionals</b> have undergone training to become Program Y trainers. Through these sessions, they have gained new training methodologies and approaches, positioning them as future trainers capable of addressing sensitive topics and collaborating more effectively with their colleagues. As a result, there is now a more proficient cohort of educators equipped to cover these topics more effectively in educational settings.
The <b>Program Y+ Manual has expanded resources available to professionals working with young offenders and other youth at risk</b> signifying progress in addressing concerns like hate speech, violence and intolerance. The Program Y+ offers a new innovative way of working with youth at risk by making them internalize the values of gender equality and promoting non-violent behavior. The program is currently being implemented in seven institutions that work with youth at risk in all target countries.
<i>In preparation for implementing the Y+ Manual, a seminar was conducted for colleagues to apply it to the younger population of prisoners in regular prison institutions, aged 18-24 years old. This led us to expand the number of educators, totaling 26 professionals and associates who are now familiar with the manual and its potential applications. This has helped us to further raise awareness of necessity to address hate speech and intolerance in our center by using non-formal approach. (Psychologist from Juvenile Correctional Centre in BiH)</i>

<b>Effectiveness and immediate impact</b>
What are the potential positive or negative outcomes that were not intended because of the intervention?
<b>E7. In response to the challenging incidents at the Sutjeska camp in 2022, where certain participants were offended by others, the project partners took proactive steps to create a conducive learning environment aimed at preventing similar situations. This effort was evidenced by the positive outcomes observed during the camp the following year.</b>
Participants from Kosovo reported that some participants from BiH brought offensive photos to the camp. They promptly notified their peer educators and workshop leaders about the issue. The organizers responded swiftly and sought to utilize the situation as an opportunity for mutual learning among all involved parties. In response to this incident, the partners took proactive steps to establish a dedicated learning space with the goal of fostering understanding, dialogue, and respect among all participants. This space provided a platform for open discussions, constructive feedback, and conflict resolution sessions, enabling individuals to address their concerns, share their viewpoints, and reconcile differences respectfully. Through this initiative, the partners aimed to promote inclusivity, empathy, and mutual respect among participants, ultimately creating a more positive and harmonious atmosphere within the camp. <b>As a result of the steps taken, there were no similar incidents during the camp the following year.</b>
<i>The incident that occurred at the camp in 2022 was resolved through collaboration with all partners. We engaged in discussions with young people from our delegation, aiming to clarify the reasons and repercussions of such behavior among their peers, while also framing it as a valuable learning experience. (Local project partner from Kosovo)</i>
<i>The situation at the camp in 2022 was successfully addressed through collaborative efforts with all stakeholders. We initiated dialogues with the young participants from the group to understand the underlying causes and consequences of their peers' behavior, emphasizing the importance of learning from</i>

*such experiences. This served as a valuable learning opportunity for everyone involved. As a result, during the subsequent camp held in 2023, no incidents occurred, indicating mutual growth and improvement. (CARE Project Manager)*

#### **Effectiveness and immediate impact**

What are the potential positive or negative outcomes that were not intended because of the intervention?

**E8. The Program Y initiative at the Faculty of Sports and Physical Education in Tirana has transitioned from elective to mandatory status within the curriculum. Through created alumni network, the project exceeds the limits of the university, empowering future sports leaders to champion gender-inclusive practices in their future professional careers. Also, there are strong evidence of collaboration with academia in other project countries.**

The incorporation of Program Y into the Faculty of Sports and Physical Education in Tirana marks a considerable advancement in the academic treatment of gender equality. By elevating gender-focused modules from elective to mandatory, **the faculty demonstrates a significant institutional commitment** to this critical social issue. The surge in student participation, with nearly 300 completing the program and 100 actively seeking to delve deeper into these topics, illustrates a shifting cultural paradigm where **gender equality is not only embraced but actively pursued by the academic community**. The creation of an alumni network represents a strategic step towards sustaining engagement with gender issues, particularly in sports leadership, beyond the academic environment. The network serves as a testimony to the program's inclusive and far-reaching impact, fostering a balance of male and female voices in dialogue and action concerning gender equality. Through this network, **the project exceeds the limits of the university**, empowering future sports leaders to champion gender-inclusive practices in their professional spheres. In addition, the faculty has expressed their willingness to share their experience of integrating this program with the Faculty of Sports in the City of Elbasan.

Local partner in BiH has collaborated with the University of Banja Luka to integrate Program Y into master's programs and provide trainings. Plans to involve students in internships were halted due to a lack of permission from the Ministry of Education. In Kosovo, partnerships with faculties at the University of Pristina and AAB Private University have aimed to introduce Program Y at the university level, with peer educators conducting workshops upon request from academia. Similarly, in Serbia, cooperation with the Faculty of Philosophy has led to workshops for university students in human rights activism, enhancing their capacities in Program Y and related topics.

*We made an alumni network of students, facilitating continued engagement beyond the university, including activities addressing gender issues in sports leadership. Both male and female students participated in these initiatives, underscoring the program's inclusive approach. The project has facilitated collaboration, shared methodologies and experiences, while also aiding personal growth, especially in understanding healthy masculinity. The manual serves as a valuable resource for both bachelor's and master's studies. (Professor at the University of Tirana - Faculty of Sports and Physical Education )*

#### **Effectiveness and immediate impact**

What are the potential positive or negative outcomes that were not intended because of the intervention?

**E9. BMCs have progressed to comprehensive resource centers, providing safe spaces where young individuals can openly discuss their most sensitive concerns and receive professional referrals to address their diverse needs.**

BMCs have transformed into **comprehensive resource centers**, extending beyond the project's initial objectives of delivering life-skills education, advocating for healthy lifestyles, and promoting gender equality through unconventional means. These centers now serve as safe environments where young individuals feel comfortable discussing their most delicate concerns, which they may be unable to share elsewhere. Furthermore, BMCs have set their role as supportive communities, facilitating professional referrals to address the diverse needs of their members.

Through rigorous in-depth interviews conducted with key stakeholders and engaging focus groups involving young beneficiaries, a significant discovery has emerged.

*In a BMC workshop, a female student shared a family-related issue. We directed her to the school psychologist for professional support. Following this, we facilitated a meeting with the parents, ultimately resolving the issue together. (School professional from BiH)*

*I recall a girl who shared her experience of surviving violence at school. She expressed that disclosing it to us felt easier than seeking help from someone at school due to fear of judgment. We listened attentively to her and ensured she received professional support. Similarly, during a camp, another girl bravely opened about experiencing violence in her relationship. We have always maintained a rule that confidentiality is paramount, and no one is to ridicule anyone else. This safe and supportive environment, where individuals can freely share their experiences, is something we rarely find elsewhere. (Feedback from a young focus group participant from BiH)*

*As a sole participant from my class in BMC, I have faced sometimes judgments from my peers. Unsure of how to engage actively, I eventually gathered the courage to get involved. Now, with the support of my family and fellow BMC members, I feel more empowered. Both my teachers and parents also stand behind me in my endeavors. Since taking this step, I've noticed a positive change—I have more companionship, access to new information, and exposure to diverse opinions. (Feedback from a young focus group participant from BiH)*

*There have been instances where students reported incidents of sexual harassment following the workshop. In response, I provided advice and support. The fact that students feel comfortable enough to openly discuss such sensitive issues speaks about the strong relationships developed with educators. Similarly, when addressing potential drug use, educators provided an informal overview of the harmful effects of such substances. This approach aimed to offer students personal and tangible experiences to discourage them from experimenting with drugs. (BMC Coordinator from Serbia).*

*For instance, there was a boy who had recently arrived at the Centre and joined BMC, I witnessed him being mistreated by other young people. It was distressing for me, but I discussed it with a psychologist who reassured me that the situation could improve with all our efforts. Indeed, with our support and willingness to listen, the boy began to see us as people who cared about him. Consequently, we were able to assist him in adapting better to his new environment. (Peer educator from Serbia)*

### **Effectiveness and immediate impact**

What are the potential positive or negative outcomes that were not intended because of the intervention?

**E10. The project has shown resilience in addressing challenges, particularly in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where policymakers recently have become less cooperative regarding the further continuation of the program as originally designed.**

Recently, policymakers in Serbia and BiH have displayed reduced cooperation regarding the continuation of the program in its original design. This trend can be attributed to the shrinking civic space and decreasing levels of cooperation with civil society organizations (CSOs) in these countries.

In Serbia Program Y was accredited by the Minister of Education in 2016 and is listed as a program of public importance. Based on this accreditation, the program has been adapted for online conditions and re-accredited in 2021 by the Ministry of Education as a program for the continuous professional development of teachers of national significance.

Considering the lack of support from the Ministry of Education in the process of institutionalizing Program Y, the **local partner in Serbia has prepared recommendations** outlining various ways in which Program Y could become part of a systemic solution in schools. Additionally, the local project partner in Serbia has addressed the challenge of not having formal collaboration with the Ministry of Education by shifting focus to collaborating with youth workers. They incorporated the methodology of Program Y into the development of curricula and working principles for these workers. This collaboration with the National Association of



Youth Work Practitioners resulted in the official integration of Program Y into the training curriculum for all professional youth workers nationwide.

In **BiH**, despite facing obstacles in obtaining permission to continue the program in schools in the last school year, the local partner demonstrated adaptability by relocating activities to Youth Centre facilities. This proactive approach ensures the continuation of the program's impact on youth education and development, highlighting its sustainable nature and commitment to fostering positive change in the community. Additionally, in BiH, the local partner strategically shifted focus towards supporting the establishment of an organization of penologists operating within the juvenile correctional center, demonstrating proactive measures in overcoming bureaucratic obstacles and ensuring the project's ongoing operations regarding Program Y+ implementation.

### **Effectiveness and immediate impact**

To which extent campaigns and/or programs implemented by the project have increased awareness of key target groups about promoting peaceful masculinities, gender equality and addressing hate speech and intolerance?

**E11. The partners organized campaigns at the local level, resulting in the execution of 35 school-based initiatives that reached 9,356 young individuals, and conducted 68 community-based campaigns, engaging with 20,218 citizens spanning across youth and adults alike, significantly increasing awareness on promoting peaceful masculinities, gender equality, and addressing hate speech and intolerance within the targeted demographics.**

The **campaigns and programs implemented by the project have been highly effective in significantly raising awareness among key target groups**. Through various initiatives such as workshops, events, and digital campaigns, the project has successfully educated individuals about the importance of promoting peaceful masculinities and gender equality. Additionally, it has put light on the harmful effects of hate speech and intolerance, fostering a deeper understanding of these issues within communities.

Strategic communication has played a crucial role in the project, with a specific emphasis on social norms campaigns aimed at promoting peaceful masculinities, gender equality, and addressing hate speech and intolerance at local, national, and regional levels. Communities have been **mobilized and actively engaged in driving educational policy change**, ensuring stronger public voices for youth within the Future 4 You(th) Movement. A total of **4,038 individuals** have joined the regional movement in support of life skills education, with **115 movement members** actively involved in developing the Strategic Plan and participating in task force groups for advocacy.

This communication strategy has been executed through two dedicated websites (program-y.org and youngmeninitiative.net), monthly newsletters, and various social media platforms including the YMI Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube pages. This comprehensive approach has significantly enhanced the project's visibility and facilitated effective communication with its beneficiaries, allowing for further expansion of its reach and impact.

The partners organized campaigns at the local level, resulting in the execution of 35 school-based initiatives that reached **9,356 young individuals**. Additionally, they conducted 68 community-based campaigns, engaging with **20,218 citizens**, spanning across youth and adults alike. These campaigns were strategically aligned with significant dates and events, leveraging their importance to amplify the impact of the initiatives. Notable occasions included International Women's Day, International Family Day, International Day of Friendship, International Youth Day, International Day of the Girl Child, 16 Days of Activism, International Peace Day, World Contraception Day, etc.

### **Effectiveness and immediate impact**

Have there been **any positive changes or beneficial effects** observed in policies and strategies that incorporate life skills topics, because of the project?

**E12. The project initiative has directly influenced the implementation of new policies and other relevant documents or revisions to existing ones regarding life skills education.**

In recent years, significant efforts have been made in **Serbia** to professionalize, standardize, systematize, and certify youth work. The National Association of Youth Work Practitioners (NAPOR) has played a key role in this endeavor. Since September 2022 NAPOR, German Development Agency (GIZ), the local project partner Center E8 in Serbia have been **jointly developing curricula and working principles for youth workers**. These initiatives have directly drawn from the methodology employed by Program Y specially regarding gender equality aspect. Consequently, Program Y has been integrated into the official training curriculum for all professional youth workers operating in Serbia.

The local partner organization in **BiH** Perpetuum Mobile has played a key role **in influencing the Youth Policy of RS in life skills education**. They actively contributed to the policy, which includes strategic goals such as improving young people's opportunities and interest in sustainable living within RS, fostering youth initiative and responsible community action, promoting healthy lifestyles, and creating role models among young people. The organization's impact is evident in the strategic documents and its advocacy for life skills education, notably through their "Be a Man, Say NO to Violence" project that reached over 20,000 young people through workshops and online courses, and by insisting on the inclusion of healthy lifestyle promotion as a strategic objective in the policy. Their efforts have been recognized and integrated into the new Youth Policy, highlighting their significant influence on the legislative framework that shapes life skills education in RS.

In **Kosovo**, meaningful collaboration was built between SIT and the Ministry of Justice, paving the way for the implementation of Program Y+ across both the open and closed facilities of the Lipjan Correctional Institution for Minors. In the meantime, local partner YMCA has started collaboration with the Social Center of Gjakova, offering training to social workers on the Program Y+ methodology in April 2022.

The institutionalization of Program Y was officially celebrated at the event on September 25, 2023. This landmark occasion, attended by key stakeholders from MESTI and other institutions, marked a significant milestone in the "Future for Youth" project, **officially integrating Program Y into the educational framework** and highlighting the program's critical role in child protection and life skills education.

This successful institutionalization of Program Y represents a historic advancement in educational reform in Kosovo, ensuring that life skills programming becomes an integral component of the learning and development framework for future generations.

Regarding the Program Y+, the project kicked off with a meeting with the director of the Correctional Services in Kosovo in August 2021, establishing the groundwork for future collaboration. This was followed by a series of strategic meetings, including one in February 2022 with leaders from the Kosovo Correctional Service and Probation Service to explore opportunities for **incorporating Program Y+ into their counseling and social services**. These discussions culminated in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Kosovo Correctional Service in December 2022, making the ground for a two-year pilot of Program Y+ starting in January 2023.

The significance of Program Y+ and the collaborative efforts of the Ministries of Justice were prominently showcased during a collaboration conference held in November 2023 in Tirana. At this event, **Vice Ministers of Justice from Albania and Kosovo** not only exchanged best practices but also **acknowledged the remarkable outcomes of Program Y+** and emphasized the necessity of minors undergoing the topics covered within the program for effective rehabilitation.

*During the conference both Vice Minister of Justice in Kosovo Mr. Blerim Sallahu and Vice Minister of Justice in Albania Mr. Klajd Karameta spoke about collaboration with CARE International Balkans and expressed their support for the project and applauded the work that the partner organizations Act for Society, SIT and YMCA are doing in their respective countries. Ambassador of Austria in Albania, Dr. Christian Steiner, said*

that he is happy to be on the conference supporting the work and collaboration of both ministries in Kosovo and Albania to share best practices.<sup>15</sup>

**BMC was officially established** in December 2023 in Kavaja Juveniles' Centre in **Albania** aimed to create a platform where young individuals could engage in meaningful discussions, activities, and interventions that contribute to their personal development, challenge societal norms, and introduce positive values. The club was designed to build on the success of existing BMC initiatives, tailoring its approach to address the unique needs and circumstances of the institute's residents. Overall, **these activities have set a precedent for utilizing life skills education as a tool for rehabilitation within juvenile correctional systems**, demonstrating the potential to reshape how society supports at-risk youth and their reintegration as constructive members of the community.

Through cultivating meaningful relationships with various stakeholders, local partner in Albania has actively worked towards bringing about substantial positive changes in the lives of youth. One notable example of AfS's impact is its **involvement in the review and discussion of Law on Youth**, including the National Youth Strategy for the years 2022 to 2029.

Additionally, insights from informants support the abovementioned findings.

*The Ministry of Education in Kosovo has presently embraced a strategy along with various programs, predominantly focusing on Program Y. This program has significantly contributed to achieving the Ministry's objectives. Working as a gender equality officer, my responsibility involves providing training to teachers on these matters. Through collaboration with SIT on child protection and safeguarding, we have aligned our manual for teachers with Program Y. This module has been accredited and serves as a guiding framework for future implementation. (Representative of Ministry of Education of Kosovo)*

### Effectiveness and immediate impact

How did the project activities mobilize communities to have an impact on influencing educational policies?

**E13. Policymakers and stakeholders have been mobilized to actively engage in the development of advocacy, community-based campaigns, and other initiatives that have directly impacted the improvement of educational and other policies.**

AfS in **Albania** has played an active role in engaging policymakers and stakeholders to shape advocacy and developmental initiatives, making significant impacts on educational policies. By participating directly in policy discussions and consultations, AfS has made **influence on educational policies**, especially in areas related to **youth and gender equality**. This proactive engagement has enabled advocacy efforts to align with governmental priorities, resulting in more inclusive and effective educational policies tailored to the needs of young people. A notable example of AfS's impact is its involvement in evaluating and deliberating on the **Youth Law** and the **National Youth Strategy** from 2022 to 2029. Through collaboration with partners like UNFPA, AfS contributed to discussions facilitated by the Ministry for Youth and Children, fostering collaboration between governmental and non-governmental sectors.

Local stakeholders in **Kosovo** have engaged in diverse activities promoting educational policy change and increased youth participation in public life. Artistic endeavors like "The Last Tunnel Exhibition" and a documentary "Cry as a Man!" addressed gender-based violence. Public art, festivals, and sports events highlighted inclusivity and healthy living. Collaborations, such as with K10 and the Future4Youth Declaration, furthered discussions on health, equality, and violence prevention. The project culminated in actions supporting green skills, mental health, and peacebuilding, demonstrating the transformative power of youth-driven community mobilization for sustainable educational and policy reform.

<sup>15</sup> YMI Initiative web site - Program Y+: Nurturing Equality and Non-violent Behaviours  
<https://youngmeninitiative.net/en/2023/11/15/program-y-nurturing-equality-and-non-violent-behaviors/>

The significance of Program Y+ and the collaborative efforts of the Ministries of Justice of Kosovo and Albania were prominently showcased during a collaboration conference held in November 2023 in Tirana. At this event, **Vice Ministers of Justice from Albania and Kosovo not only exchanged best practices but also acknowledged the remarkable outcomes of Program Y+** and emphasized the necessity of minors undergoing the topics covered within the program for effective rehabilitation.

Establishing direct cooperation with the Ministries of Justice and Education in Albania and Kosovo has been a significant milestone in advancing the institutionalization of Programs Y and Y+. Through this collaboration, **stakeholders have been mobilized to actively endorse and support the integration of these programs into relevant educational and correctional curricula.** Moreover, this partnership has opened doors for **direct engagement with educational and correctional institutions,** enabling seamless collaboration and coordination in implementing these programs. This direct cooperation highlights a collective effort towards enhancing life skills education and promoting positive outcomes within the educational and correctional systems of these countries.

The **partners' approach in various working groups** has strategically mobilized stakeholders for active engagement and collaboration. Representatives from local partners have leveraged their expertise to address the distinct challenges encountered by young law offenders, at-risk youth, and high school students. This collaborative effort led to the accreditation and implementation of Program Y and Program Y+ as tailored educational approaches based on the needs of target groups. The outcomes of these approaches, along with insights gained and their impact on genders, have enriched policymakers' understanding, facilitating policy refinement and the attainment of more tangible outcomes.

#### **Effectiveness and immediate impact**

What were the identified best practices for collaborating with working groups to support the integration of life skills programming into institutional structures?

**E14. By fostering strategic partnerships and actively engaging in networking events, local partners have been acknowledged as reliable collaborators for policymakers and other relevant stakeholders. This recognition has launched their involvement in various working groups aimed at advancing the integration of life skills education into both formal and non-formal curricula.**

This active participation in numerous events and conferences focusing on youth and gender-related issues has enhanced the visibility of local partners among decision-makers and stakeholders. Through their engagement in these conferences, partners have had the opportunity to showcase their expertise, share best practices, and contribute to discussions on critical topics. This increased visibility not only strengthened their credibility but also has positioned them as key players in advocating for policy changes and implementing initiatives aimed at addressing youth and gender-related issues.

For example, Perpetuum Mobile and CARE Project Manager participated in a panel discussion at the Youth Work Conference 2021 in Banja Luka. Act for Society attended the Great Mind Meetings in Romania 2021 and the Market of Good Practices in Albania. Additionally, partners from Kosovo participated in various events such as the Taking Boys Seriously Conference at Ulster University, Working with Boys and Young Men, and Working with Fathers conferences organized by MenEngage Europe, among others.

In November 2023, during a conference in Tirana, Vice Ministers of Justice from Albania and Kosovo highlighted the significant achievements of Program Y+. They emphasized the crucial role of local partners in recognizing the importance of exposing minors to the program's topics for effective rehabilitation. Similarly, the Kosovo Minister of Education and over 60 high school principals from across the country emphasized the contributions of local project partners. They acknowledged the partners' efforts in identifying the need for thematic modules addressing child protection within the educational curriculum. These modules cover various critical topics such as violence prevention, school dropout prevention, internet safety, discrimination, gender-based violence, human trafficking, early marriages, etc.

The appreciations received by local partners have resulted in their increased involvement in decision-making processes through various working groups related to life skills education. In **Albania**, partners have

contributed to different working groups focusing on youth law, gender budgeting, youth hubs, and standards for non-profit organizations. In **Kosovo**, partners have been active participants in various working groups addressing security and gender, health, domestic violence prevention, rehabilitation reform, youth strategy, and peace education. Specifically, SIT in Kosovo has played a central role in driving progress and implementing reforms across sectors such as gender-based violence, health, education, and social well-being. In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, partners have taken part in working groups dedicated to the development of youth policy in the City of Banja Luka. In **Serbia**, partners have been involved in the National Youth Council and contributed to the assessment of the Youth Law.

### Effectiveness and immediate impact

**E15. The project has successfully met or exceeded most of its targets, indicating a strong positive impact in promoting gender-transformative life skills education.**

**Output 1:** The target for Output 1 has been **fully achieved**, with 659 teachers certified for Program Y implementation in schools, 62 educators trained as Program Y trainers, 254 trained peer educators, and 4 established schools of excellence. The participation of 930 elementary school students, 11,739 high school students, and 648 university students exceeded expectations.

**Output 2:** Despite missing evidence regarding the skill improvement of juvenile correctional institutions and social welfare staff, this output has been **largely achieved**. With 243 young people and 163 professionals from youth at risk and juvenile correctional institutions participating in Y+ activities, nearly 50% of participants improved their attitudes towards positive behavior change.

**Output 3:** This output's targets **has been fully met**, with 4,046 new members joining the regional movement supporting life skills education, including 610 institutional stakeholders. Additionally, 115 members actively engaged in the development of a Strategic Plan and task force groups for advocacy, with 43% reporting increased capacities for advocacy and movement building.

**Output 4:** This output has been **fully achieved**, with 10 national working groups established and working towards the institutionalization of Program Y in schools. Additionally, 19 MoUs were signed with governmental bodies and institutions, further integrating life skills education into educational and correctional settings.

**Outcome:** The outcomes has been **largely achieved**. The project has achieved significant milestones, including the creation of institutional strategies for integrating life skills training in education programs across all project countries. Targets for implementing gender-transformative life skills education programs in educational and juvenile correctional institutions have been met, with 89 high schools, 7 elementary schools, 3 universities, and 5 juvenile correctional institutions participating. However, challenges arose in achieving the target number of high schools implementing the program, reaching 94% of the goal due to COVID outbreaks and permission issues in Serbia and BiH.

Despite these accomplishments, direct evidence on youth demonstrating increased knowledge, awareness, and improved attitudes and behaviors related to healthy lifestyles, gender equality, and violence prevention is lacking. To address this gap, reliance was placed on baseline/endline assessments' results and proxy interviews with informants closely connected to youth beneficiaries, such as school professionals, youth at risk centers' staff, peer educators, and local partner representatives. Endline assessment results have indicated notable improvements in reproductive health knowledge, with increases ranging from 4% to 21% across most cities compared to the baseline. Participants who were more engaged in the program demonstrated more gender-equal attitudes towards gender norms, particularly evident in Pristina where statistically significant progress was observed. This suggests that active participation in workshops, campaigns, and events correlates with more negative attitudes towards violence among young individuals. Based on the endline school assessment's findings young women have shown greater improvement in attitudes across all assessed aspects. Additionally, in all cities, young women reported a significantly higher level of learning achievements during the workshops compared to young men.

Overall, the **project's accomplishments in achieving and overachieving almost all its targets** are commendable and provide a strong foundation for future initiatives, while the few areas of lower achievement offer valuable lessons for refining and enhancing future project plans.

**Note:** A detailed overview of the project's achievements against the project indicators has been provided in [Annex 7](#).

**E16. The project has demonstrated greater effectiveness in fostering positive changes in the knowledge and attitudes of young women compared to young men across all project countries (baseline/endline assessment as a source).**

**Gender roles**

Young women have experienced more change in attitudes regarding gender roles across all project countries in comparison to young men regardless the level of their participation. The subsample of young men exhibits less gender-equitable attitudes across all cities in the endline survey. This could suggest that the treatment was particularly effective for young women or that they were more receptive to changing their views on gender roles. In comparison to the baseline, statistically significant progress has been observed in the subsample of young women in Banja Luka, Pristina, and Tirana. However, the same effect has not been observed in the subsample of young men.

**Gender norms**

Unequal gender attitudes to gender norms are still present in the subsample of young men across all cities. However, progress has been made in Belgrade, ranging from 4% to 8%. In comparison to the baseline, on average, progress up to 5% has been noted in the subsample of young women, with these changes being most pronounced in Banja Luka and Pristina. Again, we can conclude that attitudes towards gender norms are generally more equal among participants who were more involved in the program, compared to those who participated minimally.

**Homophobia**

In comparison to the baseline, there is a 2% improvement in Belgrade among young men regarding violence towards homosexuals. More substantial progress has been made among young women across all cities, ranging from 2% to 15%, indicating a decreased approval of violent behavior towards homosexuals.

Young women's attitudes toward homosexuals are more open in Belgrade compared to other cities. Around 63% of young women in Belgrade express willingness to accept a homosexual as a friend, whereas in Tirana, Banja Luka, and Pristina, the percentages are 59%, 31%, and 32%, respectively.

**Reproductive health**

Overall, in most cases across all cities, significant progress has been made in the endline in comparison to baseline when it comes to using contraception. It is worth noting that while the use of contraception has increased, ranging from 3-28%, there is still room for improvement, as 1-25% of respondents did not use contraceptives. This emphasizes the necessity for education on sexual and reproductive health and the use of contraceptives in future programs.

**Mental health**

The most prominent progress, in comparison to the baseline, has been noted in confidence in competencies, ranging from 5% to 19% across most cities, in both the subsamples of young men and women.

**GBV**

We can observe that some young men show a certain level of approval for gender-based violence. Around 9-21% of young men approve of gender-based violence if a woman cheats on a man. Approximately 19% of young men from Belgrade, 36% from Banja Luka, and 53% from Pristina and Tirana believe that if a woman is sexually harassed, it is usually because of the way she is dressed. About 10% of young men in Pristina and 7% in Banja Luka feel that a woman should tolerate violence to keep her family together. A positive aspect is that no one from Belgrade and Tirana shares the same view. Attitudes of young women

toward gender-based violence are more negative, as expected. In most cases, agreement with the statements is below 8%. A higher percentage of young women feel that the way young women dress is a cause for sexual violence (4-16%). The results of the analysis suggest that individuals who actively participated in campaigns and events tend to have more negative attitudes towards gender-based violence

### **Learning achievements**

Across all cities, young women reported learning significantly more than young men during the workshops. The workshop environment may align better with the learning preferences of young women, incorporating collaborative activities and discussions.

## 5.3 Gender equality and inclusivity

### **Gender equality and inclusivity**

How did project activities encourage the meaningful participation of young people of different genders and backgrounds?

#### **G1. All project activities have been cross-cutting, promoting gender equality and inclusivity while supporting a human rights-based approach and full inclusivity.**

The project has demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting gender equality and inclusivity through various strategies and approaches. By systematically collecting and analyzing disaggregated data, the project team was able to identify and address disparities in participation, outcomes, and impacts based on gender and other demographic factors. This data-driven approach has provided valuable insights into the specific needs and challenges faced by different groups within the project's target population.

All interviewed informants confirmed that a strong emphasis has been placed on **promoting gender equality and inclusivity, guided by a human rights-based approach** throughout the whole project. This approach ensures that all individuals, regardless of gender or background, have had equal access to project's opportunities and resources. The project has integrated **gender analysis into its design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes**. This has allowed for a deeper understanding of how project activities and interventions impact young women, men, and gender-diverse individuals differently.

The project has actively challenged stereotypes and norms perpetuating gender inequality through the implementation of Program Y in schools and Program Y+ for youth at risk in correctional centers and centers for children and youth without parental care. These initiatives have fostered open discussions and provided education on gender roles and norms, encouraging critical reflection and promoting more equitable attitudes and behaviors among participants. **The end-line assessment of participants who actively engaged in project activities has confirmed a shift in attitudes and behaviors towards greater gender equality and against gender-based violence.**

The project has leveraged its findings and experiences to **advocate for policy changes** and systemic reforms that promote gender equality and inclusivity at the broader societal level particularly through educational and social support system. By engaging with policymakers, government agencies, and civil society organizations, the project has contributed to creating an enabling environment for gender equality and social inclusion.

So, the project's comprehensive approach to integrating gender and inclusivity considerations has resulted in tangible improvements in the lives of project beneficiaries and communities. By addressing structural barriers and promoting equal opportunities for all, the project has made significant steps towards achieving its overarching goals of fostering a more equitable and inclusive society.



### Gender equality and inclusivity

How did project activities encourage the meaningful participation of young people of different genders and backgrounds?

**G2. Through capacity building, awareness raising, and the creation of safe spaces for open discussion on sensitive topics such as sexuality, peer violence, and social inclusion, all young individuals have been empowered to participate and express themselves without fear of prejudice.**

BMCs have become safe environments where young individuals feel comfortable discussing their most delicate concerns, which they may be unable to share elsewhere. Project activities fostered **meaningful participation of young people across diverse genders** and backgrounds through various inclusive and educational approaches. Workshops and campaign events played a significant role in creating safe and supportive spaces where young individuals could engage with topics of gender equality, challenge traditional gender roles and norms, and embrace more inclusive attitudes.

Across all project countries, **participants**, both young men and women, who engaged in more project activities, such as workshops or campaign events, **exhibited more gender-equal attitudes towards gender roles and norms**. Additionally, they **demonstrated significantly reduced bias or prejudice against individuals of homosexual orientation** based on the endline-assessment's results.

By addressing crucial issues such as gender-based violence, partner relationships, and reproductive health, the **project resonated with participants' real-life experiences**, encouraging their active involvement. The focus on peer education was particularly effective as young people often find it easier to relate to and learn from their generations, which likely enhanced the receptiveness to progressive ideas concerning gender and sexuality. The project's **emphasis on sexual and reproductive health education** provided young people with critical knowledge about contraceptives and sexually transmittable infections, empowering them to make informed decisions. This not only improved their individual health outcomes but also fostered a sense of responsibility and autonomy over their bodies and choices (end-line assessment's findings). The inclusivity of the project's activities also contributed to reducing biases and prejudices against LGBTQ+ individuals, indicating a comprehensive approach that embraced and respected sexual orientation diversity. This aspect of the project's work not only educated but also normalized conversations around homosexuality, promoting acceptance and understanding.

*In the workshop focusing on gender and sexuality, a student revealed their identity as pansexual, highlighting the ongoing relevance of topics addressed in the project. Despite progress, there are still areas that require attention, but we remain committed to supporting individuals in navigating these discussions and embracing diverse identities. (BMC Coordinator from Albania)*

### Gender equality and inclusivity

How did project activities encourage the meaningful participation of young people of different genders and backgrounds?

**G3. Quantitative data indicating that the project prioritized the inclusion of marginalized groups, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities is lacking.**

While the project has been commended for creating environments that prioritize safety and inclusivity for all participants, regardless of their backgrounds, there **remains a gap in evidence regarding the involvement of marginalized groups in monitoring tables** although all interviewed informants **confirmed a strong emphasis on promoting gender equality and inclusivity**. These groups include individuals from ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, rural youth, LGBTIQ individuals, Roma, etc. The absence of clear data on the participation of these groups is primarily due to **legislative constraints** that restrict inquiries of this nature in educational settings. Consequently, the monitoring process lacks the necessary mechanisms to track the engagement of marginalized populations, hindering the assessment of their inclusion in project activities and initiatives. Addressing this limitation is crucial to ensure that the project's efforts towards inclusivity are effectively reaching all segments of society and promoting equitable participation.



## 5.4 Sustainability and follow up

### Sustainability and follow up

To what extent have the key actors (partners and other stakeholders) prepared to take over the responsibility and carry on with the implementation of the developed strategies and commitments (ownership and leadership) considering institutional level (beyond project duration)?

#### **S1. The institutionalization of Program Y and Program Y+ has been an important incentive for further project sustainability.**

The institutionalization of Program Y has played a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of the project. This **official recognition and endorsement by relevant authorities and stakeholders** have provided a solid foundation for the continued implementation and support of Program Y initiatives in all countries. With accreditation, Program Y gains legitimacy and credibility, which are essential for securing ongoing funding, resources, and institutional support. Additionally, accreditation serves as a validation of the effectiveness and impact of Program Y, further motivating stakeholders to invest in its continuation.

In **Serbia**, the local project partner has started collaboration with the National Association of Youth Work Practitioners. This collaboration has resulted with the official integration of Program Y into the training curriculum for all professional youth workers across the country. Moreover, the institutionalization of Program Y+ within the "Mosa Pijade" Center for Children without Parental Care in Belgrade, as well as the implementation of Program Y in St. Sava Grammar School and Graphical Vocational School, underscores the sustained impact and continuity of these initiatives beyond the project's completion. Program Y was accredited by the Minister of Education in 2016 and is listed as a program of public importance. Based on this accreditation, the program has been re-accredited in 2021 by the Ministry of Education as a program for the continuous professional development of teachers of national significance.

In **BIH**, Program Y has achieved sustainability through successful implementation within school facilities for the past three years without encountering significant challenges. Despite facing obstacles in obtaining permission to continue the program in schools during the last year, the local partner demonstrated adaptability by relocating activities to Youth Centre facilities. This proactive approach ensures the continuation of the program's impact on youth education and development, highlighting its sustainable nature and commitment to fostering positive change in the community. Similarly, the sustainability of Program Y+ is evident in its implementation at the Children's Centre for Neglected Children "Rada Vranjesevic". Despite facing challenges, such as limited resources and logistical constraints, the program has persevered in its mission to support youth at risk. By providing essential life skills education and support services within the center, Program Y+ continues to make a positive impact on the lives of vulnerable youth, ensuring their ongoing development and well-being and solid perspectives for their resocialization.

The institutionalization of Program Y in **Kosovo** was officially acknowledged during the event on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023. This event, attended by key stakeholders from MESTI and other institutions, marked a significant milestone for the Future for Youth project, as Program Y was **formally integrated into educational framework**. This achievement signifies a historic advancement in educational reform in Kosovo, ensuring that life skills programming is firmly established within the learning and development framework for future generations. Through collaborative efforts, governmental bodies are now empowered to develop and implement sustainable strategies, fostering ongoing educational innovation and reform.

Program Y+ in juvenile correctional institutions has achieved a significant milestone in sustainability through the **granted permission by the Ministry of Justice both in Kosovo and Albania**. This official endorsement provides a solid foundation for the program's continued operation within correctional facilities. With this permission, Program Y+ can integrate seamlessly into institutional protocols and procedures, ensuring its permanency and effectiveness. Moreover, the Ministry of Justice support signifies a commitment to the program goals of rehabilitation and reintegration, paving the way for ongoing funding and resources. By securing this permission, Program Y+ can sustain its impact on detained youth, promoting positive outcomes and reducing recidivism rates in the long term. In addition, the Ministry of Justice of Kosovo has officially authorized the local project partner to operate permanently within correctional facilities nationwide.

Over three years, workshops at Besnik Sykja and Sinan Tafaj high schools in **Tirana** have introduced students and teachers with essential life skills, promoting empathy, understanding of healthy relationships, and awareness of societal influences on gender roles. The described initiatives have focused on ensuring sustainability through long-term impact, capacity building, and community engagement. Workshops at Besnik Sykja and Sinan Tafaj high schools aimed to introduce life skills to students, while the Training of Trainers sessions empower educators to integrate non-formal principles into teaching practices on the aspects covered by the project. Additionally, Peer-to-Peer Leadership Training equips participants with skills to advocate for sustainability in their communities, fostering a culture of positive change and responsibility.

### **Sustainability and follow up**

To what extent have the key actors (partners and other stakeholders) prepared to take over the responsibility and carry on with the implementation of the developed strategies and commitments (ownership and leadership) considering institutional level (beyond project duration)?

**S2. Initiating and utilizing a space for mutual learning during challenging situations is a positive step towards sustainability. However, to ensure the long-term viability of this initiative, it is crucial to establish regular learning sessions during the consortium meetings.**

In response to the challenging incidents at the Sutjeska camp in 2022, where certain participants were offended by others, the project partners took proactive steps to create a conducive learning environment aimed at preventing similar situations. This effort was evidenced by the positive outcomes observed during the camp the following year.

**Status M**, a project partner from Croatia, has been responsible for **providing mentoring support** for the implementation of Program Y+. These mentoring sessions with the project partners were conducted online, facilitating discussions to identify lessons learned and define areas for further improvement. By embedding structured learning opportunities into the project framework, sustainability is enhanced as it fosters continuous improvement, knowledge sharing, and adaptation to evolving circumstances. Regular learning sessions not only contribute to the project effectiveness but also cultivate a culture of learning and innovation, promoting resilience and long-lasting impact. Therefore, prioritizing the establishment of regular learning sessions is essential for the sustainability and success of the initiative.

### **Sustainability and follow up**

To what extent have the key actors (partners and other stakeholders) prepared to take over the responsibility and carry on with the implementation of the developed strategies and commitments (ownership and leadership) considering institutional level (beyond project duration)?

**S3. The project partners and stakeholders have demonstrated a commitment to carrying forward the strategies and commitments developed, indicating a level of preparedness for ownership and leadership at the institutional level beyond the project's duration.**

In Serbia there is clear evidence that workshops based on Program Y have been recognized within strategic documents and school calendars in the School of Excellence in Belgrade (St. Sava Grammar School), highlighting a growing stakeholders' acknowledgment. The response from the school management, especially following tragic events in May 2023 in Belgrade, suggests an increasing recognition of the need for these programs to foster inclusion, tolerance, and understanding. The decision of the school management regarding the **expansion of the project to additional grades** each year signals a commitment to widening its scope within the school educational system.

For the follow up and potential project upscaling there are plans that focus on formation of an alumni network, with the aim of supporting continued result dissemination. Furthermore, the engagement with alternative, creative methods of education, such as performances at Alternative Theatre Dorćol Platz, led by the local partner, suggests innovative approaches for challenging stereotypes and promoting critical thinking. There is an acknowledgment of the need to extend the program's inclusivity, considering additional marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities and other ethnic and national minorities.

Since September 2022, in collaboration with GIZ, NAPOR and local project partner Center E8 in Serbia have been jointly developing curricula and working principles for youth workers based on Program Y. As a result, Program Y has been integrated into the official training curriculum for all professional youth workers operating within the country. This will enhance the future sustainability of the project through the continued efforts of youth workers. Recognizing the sustained significance of Program Y+ and its impact, the local partner has committed **to continuing weekly workshops at the "Mosa Pijade" Center for Children without Parental Care** in Belgrade even after the project completion.

In conclusion, the key actors are not only prepared to continue with the implementation of the developed strategies but are actively seeking ways to expand and deepen their impact. They have shown a readiness to assume responsibility and demonstrate leadership in institutionalizing these programs, ensuring their continuation and growth beyond the project lifespan.

In BiH the project's ability to adjust to changing needs and the vital role of peer educators are crucial for its long-term success. Younger teachers' commitment to continuing non-formal education methods shows promise for keeping the project sustainable. Encouraging teachers through ongoing training could help integrate project activities more deeply into schools.

Despite funding oscillations, the determination to sustain the program autonomously showcases resilience and a profound dedication to its goals. The **Ministry of Justice backing**, though non-financial, **underscores an acknowledgment of the project's significance and future sustainability**. Moreover, there has been a strategic pivot towards supporting the **establishment of an organization of professionals** operating within the juvenile correctional center, a partner instead of the correctional center itself, indicating a proactive view in prevailing bureaucratic obstacles and securing the project's ongoing operations. Training of professional staff working with both adult prisoners and juveniles is noted as a crucial need, indicating that capacity building remains essential, particularly in sensitizing staff to work with minors.

The significant attention and support gathered from the **Ombudsman and the Center for Social Work**, not only increases the project's credibility but also opens doors for its continuation in the educational and social support system. Lastly, the involvement of the local partner in **shaping the Action Plan for Youth 2023-2025** by integrating the Y+ program into its framework showcases a strategic approach to ensuring the project's initiatives are recognized and sustained.

In Kosovo, the proactive engagement of project partners and stakeholders illustrates substantial steps toward taking ownership and leading the implementation of developed strategies and commitments beyond the project duration. The Ministry of Education's **recent strategy incorporates various programs, notably Program Y, which aligns with their gender equality objectives**. Challenges persist in shifting mentalities, particularly in rural areas, but the inclusion of topics like gender equality in extracurricular activities is a promising step.

The Ministry of Justice has officially authorized the local project partner to **operate permanently within correctional facilities nationwide**. The success of Program Y+ is evidenced by the extension of the MoU with the Ministry of Justice, reflecting positive changes among at-risk youth. The **Youth Strategy**, developed by the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports in partnership with YMCA, highlights substantial involvement from civil society organizations in strategic development. This active engagement during the strategy development ensures their ongoing participation in the implementation phase as well.

**Accreditations received from MESTI** for Program Y confirm the institutional commitment to the project's objectives, aiming to address human rights and violence prevention in educational settings. The **endorsement of Program Y guidelines by the Agency for Gender Equality** for the development of schoolbooks further sets its integration into the educational framework. **Plans to engage parents, teachers, and school administrators in info sessions** on gender equality, human trafficking, and domestic violence exemplify a collaborative and multi-faceted approach to tackling these issues, especially in rural areas. The extent of preparation by key actors in Kosovo for taking over responsibility and carrying on with the implementation of strategies shows not only readiness but an active, ongoing process of

institutionalizing the programs and commitments developed, ensuring their continuation and adaptation to evolving community needs.

The success of the AfS partner organization is **deeply rooted in its strategic partnerships with key governmental departments such as the Ministry of Justice**. The signing of a **memorandum of cooperation** and the subsequent training programs for correctional center workers highlight a commitment to improve the situation for at-risk youth and promote gender sensitivity. These actions have led to the **institutionalization of the Y+ Program into the rehabilitation plans**, reflecting a proactive approach to policy change and program sustainability.

The **collaborative event hosted by the partners**, which brought together various justice stakeholders and the Austrian Ambassador, highlights a collective dedication to sharing best practices and ensuring the continuity of transformative projects. This is complemented by AfS's active **involvement in the national youth strategy development** and discussions around the **Law on Youth**, indicating a strong engagement with both governmental and non-governmental entities.

**Academia in Albania has recognized the importance of integrating such modules** into the curriculum as a permanent feature. Plans to expand these initiatives to other universities and increase credits for current teachers and coaches signal an effort to institutionalize these programs within educational frameworks.

The **MoUs signed with the Ministry of Justice and the City of Tirana** to support the continuation of Program Y and Y+ reflect the strengthening of partnerships. The **expansion of BMC activities in schools and new cities** further indicates the project's growth and its increasing reach into smaller communities. The **scaling up of Program Y and BMC in other municipalities outside Tirana, with the support of UNFPA**, demonstrates the project's widening influence. Efforts to **decentralize the implementation of the BMC program and involve parents** more actively are strategies to enhance its community impact. There is also a movement to **extend the BMC model beyond high schools, involving universities and engaging with accreditation agencies**, which is pivotal for the sustainability of gender transformative actions.

In essence, the project in Albania has ensured its sustainability through the committed participation of all involved, from government agencies to individual participants and focus group members expressing a desire to continue advocacy and workshop activities. The collective efforts and strategic partnerships have laid a solid foundation for the project to maintain its impact and expand its reach, showing that the key actors are not only prepared but also actively engaged in taking ownership and carrying on with the implementation of the developed strategies and commitments.

Also, the project consortium has developed the Guidelines for integrating the Program Y's themes (gender equality, sexual and reproductive health, mental health, violence prevention, drug and alcohol abuse prevention) at the university level. This document aims to map out ways in which these topics can be integrated into university curricular or extracurricular activities, ensuring the sustainability of this program even after the project is completed. The guidelines provided reasoned arguments for the establishment of the program at the university level, identify areas where there is a recognized need for its introduction, and justify four models through which this can be accomplished (Program Y as part of existing curricula, as an elective course, as guest lectures, and as extracurricular activities).

#### **Sustainability and follow up**

To what extent have the key actors (partners and other stakeholders) prepared to take over the responsibility and carry on with the implementation of the developed strategies and commitments (ownership and leadership) considering institutional level (beyond project duration)?

**S4. The piloting of the YMI program in North Macedonia emphasizes sustainability through local partnerships and capacity-building efforts, contributing to long-term positive change in communities.**

During 2021, CARE continued its scaling efforts and expanded Young Men Initiative to North Macedonia. CARE partnered with the Center for Research and Policy Creation from Skopje, and piloted Program M in two municipalities in North Macedonia. After the successful implementation of the first phase of the project, with the support of the Embassy of the Netherlands in North Macedonia, CARE continued further scaling through adaptation of Program Y, and building capacities of partners and educators to implement Program Y in school environment. Current project is continuation of initial efforts; however, it includes additional local communities in Skopje (municipality of Center, Gazi Baba), Gostivar, Tetovo, Ohrid, Lathe, Kavadarci and Negotino.

The upscaling of the Young Men Initiative (YMI) program in North Macedonia, led by CARE and local partner not only aims to address gender-based violence and promote gender-equitable social norms among male youth but also prioritizes sustainability through local partnerships and capacity-building efforts. The first phase of the project will include adaptation of CARE's International training manual Program M (Program Men) in accordance with the results gained from the PLA (Participatory Learning and Action) research on gender, masculinities, violence and healthy lifestyles that will be conducted in North Macedonia by research expert, local partner and with guidance of CARE International Balkans.

By establishing BMCs and provide training to local organizations to deliver workshops, the initiative lays the groundwork for long-term impact and replication in other communities. Through intensified cooperation between various stakeholders, including schools, local governments, and civil society, the initiative contributes to the achievement of strategic goals aimed at improving support for youth, enhancing education offerings, and reducing risky behavior and violence. This collaborative approach ensures that the benefits of the YMI program extend beyond the project period, fostering lasting positive change in North Macedonian communities.

#### **Sustainability and follow up**

To what extent have the seven project partners improved their organizational capacities for self-sustainable function as well as lobbying and advocacy?

#### **S5. The local partners have built the foundation for sustained impact and long-term sustainability of the project's achievements by enhancing their advocacy capacities throughout the project.**

Throughout the project implementation, partners have succeeded in cultivating stronger relationships with institutional and other stakeholders while advocating for the accreditation of Program Y and Program Y+. From establishing partnerships with schools and youth-at-risk centers' managements to engaging representatives from various ministries, CSOs, and other movement members, partners have built an impressive network of support. This network can be eagerly tapped into for scaling up this project or implementing similar projects with advocacy components.

While partners may not all be at the same level regarding policy influence and advocacy as they hadn't been before the project, **all partners have demonstrated tangible improvements in their competencies**. Policy influence and advocacy assessments have concluded that **partners have acquired additional advocacy knowledge and experience, leading to enhancements in internal structures such as hiring additional staff or allocating more working hours to existing team members responsible for advocacy activities**. Institutionalizing advocacy work within partner organizations ensures that these efforts become integral to their core functions, guaranteeing their continuation beyond the project's lifespan.

Notable progress has been observed in community mapping, evaluating stakeholders' influence on selected topics, and cultivating a support base to exploit the potential of the created movement. The partners' approach has also promoted accountability among policymakers, fostering a more conducive environment for advancing gender issues even after the project concludes. In summary, by addressing these areas and strengthening their advocacy efforts while establishing stronger connections with relevant stakeholders, the project partners not only deepen their policy influence but also lay the groundwork for sustained impact and long-term sustainability of the project's outcomes and their future advocacy initiatives.

## 6. Conclusions

<b>Conclusion 1:</b>	<b>The project has proven to be a highly relevant intervention in the Western Balkans. Its focus on pressing social issues, inclusive and comprehensive beneficiary engagement, and alignment with local and international policies ensures that it contributes meaningfully to the region's ongoing social transformation and European integration efforts.</b>
Related findings:	<a href="#">R1</a> , <a href="#">R2</a> , <a href="#">R3</a> , <a href="#">R4</a> , <a href="#">R5</a> , <a href="#">R7</a> , <a href="#">R9</a>
<p>The project remains highly relevant across the Western Balkans, where all four countries encounter shared challenges related to extremism, radicalization, and gender equality. While each country progresses towards EU membership at its own pace, they have adopted various policies to address these issues, including gender equality, peer violence, gender-based violence, and promoting healthy lifestyles as integral aspects of youth development. However, the effectiveness of these strategies is often hindered by a <b>lack of concrete implementation mechanisms</b>, resulting in a disparity between intentions and actual outcomes. <b>To bridge this gap, the project offers support to local stakeholders</b> and other professionals, facilitating the <b>integration of critical topics</b> such as gender equality promotion and prevention of extremism and violence <b>into formal education curricula</b>.</p> <p>The project's inclusive approach, encompassing a diverse range of beneficiaries from elementary and high school students to at-risk youth and professionals together with academia ensures that the initiatives resonate across various layers of society. This broad engagement is vital in regions like the Western Balkans, where societal transformation is often slow due to the remainders of past conflicts and deep-rooted social norms. By actively contributing to the advancement of gender equality and the prevention of extremism and violence, the project directly addressed some of the Western Balkans' most pressing concerns. The enhancement of safety and security within local communities is not just a social good but also a step towards stabilizing the region and fostering its European aspirations.</p> <p>The project's <b>alignment with local partners</b> was particularly crucial in this region. By acting as an <b>incentive for organizational growth and development</b>, the project has contributed to building enduring local capacity, which is a cornerstone for the sustainable progress of Western Balkan societies. Moreover, the absence of significant gaps or limitations in the project's design that has affected the project's relevance indicates a well-researched understanding of the regional context.</p>	
<b>Conclusion 2:</b>	<b>The project has demonstrated a unique and vital contribution to the Western Balkans' regional agenda for youth cooperation by bringing to the forefront topics that are often neglected in other similar initiatives.</b>
Related findings:	<a href="#">R6</a> , <a href="#">R8</a> , <a href="#">R9</a>
<p>The project has aligned with overarching regional goals while creating a niche in promoting healthy lifestyles, gender equality, and non-violence—issues that are particularly resonant in societies that are recovering from conflict and are in the middle of social transformation. <b>The adaptability of the life skills education program across diverse social and cultural contexts in the Western Balkans underlines its strength and potential for scalability.</b> This quality is essential in a region marked by varied historical, ethnic, and cultural dynamics. The program's capacity to be contextually tailored enhances its suitability for widespread adoption throughout the region.</p> <p>RYCO is recognized as a regional leader in facilitating youth exchanges, further enhancing its role in fostering understanding, cooperation, and reconciliation. The project has significantly enriched and broadened RYCO's mission, moving beyond its traditional emphasis on peacebuilding and reconciliation. By integrating elements concerning gender equality, radicalization prevention, and extremism mitigation, the project has expanded RYCO's mandate to tackle wider societal challenges confronting young people in the Western Balkans. This transformation underscores the project's dedication to promoting regional collaboration and addressing complex issues that affect youth development and stability in the region.</p>	

<b>Conclusion 3:</b>	<b>The life skills education program, which has been created and implemented by partner organizations, has proven its relevance by addressing critical and often overlooked topics in formal education curricula in target countries.</b>
Related findings:	<a href="#">R2</a> , <a href="#">R9</a>
<p>The life skills education program stands out as a highly relevant initiative within the Western Balkans, having been accurately tailored to address the identified needs of a diverse array of beneficiary groups. It demonstrates a deep understanding of the region's educational and societal gaps, particularly by enriching the formal education system with essential but often neglected topics. The project has filled a substantial gap, equipping young people with the necessary competencies to navigate complex social realities, promote gender equality, and embrace non-violent norms, which are crucial for the development of democratic and peaceful societies in the Western Balkans. The program's relevance lies in its <b>responsiveness to the current educational landscape's shortcomings</b> and its commitment to the comprehensive development of young people in the Western Balkans. This project is not only a model of educational excellence but also a catalyst for broader social change in the region.</p>	

<b>Conclusion 4:</b>	<b>The project has effectively sparked a positive transformation in the Western Balkans by reshaping youth attitudes towards gender equality and norms, while also enhancing knowledge on inclusivity and health. Its comprehensive impact has guided the involved youth towards a future characterized by greater awareness and equity.</b>
Related findings:	<a href="#">E1</a> , <a href="#">E2</a> , <a href="#">E3</a> , <a href="#">E4</a> , <a href="#">E5</a>
<p>The project has <b>effectively changed attitudes and increased knowledge</b> in vital areas of gender norms, inclusivity, and health among youth in the Western Balkans. The participation in project activities, such as workshops and campaign events, has resulted in young men and women fostering more gender-equal attitudes and reducing prejudices, particularly related to gender quality, gender norms and violence. <b>This indicates a successful shift towards a more open-minded and equitable societal perspective among participants, showing the project's effective strategies in addressing deep-rooted cultural norms and biases.</b></p> <p>Moreover, the significant <b>increase in understanding sexual and reproductive health</b> and prevention measures highlights the project's impactful role in enhancing the well-being and informed decision-making of young individuals. Such education is critical for empowering youth with the knowledge to make safe choices, positively affecting public health outcomes. The improved attitudes towards violence in three out of the four project countries demonstrate that the project's reach in modifying behavioral norms extends to critical social issues, underscoring its multifaceted impact. This shift is indicative of the program's capability to influence perspectives and encourage non-violent interactions, contributing to safer and more respectful communities. Additionally, the <b>positive testimonials from parents regarding the personal growth</b> of their children further validate the project's beneficial influence on youth development. While the <b>feedback suggests a need for reinforcing the visibility of gender equality and LGBT inclusivity</b> in parental engagement, the overall parent response confirms the project's holistic impact on participants' lives.</p>	

<b>Conclusion 5:</b>	<b>The increase in knowledge was attained irrespective of participants' level of engagement, while the shift in attitudes was noted exclusively among those who participated more than the average. This documented transformation provides concrete evidence of the project's effectiveness and impact. It underscores the importance of providing continuous and comprehensive support to young people regarding gender equality, GBV, peer violence, and fostering a culture of understanding and acceptance of differences.</b>
Related findings:	<a href="#">E1</a> , <a href="#">E2</a> , <a href="#">E3</a> , <a href="#">E4</a>
<p>The project has been successful in fostering more gender-equal attitudes and reducing biases against the LGBTIQ+ community among young men and women <b>who engaged more deeply</b> with its activities.</p>	



This engagement through workshops and campaign events was a critical factor in shifting attitudes towards gender roles, norms, and violence, which indicates that **active participation in the project's offerings is associated with significant attitudinal change**. The direct involvement in the project's interactive elements appears to be the catalyst for these social and behavioral transformations.

For the young men and women in the project countries, it seems that simply accessing the information was sufficient to enhance their understanding of sexual-reproductive health. This suggests that the project's educational materials and messaging on health topics were designed and delivered in a way that made them accessible and impactful, regardless of how frequently the individuals participated in the project activities.

On the other hand, the substantial shift in attitudes on sensitive social issues such as gender roles and violence correlate with a higher level of participation. This indicates that **attitudinal change, especially in areas that challenge existing societal norms and personal beliefs, is facilitated by immersive and repeated interactions provided by the project's workshops and campaign events**. It underscores the importance of sustained engagement and the active processing of information and discussions in altering deep-seated attitudes and biases.

There is a space for improvement in **establishing a series of behavioral change indicators** for policymakers, rights holders, and partners collaborating within the project. Furthermore, incorporating elements **like first-person narratives, human libraries, and similar initiatives into the project's framework can serve as powerful tools for driving further attitudinal shifts**.

<b>Conclusion 6:</b>	<b>The project didn't solely target the direct beneficiaries, the young people themselves, but also empowered educators and facilitators with the necessary tools and skills to uphold and disseminate the project's objectives, thereby contributing to its long-term sustainability.</b>
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Related findings:	<a href="#">E6</a> , <a href="#">S3</a>
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The project's impact extends beyond the immediate educational sessions with young individuals. It has effectively enhanced the capacities of educators and juvenile correctional center staff. **By equipping these key influencers with high-quality content and the competencies required for effective non-formal education, the project has placed a strong foundation for a sustainable change in how vital topics are addressed with youth.**

The non-formal approach, which aligns with the needs and preferences of young people, is critical in fostering an engaging and receptive learning environment. This method is particularly beneficial for addressing these refined and personal topics covered by the project, as it allows for more interactive, empathetic, and personalized communication, which is more likely to resonate with and be retained by young individuals. The project has made a strategic impact by empowering those at the frontline of youth education and rehabilitation with the capabilities to continue the mission of the project. This ensures that the influence of the program will continue to be felt in the long term, as these professionals use their new skills to shape the attitudes and behaviors of the youth they work with, reinforcing the project's objectives and fostering an environment conducive to personal growth and social development.

<b>Conclusion 7:</b>	<b>The project has not only achieved its intended outcomes but also facilitated beneficial changes that were not originally anticipated. These outcomes could be further upscaled by incorporating lessons learned into future comprehensive MEL systems, enhancing the capacities of BMCs and their members and leveraging alumni networks and involving past participants in promoting the project's goals.</b>
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Related findings:	<a href="#">E7</a> , <a href="#">E8</a> , <a href="#">E9</a>
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The project has **provided unintended yet profoundly positive outcomes** that enhance its overall success. The initiative's **ability to respond to unexpected challenges, influence institutional policies, and create lasting community resources** underlines its role as a transformative force within the Western



Balkans. These outcomes suggest that the **project has not only met its objectives but has also catalyzed a wider cultural and educational shift**, laying the groundwork for enduring social change.

The proactive measures taken by project partners following the Sutjeska camp incident in 2022 resulted in the creation of a **more respectful and inclusive learning environment**. This improvement is a legacy to the project's ability to learn from experience, to evolve, and to foster a positive culture among participants. Such adaptability is crucial in managing the complexities of group dynamics and ensuring the project's sustainability.

The integration of Program Y into the **mandatory curriculum at the Faculty of Sports and Physical Education in Tirana** underscores the project's unexpected impact on educational policy, **particularly in a faculty predominantly occupied by men**. Despite initial expectations for such changes in social or humanities faculties, this shift represents a significant systemic transformation towards embedding gender-inclusive practices within higher education. Moreover, considering that graduates from this faculty often assume leadership positions in schools and the sports industry, the **project's influence extends beyond university walls**. The establishment of an alumni network further amplifies this impact, empowering future professionals to champion gender inclusivity throughout their careers.

The **transformation of BMCs into comprehensive resource centers** highlights the project's role in creating lasting community infrastructure. These centers now serve as vital hubs where youth can safely express their concerns, seek advice, and receive professional support. This development not only addresses the immediate needs of young people but also contributes to the long-term well-being of the community by providing ongoing support and resources. Continued efforts should be directed towards strengthening BMCs through ongoing capacity building for members and peer educators. Additionally, strategic partnerships with local influencers and media should be leveraged to enhance visibility and outreach efforts.

<b>Conclusion 8:</b>	<b>The project has showcased not only effectiveness and adaptability in its implementation but also resilience in navigating unstable political landscapes. Additionally, it has shown the capacity to significantly influence community attitudes on key social issues. These achievements serve as compelling evidence of its effectiveness and sustainability.</b>
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Related findings:	<a href="#">E10</a> , <a href="#">E11</a> , <a href="#">E15</a> , <a href="#">S3</a>
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The project has navigated a challenging environment, particularly in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, by showing resilience and flexibility when faced with less cooperative policy environments. Despite these external pressures, the project's persistence in maintaining its core objectives illustrates a strong commitment to its foundational goals and a readiness to adapt as needed to continue its impactful work. By remaining agile and responsive, the project has been able to navigate obstacles and continue its impactful work in the face of adversity. This adaptability not only reflects the project's commitment to its goals but also its determination to overcome challenges and create positive change in the communities it serves. The project's resilience, flexibility, and firm commitment to its core objectives highlight its effectiveness and dedication to promoting positive societal change. Despite facing challenging environments, the project remains resolute in its pursuit of empowering youth and fostering a more inclusive and equitable society.

<b>Conclusion 9:</b>	<b>The project has made a significant impact on both policy and practice levels regarding life skills education in the target countries, particularly highlighting the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement through the adoption of a multisectoral approach.</b>
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Related findings:	<a href="#">E11</a> , <a href="#">E12</a> , <a href="#">E13</a> , <a href="#">E14</a>
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The project has proven to be highly effective in influencing educational policy reform and in engaging policymakers and stakeholders in the active development of initiatives that support life skills education. **By directly contributing to the creation, implementation, and revision of policies, the project**

**demonstrates its tangible impact on the structural level of educational systems.** The project's success can be attributed to the strategic engagement of key stakeholders and the utilization of a multisectoral approach. This method has facilitated comprehensive integration of life skills programming within institutional and stakeholders' structures, indicating that collaborative efforts are more likely to result in substantial and lasting impact.

The project showcased exceptional effectiveness by adopting a tailor-made approach that responded to the distinct political and social landscapes of each target country. **In countries where policymakers were accessible and cooperative, the project capitalized on this openness to foster direct engagement, driving policy development and revisions that support life skills education.** In instances where policymakers remained unapproachable, the project demonstrated agility by **pivoting its focus to other influential stakeholders within the educational and youth sectors.** This strategic reorientation ensured that the **project's objectives were still advanced,** although through different channels. By engaging with a diverse array of agents—from educators and community leaders to youth organizations—the project secured its impact and sustained its momentum in areas that were crucial for the intended change.

<b>Conclusion 10:</b>	<b>The project across the target countries has made a significant and multidimensional impact on young individuals, their families, educational institutions, and broader policy frameworks. There is a need for improvement in quality assurance standards and MEL practices.</b>
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Related findings:	<a href="#">E1</a> , <a href="#">E2</a> , <a href="#">E3</a> , <a href="#">E4</a> , <a href="#">E5</a> , <a href="#">E6</a> , <a href="#">E7</a> , <a href="#">E8</a> , <a href="#">E9</a> , <a href="#">E10</a> , <a href="#">E11</a> , <a href="#">E12</a> , <a href="#">E13</a> , <a href="#">E14</a> , <a href="#">E15</a> , <a href="#">E16</a>
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The project has successfully met and often exceeded most of its targets, showcasing a strong, positive impact in promoting gender-transformative life skills education. By engaging a wide range of beneficiary groups and adapting its strategies to each unique context, the project has achieved widespread and inclusive impact. It has empowered youth and has fostered supportive environments for vulnerable populations. This strategic approach, combined with the project's adaptability and resilience, has facilitated not only immediate educational benefits but also broader societal and policy-level advancements.

Given the program's outstanding overachievements, exceeding 120% in many instances and even surpassing 250% in some cases, it's imperative to set targets for each indicator that are more realistic, particularly considering the project's extensive implementation period. So, rather than aiming for modest goals, it's essential to establish targets that are both attainable and optimal. There is **a necessity for a robust MEL system** that will provide valuable insights into the program's progress and guide future interventions to maximize impact and outcomes. Also, there is **a need for improvement in quality assurance standards** within the project consortium, particularly led by CARE. It's essential to accurately assess the suitability of all activities, ensuring they align closely with the project's objectives and values. Inadequate data collection tools have resulted in a lack of direct evidence regarding the project's achievements against certain indicators, such as the improvement of skills among professionals in juvenile correctional centers. While proxy interviews provided some insights, their validity was limited due to a lack of triangulation with direct beneficiaries.

<b>Conclusion 11:</b>	<b>The project's focus on gender transformative actions is integral to its objectives, and the findings underscore its dedication to fostering gender equality and inclusivity across all activities.</b>
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Related findings:	<a href="#">E9</a> , <a href="#">E16</a> , <a href="#">G1</a> , <a href="#">G2</a> , <a href="#">G3</a>
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The project's **impact on gender transformative actions is obvious and profound.** The project's **commitment to gender transformation has been evident** in its cross-cutting approach, ensuring that every initiative promoted gender equality and supported a human rights-based approach. The intervention has created and used **safe spaces for young people that serve for dialogue on sensitive issues like sexuality, peer violence, and social inclusion.** Such environments are critical in challenging and

transforming traditional gender norms and stereotypes, empowering all young individuals to express themselves freely and without fear of discrimination.

The project has also demonstrated significant strides in fostering gender transformation by actively engaging both young men and women in various activities and workshops. Through targeted interventions, it has challenged traditional gender norms and promoted more equitable attitudes towards gender roles for both young men and women that have taken more active role in the project's activities. By involving young men in discussions and initiatives aimed at gender equality, the project has contributed to breaking down barriers and fostering a more inclusive environment. Additionally, partnerships with educational institutions and the integration of Program Y into academic curricula same as accrediting of Program Y+ for young law violators have furthered the project's gender-transformative impact by reaching a broader audience and embedding principles of gender equality into formal education.

While **direct evidence of inclusivity among marginalized groups is limited** by legislation that protects minors, this presents an opportunity for the project to explore alternative, non-invasive methods of demonstrating inclusivity. These could include qualitative assessments, case studies, or the development of new tools that respect legal constraints while still capturing the range of the project's impact.

<b>Conclusion 12:</b>	<b>The project's sustainability strategy positions it strongly to maintain and expand its influence in life skills education. This ensures lasting benefits for the target communities and stakeholders in the future. The focus of improvement and upscaling efforts should shift towards evidence-based learning, expanding into other countries within the region, and targeting a broader range of young people and stakeholders from disadvantaged communities.</b>
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Related findings:	<a href="#">S1</a> , <a href="#">S2</a> , <a href="#">S3</a> , <a href="#">S4</a> ,
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Establishing Program Y and Program Y+ within institutional frameworks represents a critical milestone in fostering sustainable life skills education. Through these integrations, the project guarantees that **these programs hold a formal and lasting position** within the education system, **whether within formal educational and correctional institutions or in more non-formal educational settings**. This institutionalization ensures the continued presence and impact of the initiatives, laying a solid foundation for long-term sustainability.

The **demonstrated commitment of project partners and stakeholders** to advance developed strategies and commitments suggests a readiness for these entities to assume ownership and leadership roles. This readiness is a promising sign of the project's sustainability, as it indicates that the initiatives have the support and buy-in necessary to continue beyond the project's initial timeframe.

**Expanding into other countries within the region** presents an opportunity to reach a wider audience and address similar challenges faced by neighboring communities. By leveraging lessons learned from the current project implementation, the expansion can be more strategic and impactful. Expansion efforts, such as the piloting of the YMI program in North Macedonia, show an active pursuit of sustainability through regional scaling and partnership building.

Targeting a **broader range of young people and stakeholders from disadvantaged communities** (e.g. rural areas, certain vocation schools, Roma and other ethnic minorities.) is essential for ensuring inclusivity and addressing equity issues. By actively engaging with these communities, the project can better understand their unique needs and tailor interventions accordingly. **Guidelines for integrating the Program Y** themes (gender equality, sexual and reproductive health, mental health, violence prevention, drug and alcohol abuse prevention) **at the university level** are designed to ensure the sustainability of the project beyond its completion. The guidelines underscore the importance of building alliances with university stakeholders and providing ongoing support to facilitate the successful implementation of Program Y, thereby enhancing its long-term viability within the university setting.

<b>Conclusion 13:</b>	<b>The project has notably reinforced the sustainability of gender-focused initiatives through the growth of local partners in policy influence and advocacy. Enhancing capacity in advocacy and networking with local stakeholders is crucial for achieving future policy and advocacy goals.</b>
Related findings:	<a href="#">S5</a>
<p>The project's <b>sustainability is evidenced by the significant advancements</b> made by the partners. They have <b>not only increased their understanding of gender issues but have also effectively engaged with a variety of stakeholders</b>, an essential component in driving policy reform. The partners have confirmed <b>a dedication to sustaining their impact on gender-related policies and life skills education</b>. Their continued <b>commitment to refining advocacy skills and strategies</b> is instrumental in ensuring the durability and resilience of their initiatives, paving the way for enduring societal transformation in gender equality and education. Through policy influence and advocacy assessments, each partner has gained valuable insights to develop a roadmap for enhancing their internal capacities for more impactful policy changes. These improvements involve allocating more resources, including time and staff, to the advocacy component, continuously strengthening capacity in this area, networking with relevant stakeholders, and expanding outreach and community mobilization efforts.</p> <p>Also <b>CARE as lead organization should take a proactive position in advocacy efforts, particularly in countries like Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)</b> which are facing with a constant shrinking of civic space and lack of policymakers' accountability.</p>	

<b>Conclusion 14:</b>	<b>The Future 4 You(th) Movement has been established to mobilize communities in initiating changes in educational policy, ensuring a louder voice for youth within the public sphere.</b>
Related findings:	<a href="#">E11</a> , <a href="#">E13</a> , <a href="#">E15</a> , <a href="#">S3</a>
<p>The organized campaigns at the local level have had a substantial reach, engaging thousands of individuals through school-based and community initiatives. These campaigns have made a notable impact in promoting gender equality, peaceful masculinities, and in addressing hate speech and intolerance. The significant reach of these initiatives – engaging both youth and adults – showcases the project's ability to resonate with a wide audience and to generate awareness on important social issues across various demographics. Communities have been mobilized and actively engaged in driving educational policy change, ensuring stronger public voices for youth within the <b>Future 4 You(th) Movement</b>. A total of <b>4,038 individuals</b> have joined the regional movement in support of life skills education, with <b>115 movement members</b> (CSOs, institutions, etc.) actively involved in developing the strategic plan and participating in task force groups for advocacy. There is room for improvement concerning campaigning efforts. Innovative campaigning methods should be tailored more closely to local contexts and hard-to-reach groups to enhance effectiveness.</p>	

<b>Conclusion 15:</b>	<b>Based on the available data, it is evident that the project has achieved or exceeded most of its targets, indicating its effectiveness. However, there is absence of some data against certain key performance indicators highlighting the need for a more robust MEL system with clearly defined tasks and adequate data collection instruments.</b>
Related findings:	<a href="#">E15</a>
<p>From the available data, it is evident that the project has successfully <b>met or exceeded most of its targets</b>, which underscores its effectiveness. It's important to emphasize that data regarding the improvement of social welfare staff skills are lacking. <b>Limited data availability</b> for these indicators is due to constraints in data collection within juvenile correctional centers and inadequate data collection instruments. However, proxy interviews with representatives from local partners, staff, beneficiaries, and officials from the Ministries of Justice in Albania and Kosovo indicate that staff have improved their capacities, and beneficiaries have shown improved attitudes, particularly towards peer violence, assertive communication, and tolerance. It's noteworthy that no data triangulation has been conducted due to lack of direct feedback from both young law offenders and professionals within the correctional centers.</p>	

The project **has shown promising results in its objectives**, but there **remains a critical need for improved data collection and direct feedback mechanisms** to accurately measure its impact on staff skill enhancement and behavioral changes among the targeted youth populations. Moving forward, it would be beneficial to prioritize these aspects to ensure all project targets can be robustly evaluated and sustained over time.

<b>Conclusion 16:</b>	<b>The project intervention has shown its relevance across all genders and cities, with particularly notable results among young women. However, there remains a pressing need for educational and awareness programs promoting tolerance and acceptance among all demographics. Additionally, the current design of the capacity building program has been more effective in meeting the learning needs and preferences of young women compared to young men.</b>
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Related findings:	<a href="#">R6a</a> , <a href="#">R11</a> , <a href="#">E16</a>
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The baseline/endline assessment indicates that the project has been more successful in promoting positive changes in the knowledge and attitudes of young women compared to young men across all project countries. **Young women have shown greater improvement in attitudes across all assessed aspects.** Additionally, **in all cities, young women reported a significantly higher level of learning during the workshops compared to young men.** This suggests that the workshop environment may better adjust to the learning preferences of young women, possibly due to the inclusion of collaborative activities and discussions.

The results of the endline survey emphasize the persistent presence of **unequal gender attitudes among young men across all cities**, indicating a critical area for intervention and education. The data also highlights **troubling levels of approval for gender-based violence among young men**, underscoring the necessity for comprehensive education and awareness initiatives to address such harmful attitudes. Although most of **both young men and women disapprove of gender-based violence**, the existence of approval among certain segments of young men underscores the complexity of the issue and emphasizes the importance of targeted interventions. With a notable presence of homophobic attitudes among young men, there is a pressing need for educational and awareness programs promoting tolerance and acceptance.

In all project countries, **young men and women** who participated in a greater number of project activities, including workshops or events related to campaigns, demonstrated more gender-equal attitudes towards gender roles and norms. The pivotal factor in shifting attitudes towards gender equality relies heavily on the level of participation of both young men and women. To empower more young men for increased involvement, it's imperative to implement a series of new tools tailored specifically to engage this demographic.



## 7. Recommendations

Target: Local partners		
No.	Related conclusion:	Recommendation
LP1	<a href="#">C5</a>	<b>Involvement of parents:</b> Local partners should initiate the involvement of parents at the beginning of project implementation. This engagement should include comprehensive info sessions where the project's objectives, intended impacts, and the importance of behavior change towards mutual understanding and non-violent communication are clearly presented. By doing so, parents can become allies in the project, reinforcing its goals within the family setting, which is critical for the adoption of new perspectives on gender and inclusivity.
LP2	<a href="#">C5</a>	<b>Informing the parents:</b> In future projects, prioritize engaging with parents by organizing informal meetings designed to enhance their understanding of gender equality, gender-based violence (GBV), and LGBT inclusivity through the lens of human rights and societal advantages. Including the local stakeholders could also be beneficial. Try to establish a supportive atmosphere where parents can freely ask questions and express their concerns, fostering open dialogue and dispelling misconceptions. Highlight the significance of embracing diversity, emphasizing that all young individuals, including their own children, may identify with minority groups, be it ethnic, national, or otherwise.
LP3	<a href="#">C5</a>	<b>Implement innovative approaches</b> such as "living library" sessions or similar interactive methods that allow young people to directly engage with individuals from diverse backgrounds and understand their challenges. By providing opportunities for personal interaction and empathy-building, these approaches can effectively support young people in identifying with individuals facing various challenges, including but not limited to those related to gender identity, HIV status, substance abuse recovery, and experiences of violence. These initiatives foster a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and promote empathy, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and empathetic society.
LP4	<a href="#">C13</a>	<b>Networking:</b> Local partners should establish deeper collaborations with national and regional mechanisms that unite parents, teachers, child rights organizations, minorities and human rights protection and networks. Integrating these stakeholders into national lobbying and advocacy actions will strengthen the push for program topics to be prioritized on the national and regional political agenda. Aligning with movements that share similar goals and agendas, such as those advocating for women's or youth's rights, will amplify the movement's reach and efficacy, creating a united front for change.
LP5	<a href="#">C8</a>	<b>Larger outreach:</b> For enhanced campaigning and broader outreach impact, it's crucial to prioritize the identification of key figures, local influencers, formal and informal groups, and grassroots organizations actively engaged in human rights protection, anti-discrimination efforts, and violence prevention. Collaborating with these stakeholders enables meaningful partnerships and collective initiatives, leveraging community resources and strengths to address human rights challenges effectively. Utilizing community mapping techniques, local partners can mobilize support, drive enduring change, and foster a safer and more inclusive community environment for everyone.

LP6	<a href="#">C8</a>	<b>Innovative approaches:</b> Utilize design thinking and other innovative approaches in designing campaigns aimed at reaching specific target groups, including policymakers, parents, teachers, and other hard to reach groups. Design thinking offers a human-centered approach to problem-solving, emphasizing empathy, creativity, and iterative prototyping, which can be highly effective in crafting tailored campaigns that resonate with diverse audiences. By employing design thinking methodologies, project teams can gain a deeper understanding of the needs, preferences, and challenges faced by different target groups. This enables the development of campaigns that are not only engaging and impactful but also relevant and meaningful to the intended audience. Design thinking encourages collaboration and co-creation, involving stakeholders in the campaign design process. This participatory approach fosters ownership and buy-in from key stakeholders, increasing the likelihood of campaign success and sustainability.
LP7	<a href="#">C12</a>	<b>Integration at university:</b> The project has developed guidelines for integrating Program Y at the university level, emphasizing the importance of establishing alliances with university stakeholders and providing continuous support to ensure the successful implementation of Program Y. This approach aims to enhance the program's long-term sustainability within the university environment. Despite expectations of successful cooperation and integration of Program Y at the university level, the most significant progress has been achieved only within the Faculty of Sports and Physical Education in Tirana regarding the integration of the program. This approach could serve as a model for other partners and their efforts to integrate Program Y at the university level.

Target: <b>CARE</b>		
No.	Related conclusion:	Recommendation
CARE 1	<a href="#">C11</a>	<b>Addressing the lack of quantitative data:</b> Given the legal restrictions protecting minors, the project should explore alternative methods to demonstrate inclusivity more concretely. CARE should conduct qualitative interviews or focus group discussions with individuals from vulnerable groups, such as LGBTIQ+ youth, ethnic minorities, rural youth, young people with disabilities, etc. These discussions can provide firsthand accounts of their experiences and perspectives on inclusivity within the project. Creating case studies highlighting specific instances of inclusivity and its impact on marginalized individuals can offer tangible evidence of the project's efforts. Additionally, developing innovative tools, such as interactive surveys or digital storytelling platforms, could help capture the diverse experiences of marginalized groups while respecting legal constraints. By employing these concrete methods, the project can effectively showcase its commitment to inclusivity and its meaningful impact on marginalized communities.
CARE 2	<a href="#">C10</a> , <a href="#">C15</a>	<b>Quality assurance:</b> As the lead organization in the project consortium, for CARE it's crucial to prioritize quality assurance measures to ensure the success and effectiveness of the project. One suggestion is to thoroughly assess the suitability of all activities, ensuring they align with the project's objectives and values. This involves scrutinizing the appropriateness of traditional practices, like distributing flowers on Women's Day, and opting instead for activities that more effectively promote gender equality and inclusivity. By thoughtfully evaluating the relevance of each activity, the project can maintain its integrity and maximize its impact on the target communities. Quality assurance standards should also be applied to project monitoring as well. By applying quality assurance standards to project monitoring, organizations can ensure the reliability and validity of monitoring data, enabling informed decision-making, and enhancing overall project effectiveness.

CARE 3	<a href="#">C5</a> , <a href="#">C10</a> , <a href="#">C15</a>	<b>Behavioral change indicators:</b> It's essential to establish a series of behavioral change indicators for policymakers, rights holders, and partners working in cooperation within the project. This involves developing a comprehensive framework that outlines specific behaviors related to gender equality, inclusivity, and human rights that these stakeholders should demonstrate. These indicators should be measurable, observable, and aligned with the project's goals, allowing for systematic tracking of progress and impact on behavioral levels. By implementing such indicators, the lead organization can effectively monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and initiatives, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that efforts are contributing to meaningful behavioral change among key stakeholders.
CARE 4	<a href="#">C12</a>	<b>Empowering learning:</b> It is recommended that the lead organization in the project consortium organizes regular online and offline learning sessions focused on aspects that require adjustment to the scope of work. These sessions should also provide a platform for sharing both significant change stories and "low lights" or challenges encountered during project implementation. By incorporating discussions on both highlights and lowlights, participants can gain valuable insights, lessons learned, and best practices. This approach fosters a culture of transparency, collaboration, and continuous learning within the project consortium, ultimately strengthening collective efforts towards achieving project goals.
CARE 5	<a href="#">C12</a>	<b>Expanding to vocational schools:</b> Prioritize collaborating with vocational schools to address the significant gap in reproductive health education, gender equality, and gender-based violence within their curriculum. Develop tailored curricula, workshops, and educational resources specifically designed for vocational schools to ensure comprehensive education on these topics for all students. Partners typically focus on grammar schools (gymnasiums) due to their students having more exposure to general subjects like biology and civic education, which touch upon sexual and reproductive health as well as human rights and inclusivity. By prioritizing vocational schools, it's possible to bridge this gap and ensure larger outreach in gender equality and violence prevention education.
CARE 6	<a href="#">C12</a>	<b>Project intervention customization:</b> For the forthcoming phase of the project, it is advisable to adopt an asymmetric approach, focusing efforts on specific target groups that are determined by the local context within each of the four countries. This tailored approach requires acknowledging the diverse degrees of stakeholder engagement and the different stages of institutionalizing life skills education in each country. By customizing interventions and prioritizing target groups based on country-specific needs and conditions, the project can maximize its effectiveness and impact. This strategy will ensure that resources are allocated strategically, thereby enhancing the project's overall success and long-term viability. For instance, in Kosovo, where fruitful cooperation with national policymakers is established, attention should shift to implementing life skills education at the local level and rural areas. In Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, facing challenges with shrinking civic space, more support is needed for policy influence and advocacy efforts. Meanwhile, in Albania, a greater focus on gender equality is required, specifically addressing the inclusion of diverse gender identities and destigmatizing the LGBTQ+ community. Tailoring interventions to address these specific needs will ensure that resources are allocated strategically, enhancing the project's success and long-term sustainability.
CARE 7	<a href="#">C13</a>	<b>Advocacy capacity building:</b> These initiatives should be tailored to address specific areas identified for improvement, such as enhancing stakeholder engagement, refining advocacy strategies, and strengthening impact assessment. By providing targeted training and mentoring support, CARE can empower staff and partners with the necessary tools and knowledge to effectively advocate for policy change and influence decision-making processes. This proactive approach will help to maximize the impact of



		advocacy efforts and advance the program's objectives in promoting positive change within the targeted communities. CARE should also take a proactive position in advocacy efforts, particularly in countries like Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where policymakers have been less responsive to integrating Program Y and Y+ into formal educational curricula.
CARE 8	<a href="#">C10</a>	<b>Realistic target values against defined project indicators:</b> Considering the program's significant overachievements, exceeding 120% in many instances and even surpassing 250% in some cases, it's imperative to consider developing targets for each indicator that are both reachable and optimal, rather than modest. It's important to develop robust indicators and support the setting of realistic yet ambitious targets. These targets will not only facilitate a better understanding of the program's progress but also enable more effective steering and adjustment of interventions. Also, they will assist in planning new initiatives to maximize impact and ensure that the program achieves its objectives in improving the lives of communities in the region.
CARE 9	<a href="#">C7</a>	<b>BMC development and promotion:</b> CARE in cooperation with local partners should intensify promotion of BMCs through well-planned campaigns and events, targeting youth engagement and leveraging partnerships with local influencers and media for broader visibility. Improving the organizational framework of BMCs is also essential, with team-building and strategic planning involving key stakeholders like teachers, parents and siblings of current members to support BMC initiatives and improve operational efficiency. Additionally, providing BMC members with tailored training in leadership, advocacy, and project management will further empower them to drive community change. Finally, investing in the facilitation skills of peer educators is vital for effective program delivery and to reinforce group cohesion for the BMCs' continued success and sustainability.
CARE 10	<a href="#">C5</a> , <a href="#">C10</a> , <a href="#">C15</a>	<b>Developing a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system:</b> This is essential for ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of project and requires a clear division of tasks among project stakeholders to ensure accountability and efficiency in data collection, analysis, and reporting. By investing in a comprehensive MEL system, project managers and local partners can track progress, identify areas for improvement, and make informed decisions to optimize project outcomes. A well-designed MEL system enhances transparency and accountability, enabling stakeholders to assess the project's impact and ensure alignment with its objectives.
CARE 11	<a href="#">C10</a> , <a href="#">C11</a> , <a href="#">C12</a> , <a href="#">C15</a>	<b>More programmatic staff:</b> For addressing the similar projects in the future with such broad objectives and complex approaches, it is advisable for the lead organization to allocate a larger portion of its budget towards hiring additional staff. By increasing the number of personnel, especially experts in various fields like project monitoring and advocacy support, the organization can better manage and execute the project's objectives.
CARE 12	<a href="#">C16</a>	<b>Addressing young men's learning needs:</b> Involving role models important for young men could be a valuable addition to the capacity building program, helping to make the learning experience more engaging and relevant for them. This approach could inspire and motivate young men by providing examples of success and leadership within their own communities. Additionally, incorporating more teaching methods and activities that resonate with the preferences and learning styles of young men can further enhance their participation and learning outcomes. By addressing these specific needs and preferences, the program can better support the holistic development of all participants, regardless of gender.

## 8. Annexes

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## Annex 2: Data Collection Tools

### 2.1 Focus group protocol

Aim	The aim of these FGDs is to identify key outcomes among project's beneficiaries (high school students) who have participated in the project activities.
Duration	60-90 minutes
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose and aim of FGD including information about data processing and guaranteed anonymity of the provided inputs.</li> <li>• Steps will be taken to protect the confidentiality of sensitive information.</li> <li>• Presence of other adult staff member is necessary due to safeguarding procedures as minors will be present on the session.</li> <li>• Written consents from all participants signed by parent/guardian will be needed before starting the session.</li> </ul>
Participants' profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6-8 young project's beneficiaries, diversification ensured in gender, age, localization (urban/rural communities) and profile (ensuring participation of young people with fewer opportunities).</li> </ul>
Intro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief energizer and name game to ensure safe-space and to open the session in a friendly manner.</li> </ul>
Criterion: <b>relevance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did the stuff you did in this project vibe with what you're into? Got any cool stories about how it fit your interests or needs?</li> </ul>
Criterion: <b>effectiveness and comparative advantage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What's the biggest thing you're taking away from being a part of this project? Did it switch up the way you see things or how you act? Which topics did you notice this change the most, and can you share a specific time this happened?</li> <li>• What made this project different from other things you've been part of? Was there anything that made it stand out to you?</li> </ul>
Criterion: <b>sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you think you could keep this project going at your school or in your neighborhood? Why or why not?</li> <li>• What skills or resources do you already have that could help you continue this project, and what do you need that you don't have yet?</li> </ul>
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there anything super important you want the people checking out this project to know about your experience?</li> </ul>

## 2.2 Key informant interviews

Criterion	Evaluation questions	Interview questions	Informants
<p>Relevance and coherence</p>	<p>To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities and the relevant sectoral policies of the target countries and proven to be feasible?</p> <p>Are there any gaps or limitations in the project's design or implementations that affect its relevance?</p> <p>How well did the project fit within the youth agenda in your country and current regional trends regarding youth?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has the project responded to the needs of the main target groups? Could you elaborate on these needs?</li> <li>• How did you identify those needs? Did this process include an analysis of the distinct needs across different genders? If so, please explain how.</li> <li>• To what degree has the project aligned with and supported the sector-specific policies within the country? Please elaborate on those policies.</li> <li>• How did you involve your target groups and stakeholders in the project design?</li> <li>• Have you noticed any gaps or limitations in the project's design or implementation that could be refined to better align with the project goals?</li> <li>• Based on your insights, how effectively has the project met the needs and expectations of young people we aim to support? Do you have a story or example that illustrates this?</li> <li>• How does the project align with the current regional trends and the evolving youth priorities? Could you mention any other project or program in this field that the project established any synergy with? How did this work?</li> </ul>	<p>Project manager, local project coordinators and other project staff</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From your observations to what extent do you think the project addressed the needs and priorities of young participants? What would be an illustrative example?</li> <li>• In what ways did the project align with the strategic goals and objectives of your organization/institution?</li> <li>• To what extent did the project manage to address national youth priorities within your specific area of expertise or interest?</li> <li>• Have you noticed any gaps or limitations in the project's implementation that could be refined to better meet the needs of main target groups?</li> <li>• How does the project correspond to current regional trends regarding youth?</li> </ul>	<p>Stakeholders (school staff, social welfare service, academia, etc.)</p>

<p>Effectiveness and immediate impact</p>	<p>To what extent have stakeholders (school staff, parents, representatives of institutions, etc.), beneficiaries (youth) as defined gained new knowledge and changed their behavior?</p> <p>What are the potential positive or negative outcomes that were not intended because of the intervention?</p> <p>To which extent campaigns and/or programs implemented by the project have increased awareness of key target groups about</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what degree has the project succeeded in its primary aim of fostering inclusive, non-violent, and gender-equal environments for the youth in WB countries?</li> <li>• What shifts in knowledge and behavior have you perceived among the youth and other key parties involved, such as educational staff, parents, and institutional representatives?</li> <li>• Have there been any unexpected outcomes from the project that you think are noteworthy, whether they're beneficial or adverse?</li> <li>• What have been the key enablers and obstacles in achieving the outcomes?</li> <li>• How the implemented campaigns and other project activities have contributed to raising awareness of key target groups about promoting peaceful masculinities, gender equality and addressing hate speech and intolerance? What would be an illustrative example?</li> <li>• In what ways has the project aided in the integration of life skills topics into relevant policies, strategies, and educational programs?</li> <li>• Could you share an example of a best practice in terms of cooperating with key stakeholders to ensure the seamless incorporation of life skills education into institutional frameworks?</li> <li>• Which strategies and initiatives have been most successful in mobilizing communities to influence educational policy changes?</li> </ul>	<p>Project manager, local project coordinators and other project staff</p>
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	<p>promoting peaceful masculinities, gender equality and addressing hate speech and intolerance?</p> <p>Have there been any positive changes or beneficial effects observed in policies and strategies that incorporate life skills topics, because of the project? What were the identified best practices for collaborating with working groups to support the integration of life skills programming into institutional structures? How did the project activities mobilize communities to have an impact on influencing educational policies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In your opinion to what degree has the project succeeded in its primary aim of fostering inclusive, non-violent, and gender-equal environments for the youth in WB countries? Could you specify the main outcomes you observed?</li> <li>• What shifts in knowledge and behavior have you noticed in the individuals or groups that have been involved with or impacted by your work?</li> <li>• Have there been any unexpected outcomes from the project that you think are noteworthy, whether they're beneficial or adverse?</li> <li>• How the project activities you took part have contributed to raising awareness of young people about promoting peaceful masculinities, gender equality and addressing hate speech and intolerance? What would be an illustrative example?</li> <li>• In what ways has the project aided in the integration of life skills topics into relevant policies, strategies, and educational programs?</li> </ul>	<p>Stakeholders (school staff, social welfare service, academia, etc.)</p>
<p>Gender sensitivity</p>	<p>How did project activities encourage the meaningful participation of young people of different genders and backgrounds?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did the project reach out and engage participants to ensure gender parity and equal participation?</li> <li>• Could you provide examples of how the project facilitated the active involvement of young people from diverse genders and backgrounds?</li> <li>• What could be done more regarding actively involving youth with different gender and backgrounds?</li> <li>• What recommendations do you have for enhancing gender mainstreaming in future projects?</li> </ul>	<p>Project manager, local project coordinators and other project staff</p> <p>Stakeholders (school staff, social welfare service, academia, etc.)</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What recommendations do you have for enhancing gender mainstreaming in future projects?</li> </ul>	
Sustainability	<p>To what extent have the seven project partners improved their organizational capacities for self-sustainable function as well as lobbying and advocacy?</p> <p>To what extent have the key actors (partners and other stakeholders) prepared to take over the responsibility and carry on with the implementation of the developed strategies and commitments (ownership and leadership) considering institutional level (beyond project duration)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How confident are you that the project's positive effects will continue after its completion?</li> <li>• Which of the project's successes do you see as having the most lasting effect, and what factors contribute to their sustainability?</li> <li>• How prepared and motivated are local and national entities to assume ownership and advance the strategic initiatives and commitments that are among the project's primary achievements? What are existing gaps in this field?</li> <li>• How has this project improved your organizational capacities for self-sustainable function as well as lobbying and advocacy?</li> </ul>	Project manager, local project coordinators and other project staff
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How confident are you that the project's positive effects will continue after its completion?</li> <li>• Could you identify the project's achievements you witnessed that will have long-lasting impact? Which factors do you believe will contribute to sustaining these successes over time?</li> <li>• How you personally and your organization are willing to take over responsibility and carry on with the implementation of the developed strategies and commitments that are key project's benefits? Can you pinpoint any significant gaps in these areas?</li> </ul>	Stakeholders (school staff, social welfare service, academia, etc.)

**Note: The questions will be tailor-made for each informant based on their profile, background and role in the project implementation.**

## 2.3 Policy influence and advocacy assessment

Level	Impact	Sustainability	Efficiency	Engagement with stakeholders	Gender sensitivity
<b>Excellent</b>	<p><u>Significant impact on policies:</u> Organization's advocacy efforts exhibit substantial influence on policies concerning youth and gender, leading to transformative changes or advancements in policy frameworks.</p>	<p><u>High sustainability:</u> The organization has secured multi-year funding commitments and has developed additional revenue streams to support advocacy work.</p> <p>Policy advocacy is part of a long-term strategy, with evidence of ongoing influence on policy agendas.</p> <p>Impact assessments are regularly conducted, with findings informing strategic adjustments and advocacy methods.</p>	<p><u>Highly efficient organizational structure that supports advocacy and policy influence:</u> The organization's advocacy strategy is not only clear and comprehensive but also flexible to adapt to changing contexts. Internal communication is excellent, fostering a culture of transparency and collective responsibility for advocacy outcomes.</p> <p>Resources are optimized, with strategic fundraising. There is a high level of staff and volunteer engagement, with a focus on continuous improvement, professional growth, and a strong internal culture that supports policy advocacy.</p>	<p><u>Comprehensive engagement with stakeholders:</u> Stakeholder engagement regarding youth and gender issues is exemplary, showcasing comprehensive involvement and collaboration, significantly shaping policy developments and implementations for these demographics.</p>	<p><u>Gender mainstreaming:</u> Comprehensive understanding and sensitivity to diverse gender needs and challenges, reflected in all aspects of advocacy initiatives.</p>
<b>Good</b>	<p><u>Moderate impact on policies:</u> Organization's advocacy efforts demonstrate a tangible impact on policy decisions related to youth and gender, resulting in noticeable changes or advancements in policy frameworks.</p>	<p><u>Moderate sustainability:</u> The organization has a mix of short-term and long-term funding.</p> <p>There are documented cases of policy influence that suggest potential for sustained advocacy, but these are not yet fully institutionalized.</p> <p>There is a strategic approach to impact assessment, though it may not be fully integrated into all areas of work</p>	<p><u>Developed organizational structure that supports advocacy and policy influence:</u> The NGO has a clear strategy that is known internally, with some level of operational planning linking activities to policy goals. Internal communication is regular, and there is a concerted effort to coordinate advocacy campaigns.</p> <p>Resources are generally used appropriately, with a balanced budget and some investment in capacity building.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers are engaged, and there's an effort to match tasks with expertise, although some gaps remain.</p>	<p><u>Satisfactory engagement with stakeholders:</u> Stakeholder engagement and collaboration regarding youth and gender issues are reasonably effective, contributing significantly to policy improvements.</p>	<p><u>Gender inclusiveness:</u> Adequate efforts made to include diverse genders, ensuring fair representation and consideration of their needs in advocacy activities.</p>



<p><b>Basic</b></p>	<p><u>Limited impact on policy change:</u> Organization's advocacy efforts demonstrate limited success in influencing policy changes relevant to youth and gender, resulting in minimal advancements or insufficient responses from policymakers.</p>	<p><u>Low sustainability:</u> The organization has some multi-year funding but continues to be primarily dependent on uncertain or single-stream funding sources.</p> <p>Policy advocacy work has seen some successes, but these are not yet part of a sustained change strategy.</p> <p>Efforts to monitor long-term impact are present but limited in scope and regularity.</p>	<p><u>Basic policy and advocacy framework:</u> The organization has a basic strategic framework, but it's not fully developed or consistently applied.</p> <p>Internal communication exists but is often reactive rather than proactive, leading to missed opportunities.</p> <p>Resource allocation is somewhat more aligned with goals, but there's still inefficiency in utilization, and fundraising efforts are sporadic.</p> <p>Staff engagement is low, with some training provided, but it's not effectively enhancing advocacy skills.</p>	<p><u>Insufficient engagement:</u> Engagement with stakeholders or policymakers related to youth and gender issues might be inconsistent or inadequate, hindering substantial policy changes.</p>	<p><u>Lacking gender concerns:</u> Lack of awareness or understanding of gender-related issues, resulting in unintentional exclusion or oversight in addressing gender concerns.</p>
<p><b>Critical</b></p>	<p><u>Limited impact on policies:</u> Organization's advocacy initiatives show minimal or no influence on policies related to youth and gender, resulting in stagnant or regressive policy measures.</p>	<p><u>No sustainability:</u> The organization relies heavily on unstable or short-term funding sources with no clear plan for financial diversification.</p> <p>Over-dependence on key individuals for advocacy efforts.</p> <p>Policy wins are sporadic and not systematically integrated into broader change agendas.</p> <p>The organization has no clear mechanisms for measuring long-term impact or for adapting to changing policy environments.</p>	<p><u>Lacking strategic direction and organizational support to policy and advocacy:</u> The organization lacks clear strategic direction, objectives are not aligned with policy goals, and there is little to no strategic planning.</p> <p>Internal communication is poor, leading to fragmented efforts and confusion among staff and volunteers.</p> <p>Resources are significantly underutilized, with financial mismanagement and inadequate allocation towards key advocacy activities.</p> <p>There is a high turnover of staff, low morale, and minimal professional development opportunities.</p>	<p><u>Negative consequences on Youth and Gender Groups:</u> Advocacy initiatives might have led to increased marginalization or exclusion of specific youth or gender groups.</p>	<p><u>Not taking into consideration gender needs:</u> Absence of any consideration or acknowledgment of gender-related needs, perspectives, or challenges, leading to exclusion or discrimination.</p>

## Annex 3: Evidence Grid per Evaluation Question Matrix

### Serbia

Criterion and questions	Evidence
<p><b>Relevance and coherence/</b> To what extent has the project responded to the <b>needs of the local communities and the relevant sectoral policies</b> of the target countries and proven to be feasible?</p>	<p>Young people normally do not have many opportunities to try their hand at activism and to acquire the knowledge that is important to them at that age. This project has offered an opportunity to young people to engage in activism, gain knowledge on various relevant topics such as learn violence prevention, understand the risks of psychoactive substance abuse, develop leadership skills, and learn about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Peacebuilding, integral to this program, holds significance as it encourages young people to explore beyond their usual regional boundaries, which they typically don't venture far from. (KII-SRB-01).</p> <p>The program was relevant because participation was voluntary rather than obligatory. This allowed us to engage with topics that genuinely interested us, providing a refreshing change from typical classroom lessons. Often, there are few opportunities to explore such topics, leaving us to rely solely on internet searches for information. The project also fostered an atmosphere where our opinions were valued—a rarity in school settings. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>Among the topics covered, violence appears to be the least favored among students, likely because there are already numerous programs addressing this issue. Contrariwise, gender equality, the abuse of psychoactive substances, and promoting healthy lifestyles gathered the greatest interest among students. This preference suggests a strong inclination towards discussing topics that are both relevant to their lives and not as widely covered in existing programs. By focusing more on these areas of interest, we tried to ensure that our efforts resonate more effectively with students and address their specific needs and concerns. (KII-SRB-06).</p> <p>Unlike other programs that may only offer a few workshops, Program Y is continuous, providing ongoing engagement with these issues throughout the entire academic year. This consistent approach ensures that the entire generation is consistently exposed to and engaged with these topics, fostering deeper understanding and awareness. Even now, when I attend class meetings, I find myself turning to Program Y because I know I will find a valuable workshop that can contribute to our ongoing efforts in addressing these important issues. This ongoing availability and relevance of workshops from Program Y have made it an invaluable resource for our school community. (KII-SRB-06)</p> <p>The program has proven to be highly relevant for teachers, as it provides valuable activities and an innovative approach to teaching. Many teachers express a desire to transform their practices by incorporating workshop-based activities, viewing the program manual as an invaluable resource in this regard. (KII-SRB-01)</p> <p>From my perspective as a professional in the school, I find the program highly relevant. When we as teachers and pedagogists identify children struggling with issues like violence, peer communication, or developmental challenges, we make efforts to involve them in the BMC.</p>

This environment often proves beneficial for them to find their place, and we encourage them to foster independence and better integration. (KII-SRB-05)

We adjusted the curriculum according to the topics young individuals expressed interest in. As time progressed, it was noticeable that they were increasingly acquainted with terms such as transgender, heterosexuality, and homosexuality, actively incorporating them into our discussions. Initially, there might have been instances of teasing or laughter, but eventually, they transitioned into more serious and profound conversations about these subjects from their unique viewpoints. (KII-SRB-02)

The peer educators have demonstrated a deep sensitivity towards the children's needs and understand the importance of embracing diversity. Our beneficiaries, children without parental care, find these topics highly relevant as they are often victims or witnesses of violence. Additionally, topics such as LGBT issues, violence, and gender equality are rarely addressed in other activities, especially not in a manner that resonates with them. KII-SRB-03

The project is aligned with the strategic priorities of the Centre for Children without Parental Care, alongside providing accommodation, our aim is to offer them content focused on life skills. Although we frequently cover topics such as employment and financial literacy, they often receive little attention from others. (KII-SRB-03)

Relevant national policy documents that the project is coherent with:

National Strategy for Youth for the period 2023-2030 indicates that the percentage of women and girls aged 18 to 74 who have been exposed to physical, sexual, or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner during the past 12 months (indicator COR 5.2.1.) is 7.4% among women aged 18-29, while the overall percentage in the observed age group is 9.2%.

On the other hand, the percentage of women and girls aged 18 to 74 who have been subjected to sexual violence by persons who were not their intimate partner during the past 12 months (indicator COR 5.2.2.) shows that young women aged 18 to 29 (1.4%) are more exposed to this type of violence compared to the total population, where this percentage is 0.5%.

The percentage of women aged 15 to 49 who make decisions autonomously based on information about sexual relations, contraceptive use, and reproductive health care (indicator COR 5.6.1.) is one of the indicators of human rights realization. Unfortunately, data from 2019 show that only 83.2% of women aged 20 to 24 and 84.2% of women aged 25 to 29 make these decisions autonomously.

The Strategy for Prevention and Combating Gender-Based Violence against Women and Domestic Violence for the period 2021-2025 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 47/21), which aims to establish effective prevention and protection against all forms of violence against women and girls, domestic violence, and develop a gender-responsive system of victim support services. The specific objectives of this strategy, which are relevant to youth policy as well, relate to enhanced action by all actors in the prevention of gender-based violence

against women and domestic violence, ensuring effective and efficient protection of victims and adequate support services for victims of violence.

The Public Health Strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2018-2026 (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 61/18-6) supports the improvement of health, prevention of diseases, and extension of the quality of life of the population. Planned measures include community health promotion, prevention and combatting of smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke, harmful alcohol use, and drug abuse.

The Mental Health Protection Program in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2019-2026 (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 84/19) represents a coordinated system of measures, conditions, and instruments of public policy aimed at protecting mental health. Youth (aged 15-24) are recognized as one of the particularly vulnerable populations, and it is envisaged that work on the prevention of mental disorders and improvement of mental health will be specifically directed towards youth, and that the development of a network of specific services will be supported in this regard.

The Strategy for Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence for the period from 2020 to 2023 (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 80/20) is a document aimed at ensuring continuous comprehensive societal response to violence against children. The goals and measures of this strategy also relate to children aged 15-18, thus being relevant to youth policy as well.

The Strategy for the Development of the System of Execution of Criminal Sanctions, the Social Protection Strategy and the Strategy for Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence 2020-2023 envisage the improvement of conditions for accommodation of juveniles, as well as the improvement of specialized and individualized treatment programs for particularly vulnerable groups.

The Law on Gender Equality (Official Gazette of RS, No. 52/21) regulates, among other things, measures and policies for achieving and improving gender equality, institutional frameworks for achieving gender equality, oversight of law enforcement, and other matters of significance for achieving and improving gender equality. The law also regulates measures to combat and prevent all forms of gender-based violence, violence against women, and domestic violence.

The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination (Official Gazette of RS, No. 22/09 and 52/21) defines the concept of discrimination, indirect discrimination, segregation, forms, and cases of discrimination, emphasizes the general prohibition of discrimination, and procedures for protection against discrimination. For youth policy, the prohibition of discrimination is important in the field of work, among other areas, such as the prohibition of discrimination of students or trainees in practice, volunteers, persons undergoing professional training, etc., the prohibition of discrimination based on age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, health condition, and other personal characteristics, including religious and national affiliation.

<p><b>Relevance and coherence/ Are there any gaps or limitations in the project's design or implementations that affect its relevance?</b></p>	<p>After thoughtful consideration, we have concluded that the existing program effectively addresses key issues such as gender equality, dispelling stereotypes, and preventing violence among specific target groups. However, based on practice we have noted a growing demand for programs tailored to homogeneous groups, allowing them to explore these topics separately. It's crucial to strike a balance between homogeneous and mixed-gender approaches to foster lasting change, rather than consistently keeping participants in mixed-gender settings. Additionally, we recognize that the name "BMC" may pose challenges, particularly regarding inclusivity for girls. We believe that insistence on exclusively homogeneous groups (comprising only young men or women) has, to some extent, limited the program's effectiveness in achieving certain outcomes.(KII-SRB-01)</p> <p>Creating distinct classes for these topics as proposed by the donor during the project design phase isn't entirely viable. Yet, incorporating the program as a standalone subject isn't practical either, given its importance exceeding conventional class activities for students. Our approach should be interdisciplinary to enable teachers from different subjects to integrate both knowledge and attitudes into their teachings. It's crucial to empower teachers with the necessary competencies so they can emerge as leaders in advocating these values themselves. (KII-SRB-01)</p> <p>We requested a meeting with the Ministry of Education to present the outcomes of the project but have yet to receive a response. In collaboration with 25 other CSOs, we signed a declaration advocating for the institutionalization of Program Y. Previously, we enjoyed a more cooperative relationship with the Ministry, particularly with the former Coordinator of the Violence Prevention Unit. The lack of cooperation with the Ministry has led to certain limitations in achieving outcomes, particularly concerning the amendment of relevant policies to incorporate life skills topics. (KII-SRB-01)</p> <p>At the St. Sava High School, we've managed to involve some teachers who have been supportive and helpful in organizing the workshops. However, I don't believe it's realistic to engage more teachers without additional institutional support from the school administration, ministry, etc. Many teachers are not keen on leading these workshops, as they are considered extra-curricular. Due to the absence of official verification by the Ministry and other relevant bodies, many of our colleagues fail to recognize the relevance of the subject for both teachers and students. (KII-SRB-04)</p> <p>Program E was piloted during 2022 in the elementary school Filip Filipovic in Belgrade. A series of workshops were conducted, as well as pre- and post-tests to measure the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the youth who participated in the program. A problem arose when one of the parents saw the program mentioning gender, equality, and similar topics. The parents opposed the program. It's important to note that at that time there were intensified tensions and hate speech against the LGBT community considering the Euro Pride ban. (KII-MAN-02)</p> <p>At the Graphic School in Belgrade, Program Y was being implemented regularly. In the previous years, it was going very well, and the participants were highly active. However, after the massive shooting at Vladislav Ribnikar School in Belgrade, where 10 people were killed,</p>
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	<p>it became more challenging to work in schools. During one of the sessions, a girl started crying because of a topic that reminded her of the tragic events at Vladislav Ribnikar School. The program was halted and has not continued further. (KII-MAN-02)</p>
<p><b>Relevance and coherence</b> How well does the intervention fit with other similar regional initiatives? What is its added value?</p>	<p>Our organization places equality and participation at the forefront, with education serving as a fundamental overarching priority. The program has been very relevant to us as CSO as through the BMC initiative, we have experienced significant growth and development, positioning us as pioneers in the region on critical issues like gender equality, addressing toxic masculinity, and combating discrimination. BMC has become our main brand in the region. (KII-SRB-01).</p> <p>This project has played a vital role in fostering a regional trend towards increased youth exchanges and collaboration within civic sectors. Through the youth exchanges facilitated by our program, beneficiaries have been afforded valuable opportunities to confront prejudices, stereotypes, and diverse perspectives firsthand. Interacting with peers from neighboring countries within the region has offered them unique insights into similar challenges faced elsewhere, enriching their understanding and broadening their horizons. (KII-SRB-01).</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> To what extent have stakeholders (school staff, parents, representatives of institutions, etc.), beneficiaries (youth) as defined <b>gained new knowledge and changed their behavior?</b></p>	<p>In Program Y, significant changes are evident, such as improved communication, a better understanding of the program's objectives, and increased active involvement. Attendance has risen, indicating a growing interest in the workshops, while the initiation of dialogues has evolved from initially noticeable negative biases. (KII-SRB-01).</p> <p>The key change observed was the participants' ability to empathize and understand things from someone else's perspective. They demonstrated an increased capacity to sympathize with individuals who face discrimination and showed improvements in critical thinking skills. (KII-SRB-04).</p> <p>In Program Y+, there has been a notable shift in motivation, as attendees now come voluntarily without any external pressure. The mere fact that they begin attending regularly is indicative of their growing interest. Furthermore, through a guided fantasy workshop, the topic of LGBT was introduced. Initially, there were clear expressions of negative attitudes, but over time, these attitudes evolved and changed. (KII-SRB-01)</p> <p>In the Centre "Mosa Pijade" I observed that the beneficiaries became more open about discussing important topics such as how they express anger, non-violent communication, and experiences with violence. These discussions seemed to inspire them, and they expressed a desire to share their personal experiences. In terms of their needs, it's evident that they require opportunities to talk and be listened to. (KII-SRB-02)</p> <p>It's significant that the participants discussed the topics during the workshops. They used the opportunity to reassess their existing attitudes and develop new ones based on the insights they gained. This process allowed them to reflect on their perspectives and potentially adopt more informed and inclusive viewpoints. Also, my colleagues improved their competences when it comes to non-formal education approach by witnessing the work of peer educators. (KII-SRB-03)</p>

	<p>My son has become more aware and confident in communication. You have helped him become more self-aware and open to challenges that most other children in Serbia may never experience due to the circumstances we live in. (BMC member's parent)</p> <p>My son has recognized the need to develop his potentials through activities he finds in his environment. He has become more active, decisive, and stopped procrastinating decisions. He has started planning his tasks and even reinstated reading as a habit. He has distanced himself from behaviors he identified as poor styles - disruptions in class, disrespecting others, and similar. These were behaviors prevalent in his school environment, and he managed to publicly reject and condemn them. (BMC member's parent)</p> <p>During the program, I've personally experienced a shift in my perspective on certain issues. For instance, I used to hold negative views towards the gay population. However, through discussions and activities, I've come to a more neutral stance. While some of my friends may still harbor prejudices, I've realized the importance of respecting others' beliefs and recognizing the humanity in everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation. I now choose not to support discriminatory behavior and advocate for acceptance and understanding. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>Endline assessment (page 26): Generally, we can conclude that knowledge about sexual and reproductive health is relatively low. In most cases, the percentage of correct answers varies between 25% and 65%, indicating that a significant portion of survey participants lacks answers to the set questions. Results in Belgrade are somewhat better than in other cities.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> What are the <b>potential positive or negative outcomes that were not intended</b> because of the intervention?</p>	<p>Given the current climate, the project is both timely and relevant. In addition to the project itself, we have implemented accompanying actions to encourage young people to openly declare their sexual orientation and discuss topics such as mental health and violence. This initiative is innovative because there is no other program of similar importance and progress. As an educator, I believe the program is relevant because it strives to mitigate societal polarization. (KII-SRB-04).</p> <p>There have been instances where students reported incidents of sexual harassment following the workshop. In response, I provided advice and support. The fact that students feel comfortable enough to openly discuss such sensitive issues speaks volumes about the strong relationships developed with educators. Similarly, when addressing potential drug use, educators provided an informal overview of the harmful effects of such substances. This approach aimed to offer students personal and tangible experiences to dissuade them from experimenting with drugs. (KII-SRB-04).</p> <p>For instance, there was a boy who had recently arrived at the Centre, and I witnessed him being mistreated by other young people. It was distressing for me, but I discussed it with a psychologist who reassured me that the situation could improve with all our efforts. Indeed, with our support and willingness to listen, the boy began to see us as people who cared about him. Consequently, we were able to assist him in adapting better to his new environment. (KII-SRB-02)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> To which extent</p>	<p>As a parent of a student who participated in the Y program, I've noticed significant positive changes. My child has become more resilient and has developed critical thinking skills, especially through peer education—a unique contribution that I, as a parent or their teachers, cannot</p>



campaigns and/or programs implemented by the project have **increased awareness** of key target groups about **promoting peaceful masculinities, gender equality and addressing hate speech and intolerance?**

provide. He is more willing now to think twice before acting and is very much into speaking with his friends and relatives about equality (gender, sexual, etc.) as something this is good which wasn't the case before. (BMC member's parent)

Addressing topics related to the LGBT population can be particularly challenging due to prevalent homophobic attitudes among students. However, despite these challenges, young people often express a willingness to discuss these issues. It's essential to handle discussions about gender delicately, as they are frequently associated with LGBT topics. Students have felt empowered when they could educate others and promoting masculinities in a way that is not violent. (KII-SRB-05).

I have observed a decrease in various forms of violence, particularly physical violence of the second and third degree because of promoting different types of masculinities by BMC members and other students involved in their activities. However, verbal violence and incidents of violence on social networks have persisted. While this indicates progress in some areas, it also highlights the ongoing challenges we face in addressing all forms of violence comprehensively. (KII-SRB-06)

Through the program, we researched various forms of violence, including those occurring on the internet, verbal exchanges, and within peer groups. We also explored the dynamics of friendships and relationships between males and females, alongside discussions on sexual health. We promoted this kind of narratives in our school and peers in the neighborhood. (Feedback from a focus group participant)

Being part of the program got us talking openly about gender roles and why it's important to stand up for gender equality among our friends and in our communities. It pushed us to step out of our comfort zones and talk with our friends about things that can be kind of touchy, sometimes even sparking debates about what we think. These experiences helped us grow personally and made us even more committed to being involved in BMC activities. (Feedback from a focus group participant)

Engaging in the program has empowered me to express my opinions and make decisions with a greater sense of freedom. In contrast to the school environment, where our viewpoints might not always be acknowledged, here we feel encouraged to share our thoughts and ideas without fear of criticism. This empowerment has encouraged me to take on a more active role in advocating and promoting the narratives related to gender equality among my peers at school. (Feedback from a focus group participant)

Students have demonstrated increased sensitivity towards gender-based violence, often recognizing instances of violence they were previously unaware of. This raised awareness has made them more proactive in addressing such issues. As evidence of their newfound initiative, they organized a sports tournament entirely on their own, assuming full control of the organization. This act symbolized a significant shift in ownership, as they conveyed a powerful message: "This is our school." Their invitation to the tournament showcased their growing independence and determination to take an active role in shaping their school environment. It's clear that through their actions, students have asserted themselves as leaders and agents of change within the school community. (KII-SRB-06).

<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> Have there been any positive changes or beneficial effects observed in <b>policies and strategies</b> that incorporate life skills topics, because of the project?</p>	<p>As the coordinator of the school team for the protection of students from discrimination and neglect, I ensure that when drafting annual plans, they are aligned with the activities of Center E8 and program Y as they are proven in this field as lead CSO in the country. (KII-SRB-05)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> How did the project activities mobilize communities to have an impact on influencing <b>educational policies</b>?</p>	<p>In collaboration with 25 other CSOs, Center E8 signed a declaration advocating for the institutionalization of Program Y. (KII-SRB-01).</p> <p>Drawing from the insights garnered during this project, our team supported the development of the NAPOR Gender Equality Curriculum (National Association of Youth Work Practitioners) tailored for youth workers. We underscored the significance of educating young people about gender equality. It has been especially gratifying to receive feedback from those actively engaged with young individuals, acknowledging a noticeable improvement in attitudes and behaviors. (KII-SRB-01)</p> <p>In the Gymnasium of St. Sava, which is a School of Excellence, Center E8 and their workshops based on the Program Y is acknowledged in their strategic documents, including school calendars that outline extracurricular activities. (KII-SRB-01)</p> <p>Last year, the project was implemented with second grades, and this year it expanded to include all third grades. Project activities were integrated into the class schedule, specifically within the class teacher's curriculum. (KII-SRB-06)</p>
<p><b>Sustainability and follow up/</b>To what extent have the seven project partners improved their organizational capacities for self-sustainable</p>	<p>Project partner in Serbia: The partner exhibits a strong understanding and sensitivity to gender issues, effectively incorporating gender mainstreaming in all aspects of its work. This comprehensive approach indicates a high level of awareness and dedication to addressing gender needs and challenges.</p> <p>Engagement with stakeholders is satisfactory, suggesting that the organization's efforts in involving various actors, particularly in youth and gender issues, have been moderately effective and have contributed to policy improvements. This indicates that the organization maintains functional relationships with relevant parties which support its advocacy objectives.</p> <p>The organizational structure of the CSO appears to be well-developed to support advocacy and policy influence. It is characterized by:</p>

<p>function as well as lobbying and advocacy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular internal communication and coordination efforts for advocacy campaigns.</li> <li>• Appropriate resource allocation with a balanced budget and investments in capacity building.</li> <li>• Staff and volunteers' engagement with an effort to align tasks with individual expertise, despite some existing gaps.</li> <li>• Lack of formal internal strategy and operational planning that align activities with policy goals.</li> </ul> <p>Sustainability of the organization is moderate. It has a mix of short-term and long-term funding sources and has documented cases of policy influence, indicating potential for sustained advocacy. However, these practices are not yet fully institutionalized within the organization, which could pose challenges to long-term impact.</p> <p>Regarding policy change, the impact is limited. The organization has shown only limited success in influencing policy changes relevant to youth and gender. This has led to minimal advancements, with policymakers providing insufficient responses to the organization's advocacy efforts. This could point to a need for revising advocacy approaches, strengthening stakeholder engagement, or enhancing the visibility and persuasiveness of their policy recommendations.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability and follow up</b>/To what extent have the key actors (partners and other stakeholders) prepared to take over the responsibility and carry on with the implementation of the developed strategies and commitments (ownership and leadership) considering institutional level</p>	<p>In the Gymnasium of St. Sava, which is a School of Excellence, Center E8 and their workshops based on the Program Y is acknowledged in their strategic documents, including school calendars that outline extracurricular activities. (KII-SRB-01)</p> <p>I notice a growing interest in addressing this topic among school management as well. The guidelines from the ministry, especially following the tragic mass murder of children in a school in Belgrade, underscore the importance of raising awareness about the necessity of programs like ours. It's imperative that we advocate for further institutionalization of subjects and programs related to promoting inclusion, tolerance, and understanding, particularly regarding topics such as LGBT rights and gender equality. This institutional support is essential for ensuring that such initiatives are integrated into the educational system and receive the necessary resources and attention they deserve. (KII-SRB-05)</p> <p>Last year, the project was implemented with second grades, and this year it expanded to include all third grades. However, not all generations have been covered yet, and our goal is to extend support packages to ensure broader coverage. We recognize the importance of peer educators, as they are often more relatable and open to their peers. This is where we see the primary role of Center E8, facilitating the training and engagement of peer educators to further promote awareness and understanding among students. (KII-SRB-06)</p> <p>The program has the potential to be extended to other schools, both within our country and internationally. By sharing our experiences and resources, we can replicate the program's success in different educational settings. Additionally, utilizing social networks as a platform for dissemination can help reach a broader audience and promote awareness about the program's objectives and impact. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p>

<p>(beyond project duration)?</p>	<p>Our trainers and BMC members are continuing their efforts within the Reflector theater, focusing on similar topics covered during the project. However, this time, they are utilizing theater as a format to emphasize the importance of the youth perspective in everyday discussions and issues. (KII-SRB-01)</p> <p>Through the project, a network of individuals has formed, leading to the establishment of an alumni informal network. We aim for this Alumni Club to support other alumni in their endeavors and continue spreading the values they acquired through the project. Notably, around 20 individuals from my faculty have joined this network after learning about the project and its impact. (KII-SRB-04)</p> <p>Performances at Dorćol Platz provided a unique and engaging way to learn about masculinity. By challenging stereotypes and humorously depicting outdated notions, we gained a deeper understanding of what it means to be a man. This approach is far more effective than reinforcing conservative attitudes, and it encourages critical thinking and reflection on societal norms (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>The project could potentially be expanded to include other marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities (PWDs), other ethnic groups, and national minorities. As a person with a disability myself, I didn't have the chance to participate in a similar program during my education. To accommodate these additional groups, we would need another manual specifically tailored to their needs and experiences. This would ensure that the program is inclusive and addresses the unique challenges and perspectives of each marginalized community. (KII-SRB-02)</p> <p>In Program Y+, the emphasis on gender equality has been significant, leading to the conclusion of the project. However, acknowledging the ongoing importance of its impact, we have made the decision to continue hosting workshops at the "Mosa Pijade" Center for Children without Parental Care in Belgrade once a week, even after the project comes to an end. (KII-SRB-01)</p> <p>As a center focused on violence prevention, these workshops are greatly beneficial due to their informal approach, which users prefer. Consequently, we have incorporated the continuation of workshops into our annual plan, recognizing their value in our efforts to prevent violence. (KII-SRB-03)</p> <p>We had the privilege of working with a visually impaired educator, and the feedback from our beneficiaries was overwhelmingly positive. This experience underscores the importance and value of inclusive practices within our educational approach in the coming school year. (KII-SRB-03)</p>
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## Bosnia and Herzegovina

Criterion and questions	Evidence
<p><b>Relevance and coherence/</b> To what extent has the project responded to the <b>needs of the local communities and the relevant sectoral policies</b> of the target countries and proven to be feasible?</p>	<p>The project has offered students opportunities to expand their understanding of crucial topics such as mental health, sexual and reproductive health, and challenge stereotypes. While other initiatives often focus on peer violence, this project confronts prevalent misunderstandings among young people, particularly concerning gender roles. Given that many students come from rural or socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, where parental influence strongly shapes their views, project’s relevance is proved to large extent. (KII-BOS-01)</p> <p>I was involved in preparing workshops on media literacy, corruption, energy and climate change—topics that resonate deeply with my peers. Our approach allows young people freedom to choose topics and shape the workshops according to their preferences. There are no restrictions; we have the autonomy to design the campaigns as we see fit. While violence prevention is crucial, we were more interested in topics like mental health, sexual and reproductive health, and partner relationships—areas where there is less focus. One area we felt was missing is discussions about relationships with family, friends, and colleagues. That’s the reason I find this project very related to young people’s needs. (KII-BOS-03)</p> <p>Students engage with a series of topics over time, forming relationships with their educators and becoming increasingly comfortable discussing their concerns. Unlike traditional school curricula, there's no rigid structure; instead, there's a fluid progression that allows deeper connections and more open dialogue about personal issues. (KII-BOS-01)</p> <p>Numerous regional initiatives focus on reconciliation efforts, but this project stands out as it addresses topics—peer relationships and gender-based violence (GBV)—often overlooked by others. Utilizing a bottom-up approach, young individuals craft campaigns centered on these crucial issues. To my knowledge, there are no other initiatives specifically targeting these areas. (KII-BOS-06)</p> <p>The project addressed the specific needs of the young individuals we engaged with, aligning closely with our organization's primary objectives. With a 17-year history of working alongside young people, we've identified significant gaps in addressing issues such as gender-based and peer violence. Prior to this initiative, these issues had not been adequately addressed, nor encountered elsewhere. Engaging directly in the project development, these young individuals played a vital role in shaping its essential components. (KII-BOS-06)</p> <p>The program is methodically crafted, particularly tailored to the needs of our users. The gender roles topic holds particular significance for them. Our beneficiaries often raise questions about gender roles, especially those they may not feel comfortable asking at home. Communication remains a compelling topic for our users, as they aren't accustomed to receiving explanations. They find it engaging, particularly when approached creatively and with voluntary participation. Our Day Center's approach is rooted in the individual needs of</p>

	<p>each child, shaping a tailored strategy and activity plan accordingly. Most of this program's topics directly address the issues we discuss with our beneficiaries. (KII-BOS-02)</p> <p>Working with juvenile lawbreakers in a correctional center presents unique challenges, given the closed nature of the institution and the diverse range of needs among the users, aged 14-23 years old. Many beneficiaries lack essential social skills, communication abilities, and assertiveness, which the project has successfully addressed. (KII-BOS-04)</p> <p>City of Banja Luka's strategic documents outline the role of our organization in shaping priorities for promoting healthy lifestyles, particularly within the strategy aimed at fostering the well-being of the city's youth. The report assessing the action plan's implementation for youth policy primarily highlights our organization's activities. (KII-BOS-05)</p> <p>Newly adopted Youth Policy of RS (January 2023) recognized a set of key priorities in promoting healthy lifestyles. When it comes to the implementation of the previous Youth Policy, on page 19 of the document, this project is mentioned and it's stated that "Be a Man, Say NO to Violence" is a project by the organization Perpetuum Mobile in which 6,648 young people have participated in workshops conducted by peer educators, and 14,943 young people have participated in workshops through online courses adapted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a total expenditure of 560,000 KM.</p> <p>Additionally, through Perpetuum Mobile participation in working groups on pages 27 to 29 in the SWOT analysis, the promotion of healthy lifestyles is included as an opportunity, which directly corresponds to the project's goal. On page 31, strategic objectives are visible, among which the third one is to promote the development of healthy lifestyles among young people; again, at our insistence, this part has been included.</p> <p>The document mentions Perpetuum Mobile (project partner) is one of the founders and initiators of the establishment of the Network of Youth Centers for Development and Training Animation.</p>
<p><b>Relevance and coherence/ Are there any gaps or limitations in the project's design or implementations that affect its relevance?</b></p>	<p>The program's goals and activities have influenced adjustments to the school's plans. Following each semester, the school diligently submitted reports detailing the conducted workshops to both the Ministry of Education and the Pedagogical Institute. These reports provided thorough descriptions of the workshops and the topics addressed. However, despite our efforts, approval from the Ministry of Education for conducting the workshops in schools has not granted. (KII-BOS-01)</p> <p>Obtaining permission to enter schools posed challenges, primarily due to the position of the Republic Pedagogical Institute rather than the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, changing the project's name necessitated restarting the accreditation process from scratch. Despite the support from three schools where the project was previously implemented, the Director of the Institute didn't permit any CSOs to execute their programs in schools. Although we received approval in previous school years, there were no programs in schools in the last year. Consequently, activities had to be relocated to the Youth Center instead of schools. The reasoning provided was that the program didn't align with the traditional education framework in the Republic of Srpska. (KII-BOS-05)</p>

Accessing schools proved difficult as we were unable to secure permission from the Ministry of Education. Historically, navigating the Ministry's stance on transforming gender identities has posed challenges for us. (KII-BOS-06)

In terms of collaboration, we partnered with three secondary schools who participated in our research. Our main point of contact within these schools facilitated our engagement. Despite sending a letter of support to the Ministry of Education, unfortunately, our efforts did not produce any positive outcomes. However, we enjoyed a fruitful partnership with the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sports, although they were unable to assist us in obtaining school access. They did contribute to our project by attending events. Additionally, the Children's Ombudsman of RS provided valuable support, particularly during our events in Banja Luka and Bijeljina, where we presented Program Y. (KII-BOS-06)

The National Assembly of RS has adopted a controversial draft law that would require nonprofit organizations funded from abroad and active in this entity to register and report on their work. The so-called foreign agents' law, formally known as the Special Register and Publicity of the Work of Nonprofit Organizations law, passed on September 28. Whether the draft law will receive final approval and be implemented remains uncertain. It must still go through additional procedural steps before taking effect. The EU Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina condemns recent moves by the leadership of the RS which seriously shrink civic space, harm the interest of the RS and the country, reject fundamental European values, and are steps backwards for Bosnia and Herzegovina's European path. (Press statement of the EU Delegation to BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, published March 27, 2023)

**Relevance and coherence** How well does the intervention fit with other similar regional initiatives? What is its added value?

This project effectively addressed the needs of young people for non-formal education. Short workshops, such as those conducted with high school students, resonated well with them. However, stakeholders, such as teachers, often struggle to find time to cover these topics in their classes. Nevertheless, we were pleasantly surprised by the positive reaction from professional staff, including psychological and pedagogical services, who expressed a need for more activities of this nature. The project is also in line with the strategic priorities of our organization, as outlined in our four-year strategic plan. Our primary goals within this plan focus on the prevention of gender-based and peer violence. Therefore, the project's objectives and activities directly support and contribute to achieving these strategic priorities, emphasizing our commitment to creating a safer and more inclusive environment for all individuals involved which I see as the project's added value for our CSO. (KII-BOS-05)

The project has enhanced the capacities of our organization, with project coordinators significantly improving their skills. We benefited from a mentoring and supportive relationship with CARE, which bolstered our advocacy capabilities, enabling us to effectively engage with decision-makers. This emphasis on institutional collaboration adds another dimension of sustainability to our efforts. Notably, progress was made towards establishing a high school for police officers, and the school psychologist who took part in the training-of-trainers (ToT) reached out to express interest in continuing the project within the newly formed school. (KII-BOS-05)



	<p>The younger generations are an important focus of EU work in the region. In cooperation with Western Balkan partners, the EU invests in youth through programs in many areas – education and vocational training, entrepreneurship, culture, research, inclusion, cooperation and reconciliation, civic activism, and all sorts of exchange programs for learning and personal development. Thousands of students have gained new skills by training, studying or volunteering abroad. Many young artists have taken up opportunities to develop their creative projects and reach new audiences. The EU also encourages active participation of young people – to get involved in policy-making and shaping and grassroots activism and take the future into their own hands (Taken from the WeBalkans.eu portal which is a one-stop shop for news, stories, funding opportunities, and related information on cooperation between the European Union and the Western Balkans. It is part of the EU Regional Communication Program for the Western Balkans, managed by the European Commission and implemented by an external contracted agency)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> To what extent have stakeholders (school staff, parents, representatives of institutions, etc.), beneficiaries (youth) as defined <b>gained new knowledge and changed their behavior?</b></p>	<p>For me and my peers, BMC workshops offered a unique opportunity that we couldn't find elsewhere. Prior to the camp, I hadn't met any Albanians, but through BMC, I discovered commonalities—we share similar interests in music and hobbies. Many of my female colleagues found BMC to be instrumental in enhancing their communication skills. As the sessions progressed, people became more relaxed, opening about their challenges and problems. (KII-BOS-03)</p> <p>Working with juvenile lawbreakers in a correctional center presents unique challenges, given the closed nature of the institution and the diverse range of needs among the users, aged 14-23 years old. The focus on emotional response, communication techniques, and aggression prevention has been particularly beneficial for them. Moreover, the staff who underwent training gained valuable presentation skills, improved communication abilities, and enhanced assertiveness, making the project highly relevant to their work within the institution. (KII-BOS-04)</p> <p>During workshops on non-violent communication, participants often repeat what is acceptable and what isn't in everyday interactions. At our center, two-thirds of the attendees are boys and one-third are girls. Considering the profiles of our users—children and young people at risk, including victims of violence, those with behavioral difficulties, learning challenges, social vulnerability, or with a parent in prison—we've observed boys taking on roles traditionally not assigned to them, such as responsibilities in the kitchen, cleaning, or gardening. This shift may be attributed to the influence of the workshops. We actively encourage such changes and their involvement in activities that challenge stereotypical gender roles. (KII-BOS-02)</p> <p>Participating in the project has significantly improved my organizational skills, particularly during campaign implementation. I've improved my time management and communication skills, which have proved invaluable. The project's focus on gender roles has been particularly impactful—I've observed a notable shift as boys have begun engaging in tasks traditionally associated with women, such as cooking and cleaning. First, progress can be seen in the participants who come to BMC meetings. In schools, it hasn't contributed that much because we don't have workshops in schools (KII-BOS-03)</p>

The participants' maturity notably improved throughout the project, suggesting its positive impact on their development. There's a sense that peer violence has decreased within the school, with violence levels decreasing from 1st to 4th grade of the high school, likely influenced by the project's interventions. It served as a valuable resource in addressing these issues, offering targeted support to classes facing the most significant challenges. The project has provided additional assistance to teachers and other professionals in their daily work, reinforcing their efforts in promoting a safer and more nurturing environment for students. (KII-BOS-01)

One significant change brought about by the project is the shift in attitudes among young people, particularly concerning violence, including verbal and cyber violence, as well as gender roles. Before the project, many young people didn't even recognize certain forms of violence. Although progress has been made in transforming gender roles, it's evident that more time and effort are needed in this area. While attitudes have changed, the youth involved aren't always actively engaged in acting. However, there have been notable instances where their participation has made a difference. For example, during an event at the Hospitality School, the director observed the impact of the program on the participants. He noted their proactive approach, as they consistently strive to make contributions and work towards improving conditions for everyone else in the school. This demonstrates the program's positive influence in fostering a sense of responsibility and initiative among young people. (KII-BOS-05)

**Effectiveness and impact/**  
**What are the potential positive or negative outcomes that were not intended because of the intervention?**

In a BMC workshop, a female student shared a family-related issue. We directed her to the school psychologist for professional support. Following this, we facilitated a meeting with the parents, ultimately resolving the issue together. (KII-BOS-01)

I recall a girl who shared her experience of surviving violence at school. She expressed that confiding in us felt easier than seeking help from someone at school due to fear of judgment. We listened attentively to her and ensured she received professional support. Similarly, during a camp, another girl bravely opened about experiencing violence in her relationship. We have always maintained a rule that confidentiality is paramount, and no one is to ridicule anyone else. This safe and supportive environment, where individuals can freely share their experiences, is something we rarely find elsewhere. (Focus group participant)

As a sole participant from my class in BMC, I have faced sometimes judgments from my peers. Unsure of how to engage actively, I eventually gathered the courage to get involved. Now, with the support of my family and fellow BMC members, I feel more empowered. Both my teachers and parents also stand behind me in my endeavors. Since taking this step, I've noticed a positive change—I have more companionship, access to new information, and exposure to diverse opinions. (Focus group participant)

At the suggestion of my sister, I decided to become active in BMC. Struggling with depression, loneliness, and a fear of reaching out to others, I hesitantly attended the first meeting. Initially, I found it challenging to find my place within the group during the first month. However, being part of BMC has brought a new motivation within me—a desire to evolve into the best version of myself. Like Bert in Mary Poppins movie, my aspiration is to make a positive impact by helping others. This journey with BMC has been instrumental in my personal growth, offering a path towards self-discovery and fulfillment. (Focus group participant)

BMC continues to thrive with a significant number of active participants, serving as role models for other youth and drawing in new members. A key positive aspect is that participants perceive BMC as a safe space where they can openly share their fears, anxieties, and successes. Prior to joining BMC, many felt unwelcome and believed they had to suppress their views. Additionally, the project addresses responsible parenting topics, which will yield long-term benefits as participants establish their own families and community partnerships. (KII-BOS-05)

Additionally, there was a favorable response from the employees of the penitentiary institution beyond the scheduled training sessions, along with a clear determination from management to collaborate with us. Employees showed significant interest and a strong desire to contribute. This led to the establishment of a lasting partnership with the association of penologists, with mutually agreed goals set in place. (KII-BOS-05)

We collaborated closely with various institutions including the juvenile correctional center's staff, the Center for Social Work, and the Children's Centre for Neglected Children "Rada Vranješević". They provided valuable insights from their practical experiences and offered their opinions on the program. The most successful communication and cooperation were experienced with the Daily Center for Children at Risk. While initially challenging to establish a relationship, through workshops conducted in these institutions, individuals learned effective communication techniques, including expressing emotions without compromising the well-being of others. However, despite our efforts, we encountered difficulty in altering attitudes towards the LGBT group, experiencing significant delays in addressing this topic according to our original plans. (KII-BOS-06)

**Effectiveness and impact/** To which extent campaigns and/or programs implemented by the project have **increased awareness** of key target groups about **promoting peaceful masculinities, gender equality and addressing hate speech**

It's common for many individuals to feel apprehensive about getting involved. I've encountered several peers who express a similar fear of judgment from their surroundings. Personally, I've experienced a significant boost in confidence regarding the activities I'm passionate about. A key moment for me was when I became an educator at a camp attended by 70 people. This experience helped me overcome my apprehension towards public speaking and enhanced my communication skills. Furthermore, it deepened my knowledge on topics that intrigue me. Overall, it was a transformative experience that allowed me to grow personally and professionally by promoting gender equality in a cool way. (Feedback from a focus group participant)

Young people are beginning to adopt gender-sensitive language, although initially, acceptance might have seemed improbable. Initially, there may have been laughter upon encountering gender-sensitive language. However, today, especially among BMC members, it is widely accepted. Given that most BMC members are female, they are embraced by their male counterparts. They have continued to promote gender equality within their workshops. This form of informal education plays a crucial role in encouraging young people to adopt gender-sensitive language and become adjusted to the diverse needs of different genders. (KII-BOS-05)

The campaign we organized in June 2023 stands out the most in my memory. We came together as a group and successfully engaged many of our peers. Our discussions revolved around important topics such as healthy lifestyles, drug abuse, mental health, and sexual and reproductive health. We were pleased to see over 70 young people in attendance. These topics are often overlooked in conversation, so it

<p><b>and intolerance?</b></p>	<p>was crucial for us to address them openly and honestly, without shying away from the truth. We aimed to break the taboo surrounding these issues and foster an environment where people feel comfortable discussing them. It was encouraging to see that individuals were receptive to different perspectives. Importantly, everyone respected each other's opinions, creating a sense of security and acceptance within the group. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>While peer violence receives considerable attention, the importance of gender equality discourse is equally significant. Beyond its educational aims, this project also played a role in shaping attitudes and behaviors. As an observer, I witnessed how peer educators emerged as role models for students, prompting shifts in participants' behavior patterns towards greater attentiveness to vulnerable groups, understanding of diverse perspectives, and increased empathy but also promoting peaceful masculinity as a concept. They have acted as true promoters of peaceful masculinity and gender equality in the school and thus have become role models for their peers. (KII-BOS-01)</p> <p>In preparation for implementing the Y+ Manual, a seminar was conducted for colleagues to apply it to the younger population of prisoners in regular prison institutions, aged 18-24 years old. This led us to expand the number of educators, totaling 26 professionals and associates who are now familiar with the manual and its potential applications. This has helped us to further raise awareness of necessity to address hate speech and intolerance in our center. (KII-BOS-04)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> Have there been any positive changes or beneficial effects observed in <b>policies and strategies</b> that incorporate life skills topics, because of the project?</p>	<p>The youth policy of the Republic of Srpska from 2023 to 2027, which was adopted by the Government of the RS in January 2023, defined 4 strategic goals with a total of 15 priorities and 44 measures, and 3 strategic projects, and for the implementation of this Strategy, funds were planned in the total in the amount of 266,389,000 KM.</p> <p>Based on the defined strategic focuses and the proposed development vision, the following strategic goals were determined:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. improve the opportunities and interest of young people for a better life (sustainable stay and return) in the Republic of Srpska;</li> <li>2. encourage the initiative and responsible action of young people in the community;</li> <li>3. encourage the development of healthy lifestyles of young people and a responsible attitude towards the environment;</li> <li>4. promote excellence and create role models among young people.</li> </ol> <p>The youth policy of RS has been developed continuously since 2006, in the form of five-year strategic documents, so the document covering the period from 2023 to 2027 is the fourth in a row.</p> <p>The process of drafting the document was technically supported by the EU4CS (EU for Civil Society) project, and the youth retention program in BiH "General Mobilization" financed by the EU delegation in BiH, as well as by the International Organization for Migration (IOM).</p>

	<p>When it comes to the implementation of the previous Youth Policy, on page 19 of the document, this project is mentioned and it's stated that "Be a Man, Say NO to Violence" is a project by the organization Perpetuum Mobile in which 6,648 young people have participated in workshops conducted by peer educators, and 14,943 young people have participated in workshops through online courses adapted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a total expenditure of 560,000 KM.</p> <p>Additionally, through our participation in working groups on pages 27 to 29 in the SWOT analysis, the promotion of healthy lifestyles is included as an opportunity, which directly corresponds to the project's goal. On page 31, strategic objectives are visible, among which the third one is to promote the development of healthy lifestyles among young people; again, at our insistence, this part has been included.</p> <p>The document mentions Perpetuum Mobile (project partner) is one of the founders and initiators of the establishment of the Network of Youth Centers for Development and Training Animation.</p> <p>The Council of Ministers of BIH took the Ministry of Security-proposed decision to adopt Bosnia and Herzegovina 2021-2026 Strategy for Prevention and Countering Terrorism, drafted by an earlier formed work group. It is an important strategic document, that confirms the commitment of all-level BIH institutions for the prevention and fights against terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization. The Strategy keeps actions that intend to prevent vulnerable groups from opting for violent extremism.</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> How did the project activities mobilize communities to have an impact on influencing <b>educational policies?</b></p>	<p>The program's goals and activities have influenced adjustments to the school's plans. Following each semester, the school diligently submitted reports detailing the conducted workshops to both the Ministry of Education and the Pedagogical Institute. These reports provided thorough descriptions of the workshops and the topics addressed. However, despite our efforts, approval from the Ministry of Education for conducting the workshops in schools has not granted. (KII-BOS-01)</p> <p>Obtaining permission to enter schools posed challenges, primarily due to the position of the Republic Pedagogical Institute rather than the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, changing the project's name necessitated restarting the accreditation process from scratch. Despite the support from three schools where the project was previously implemented, the Director of the Institute didn't permit any CSOs to execute their programs in schools. Although we received approval in previous school years, there were no programs in schools in the last year. Consequently, activities had to be relocated to the Youth Center instead of schools. The reasoning provided was that the program didn't align with the traditional education framework in the Republic of Srpska. (KII-BOS-05)</p> <p>The new government of the RS entity, in office since December 2022, adopted legislative initiatives aimed at restricting fundamental freedoms and the space for civil society, including amendments to re-criminalize defamation and a draft law targeting NGOs as foreign agents (Bosnia and Herzegovina Progress Report for 2023 (Page 17).</p>

	<p>When the Ministry of Education did not allow Program Y to continue, the partnering organization successfully advocated with the schools that had participated in the program and with their directors. Together with parents, they wrote to the Ministry to present the reasons for continuing the program in school premises. This demonstrated the resilience of the partnering organization and enhanced its advocacy and mobilization capacity. (KII-MAN-02)</p>
<p><b>Sustainability and follow up</b>/To what extent have the seven project partners improved their organizational capacities for self-sustainable function as well as lobbying and advocacy?</p>	<p>Project partner in BiH</p> <p>The partner has shown a comprehensive understanding of and sensitivity to gender diversity, which is consistently integrated into their advocacy initiatives.</p> <p>There is satisfactory engagement with stakeholders, and collaborations are contributing meaningfully to policy improvements related to youth and gender issues.</p> <p>The partner has developed organizational structures supportive for advocacy, with clear internal strategies and operational planning that aligns activities with policy goals. Regular internal communication and coordinated advocacy campaigns are in place, and resources are used appropriately, indicating a mature approach to advocacy work.</p> <p>The partner has a mix of short-term and long-term funding sources, with some evidence of policy influence. However, these efforts are not yet fully institutionalized, suggesting a need for further development in sustainability.</p> <p>There is a strategic approach to impact assessment, but it may not be comprehensive across all areas of work, indicating room for improvement in monitoring and evaluating the long-term effects of their advocacy.</p> <p>Despite these efforts, the success in influencing policy changes has been limited, with only minimal advancements or responses from policymakers, pointing to challenges in achieving substantial policy shifts.</p> <p>In summary, the partner has improved their organizational capacities for self-sustainability and has made reasonable efforts in lobbying and advocacy. Nonetheless, while there have been some successes, the overall impact on policy change is still limited, suggesting the need for continued development in advocacy strategies, impact assessment, and sustainability to achieve more significant policy influence.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability and follow up</b>/To what extent have the key actors (partners and</p>	<p>It's crucial to maintain the current focus areas as they are often overlooked in school curriculums. Emphasizing topics such as violence, partner relationships, and reproductive health would likely gather more support from decision-makers. The project should retain its flexibility to adapt to evolving needs. Central to its success is the role of the peer educator, whose significance cannot be overstated. Their influence is key to engaging students effectively and promoting meaningful learning experiences. (KII-BOS-01)</p>

<p>other stakeholders) prepared to take over the responsibility and carry on with the implementation of the developed strategies and commitments (ownership and leadership) considering institutional level (beyond project duration)?</p>	<p>After I finish school, I intend to stay engaged in the civil sector. I believe it's crucial to encourage younger teachers to get involved in these activities and provide them with focused support. Class teachers should be dedicated to BMC activities too. (KII-BOS-03)</p> <p>At the Electrical Engineering High School, there is a notable openness among the school pedagogue, psychologist, and even the professors towards initiatives such as BMC. The success of these sessions is attributed to the involvement of peer educators rather than professors. Offering seminars to professors could bridge the gap between them and the BMC project, enhancing collaboration. Providing some form of reward, such as promotion or professional development opportunities, could further incentivize participation and support from teachers. This approach has the potential to strengthen the integration of BMC and related projects in the school surrounding. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>The Center operates within the local government's system and receives its funding from them. Despite oscillations in support, we remain committed to running the program independently. It's worth noting that our program is certified, and we consistently implement it with dedication. Moving forward, we fully intend to continue applying this program in our work. (KII-BOS-02)</p> <p>The Ministry of Justice offers support for our initiatives, although without financial backing, recognizing the value it brings to both employees and users. As the head of the association of workers in penal institutions, our aim was to establish an umbrella association. Moving forward, our priority is to continue our work with beneficiaries and employees. Given the circumstances, establishing a CSO (Association of Penologists ) has proven to be a more straightforward approach for implementing the project outside the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice. (KII-BOS-04)</p> <p>Moreover, there should be a strong emphasis on training professional staff, especially those who work with both adult prisoners and juveniles. Many of these individuals may not be adequately sensitized or trained to work with minors. The manual can serve as a valuable resource in this regard. Therefore, it's imperative to maintain seminars and training sessions for employees who work with minors, ensuring they have the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively support this vulnerable population. (KII-BOS-04)</p> <p>The youth work organized last year gathered significant attention from key figures in both the government and civil sectors, substantially boosting the project's visibility and credibility. Notably, institutions like the Ombudsman and the Center for Social Work openly endorsed the project, lending further legitimacy to its objectives. Moreover, the Round Table discussions with the Office of the Ombudsman for Children facilitated productive dialogue and collaboration. These collaborative endeavors are expected to facilitate advancements in securing permission to access schools in project's follow up. (KII-BOS-06)</p> <p>In May 2023, Perpetuum Mobile organized meetings to discuss on the Action Plan for Youth 2023-2025. These sessions provided a platform for the recognition and integration of the Y+ program into the discussions and following actions. (KII-BOS-06)</p>
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Kosovo

Criterion and questions	Evidence
<p><b>Relevance and coherence/</b> To what extent has the project responded to the <b>needs of the local communities</b> and the <b>relevant sectoral policies</b> of the target countries and proven to be feasible?</p>	<p>Educators mainly wanted to improve their competencies to navigate sensitive subjects in an informal manner, with notable steps in promoting gender equality (GE). Young individuals are benefiting from newfound ways for open discourse, enhancing their communication skills and ability to protect themselves, particularly within vocational schools. (KII-KOS-01)</p> <p>Meanwhile, the Y+ program is reshaping the approach within the correctional facilities, offering a comprehensive framework for staff to engage beneficiaries in vital topics like gender equality for the first time. This underscores the project's essential relevance in fostering inclusive education and societal progress for involved target groups based on their needs and interests. (KII-KOS-01)</p> <p>This marks the first occasion where we've had the opportunity to choose the topics, we wish to discuss without a teacher directing us on what to do and how to proceed. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>The project has highlighted the need for better education, starting from elementary school. Key topics include drug abuse, abortion, sexual behavior, socialization, and responsible usage of social networks. Young people have shown interest in discussing these topics, contributing to breaking patriarchal norms. They successfully met their information-gathering needs regarding topics that were not available elsewhere. (KII-KOS-05)</p> <p>As a social worker within juvenile correction institutions, I've found this project to be among the most relevant initiatives over the past five years of my tenure. It has been particularly commendable for its targeted focus on meeting the needs of both beneficiaries and staff members. By facilitating discussions on previously neglected topics, it has empowered our beneficiaries with newfound opportunities for expression. (KII-KOS-08)</p> <p>The State Strategy for Youth 2024-2032 is a strategic document that defines the vision, medium-term goals, priority policy measures, as well as specific actions to improve the well-being and position of young people in society. The project relates to specific objectives (SO) of the strategy, specifically SO1: Empowering or equipping young people with essential life skills for a successful and prosperous life and SO2: Improving the availability, accessibility, and quality of services (online and live) and support provided to young people that effectively address their needs. The specific measures/interventions and actions that are expected to be implemented within these objective cover different areas of life skills such as health education (physical, sexual and mental), socio-emotional skills, civic education, education on safety and social cohesion, mental and sexual health, addiction and abuse of narcotic substances, prevention or reporting of harassment, bullying, and violence (of various forms), etc. Equipping young people with life skills is planned to be done through various interventions, such as through non-formal education and youth work and formal education (STATE STRATEGY FOR YOUTH 2024-2032, p. 18)</p>



	<p>The Kosovo Government implements the Strategy on the Prevention of Violent Extremism and Radicalization Leading to Terrorism 2015 – 2020. The intervention is aligned with this Strategy, contributing to awareness raising in schools and with parents and supporting young people at risk to extremism. Furthermore, the project has contributed to the Law on Gender Equality and the Kosovo Program for Gender Equality 2020-2024 particularly related to Specific goal 2.1 Gender equality is treated as a condition for inclusive quality education (Development of a program that addresses gender-based violence in schools, p.104).</p>
<p><b>Relevance and coherence/ Are there any gaps or limitations in the project's design or implementations that affect its relevance?</b></p>	<p>Ensuring gender balance in our activities posed a significant challenge, as we made concerted efforts to maintain this balance. We encountered limited interest from young boys in participating in the activities, which required focused attention. Additionally, during Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions, only female teachers were present, making it challenging to openly discuss topics that encompass diverse gender identities, particularly in non-binary contexts. Addressing these dynamics required thoughtful consideration and proactive strategies to foster inclusivity and open dialogue. (KII-KOS-01)</p> <p>There are evident gaps that need addressing, particularly in our collaboration with decision-makers within government and local self-governments, including representatives from political parties and Members of Parliament (MPs). It's imperative for Program Y to seamlessly integrate into the daily responsibilities and approaches of teachers. To achieve this goal, concerted efforts are required to engage decision-makers effectively, as local self-governments often wield considerable influence in educational matters. (KII-KOS-01)</p> <p>In September 2022, education protests erupted over low salaries, leading to approximately 350,000 children being unable to attend school. Consequently, partner organizations postponed workshops planned for schools. However, the return of educational workers to schools the following month prevented delays in project implementation. (Progress report)</p> <p>In March 2022, the LGBTQ+ community faced increased marginalization during parliamentary discussions on the civil code, resulting in the parliament's failure to approve it. Homophobic rhetoric from several deputies reverberated throughout society, exacerbating tensions. Additionally, gender-based violence remained an urgent issue, with alarming levels of femicide and sexual violence against young girls, including recent cases involving an 11-year-old and a 13-year-old. These incidents underscored the urgent need for initiatives like CARE's Program Y, aimed at preventing violence. (Progress report)</p>
<p><b>Relevance and coherence/ How well does the intervention fit with other similar regional initiatives? What</b></p>	<p>At the Sutjeska camp, BMC members from all four countries united with a shared purpose, establishing enduring connections beyond the event itself. This cohesion was evident at the final conference, where participants attended primarily to engage with their peers from other BMCs. Similarly, the youth exchange program follows to the thorough principles of RYCO for organizing regional youth gatherings, while also aiming to expand its scope by incorporating activities common to all participating countries. (KII-KOS-01)</p> <p>Furthermore, as NGOs, we have acquired tools and knowledge that empower youth, but ongoing education and promotion are essential for sustained impact and further building our organizational capacities. Our learning hasn't been limited to theory; we've had opportunities to apply our knowledge practically, so I see this as an added value for my NGO. (KII-KOS-01)</p>

<p>is its added value?</p>	<p>Many regional initiatives concentrate on reconciliation endeavors, yet this project distinguishes itself by tackling topics such as peer relationships and gender-based violence, which are frequently neglected by others. Employing a bottom-up approach, young individuals design campaigns centered around these vital issues. As far as I am aware, there are no other initiatives specifically focusing on these areas in the region. (KII-KOS-03)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> To what extent have stakeholders (school staff, parents, representatives of institutions, etc.), beneficiaries (youth) as defined <b>gained new knowledge and changed their behavior?</b></p>	<p>During the Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions for teachers, participants consistently highlighted their acquisition of new teaching methodologies and approaches for addressing sensitive topics with students. We encouraged teachers to disseminate the learned activities among their colleagues. Notably, one of our attendees was promoted to the role of school principal and expressed a strong desire for further training sessions for the remaining staff members. As a result, we now have a cohort of more capable teachers who are increasingly open to engaging with and effectively addressing these topics in their work. (KII-KOS-01)</p> <p>We have had sessions about mental health and open communication that helped me in my personal life. I have a family member who ended his relationship with his girlfriend after one year. He reached out to me at 3 AM and we walked together, discussing his distress (he even mentioned thoughts of suicide). We conversed every night for two weeks, and he gradually improved. I faced similar challenges, but with the support of my peers from BMC, I managed to overcome the situation. (Feedback from a focus group participants)</p> <p>Our daughter's engagement in extracurricular activities has exposed her to crucial topics rarely discussed in conventional settings. This has boosted her confidence to express herself while broadening her understanding of the world. As parents, we prioritize addressing overlooked issues like mental and sexual health with her, encouraging her to navigate societal challenges with resilience. Our journey together has taught us the importance of emotional expression, meaningful conversations, and mutual support within the family. (BMC participant's parent)</p> <p>Since joining the BMC project, my child has shown increased social engagement and open-mindedness, along with notable intellectual and social development, bringing me great satisfaction. Important discussions with teenagers should cover the impact of the internet and social interactions, along with ongoing conversations about their life and goals. Supporting my child's goal-setting and determination is a priority for me as a mother. Thanks to the BMC project, my child has overcome insecurities, gained confidence, and openly discuss their aspirations, preparing them for future challenges, which brings me immense joy and pride. (BMC participant's parent)</p> <p>"Prior to BMC, I held biases against meeting LGBT individuals. However, BMC enlightened me about the importance of respecting their rights, and now I actively seek out opportunities to connect with people from this community." (Feedback from a focus group participants)</p> <p>"I wasn't much of a team player before BMC, but now I embrace collaboration and excel at working within teams to achieve the best outcomes." (Feedback from a focus group participants)</p>

	<p>"Prior to joining SIT, I struggled with aggression and reluctance to engage with others, regardless of their identities. (Feedback from a focus group participants)</p> <p>Following participation in the BMC program, I find myself engaging in more meaningful conversations with both friends and fellow BMC participants on topics that hold personal significance to me. I've noticed an improvement in my communication skills and a decreased tendency to judge others. (Feedback from a focus group participants)</p> <p>During a session in Peja, we explored into the sensitive issue of abusive relationships, which provided a valuable opportunity for dialogue. Hearing diverse perspectives allowed for a shift in my understanding of how to address such relationships. (Feedback from a focus group participants)</p> <p>In another session, we endeavored to challenge the prevalent stereotype perpetuated in our schools: "Boys don't cry." While young people are willing to discuss these topics privately, there remains reluctance to openly address them in fear of judgment. (Feedback from a focus group participants)</p> <p>I've noticed a significant shift in how I navigate and express my emotions since participating in these sessions. They've provided a safe space for me to freely articulate my feelings and perspectives. Topics such as violence cases have been openly discussed, allowing us to collectively brainstorm appropriate responses to everyday challenges within the correctional center. The positive transformations extend beyond my own experience. Members of my group have noticeably become less prone to anger and violence. Moreover, our increased engagement in discussions about shared interests has fostered a stronger sense of connection among us. (KII-KOS-07)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b>  <b>What are the potential positive or negative outcomes that were not intended because of the intervention?</b></p>	<p>Prior to attending the camp, participants from Kosovo made a collective decision not to bring any symbols that might provoke others. Unfortunately, despite their efforts, they found themselves provoked by others during the event. During the final night at the camp in Sutjeska (2022), Bosnian Serb participants were found creating and sharing offensive photos. Therefore, they were removed from the closing ceremony. Despite this, some of them were allowed to attend the subsequent exchange. Personally, I had hoped for a more extensive discussion on the matter rather than simply expelling them from the event. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>The incident that occurred at the camp in 2022 was resolved through collaboration with all partners. We engaged in discussions with young people from our delegation, aiming to clarify the reasons and repercussions of such behavior among their peers, while also framing it as a valuable learning experience. (KII-KOS-01)</p> <p>The situation at the camp in 2022 was successfully addressed through collaborative efforts with all stakeholders. We initiated dialogues with the young participants from the group to understand the underlying causes and consequences of their peers' behavior, emphasizing the</p>

	<p>importance of learning from such experiences. This served as a valuable learning opportunity for everyone involved. As a result, during the subsequent camp held in 2023, no incidents occurred, indicating mutual growth and improvement. (KII-MAN-01)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> To which extent campaigns and/or programs implemented by the project have <b>increased awareness</b> of key target groups about <b>promoting peaceful masculinities, gender equality and addressing hate speech and intolerance?</b></p>	<p>As a father, I'm gratified to witness gender equality topics being discussed in my daughters' school because of this project. Engaging within school settings, rather than solely through extracurricular activities, has provided us with a better understanding of young people's needs within their natural contexts. (KII-KOS-01)</p> <p>While some teachers find discussions on these topics bothersome, colleagues who have undergone Training of Trainers (ToT) have had a very positive experience and wanted to spread their enthusiasm around the school. (KII-KOS-05)</p> <p>The program has proven highly effective in mitigating violent conflicts within high schools concerning these sensitive topics. Consistently, school administrations report a noticeable decrease in conflict levels attributed to the program's support. However, the most significant transformation is observed within BMC and their members, where certain aspects, such as advocating for LGBT rights and promoting gender equality, are embraced passionately. In contrast, shifting perspectives within schools, particularly among young people, remains a challenging task. This is further complicated by the predominantly male composition of approximately 80% of teachers in the schools we engage with. (KII-KOS-01)</p> <p>One notable achievement of the workshops has been the dismantling of gender stereotypes, particularly regarding traditional roles and job divisions. This has resulted in amplified satisfaction among the youth beneficiaries, who now feel more encouraged to openly share their emotions and personal experiences, marking a significant step beyond plain verbal expression. Additionally, facilitating interactions with peer educators outside the boundaries of the correctional center has fostered greater trust among the youth in discussing sensitive subjects. Through our involvement in this project, staff members have not only enhanced their understanding of non-formal approaches but have also deepened their awareness of the challenges faced by youth. Previously overlooked topics are now being addressed with more nuanced and effective methods. (KII-KOS-08)</p> <p>One instance where the benefits of the program became evident was during a conflict situation I encountered. Drawing from the tools we practiced during the workshops, I was able to effectively de-escalate the situation and find a non-violent resolution. What sets this program apart is its focus on addressing issues relevant to us, the youth, rather than solely responding to adult interests. (KII-KOS-07)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> Have there been any positive changes or beneficial effects observed in</p>	<p>The Ministry of Education has presently embraced a strategy along with various programs, predominantly focusing on Program Y. This program has significantly contributed to achieving the Ministry's objectives. Working as a gender equality officer, my responsibility involves providing training to teachers on these matters. Through collaboration with SIT on Child Protection and safeguarding, we have aligned our manual for teachers with Program Y. This module has been accredited and serves as a guiding framework for future implementation. (KII-KOS-03).</p>

**policies and strategies** that incorporate life skills topics, because of the project?

Gender equality issues have been integrated into school curricula and social education programs. Additionally, elementary schools are addressing these topics through extracurricular activities such as workshops. However, a significant challenge lies in addressing mentalities, particularly in rural areas, where many of the problems surrounding gender equality persist. (KII-KOS-03)

Initially conceived as a program to support social workers, Program Y+ unexpectedly progressed to include collaboration with high school psychologists, recognizing their need for additional tools to effectively manage the program. Consequently, our Y+ training initiative now encompasses both social workers and school psychologists. Furthermore, in response to the current needs, we have provided essential equipment to correctional centers, enhancing their capabilities. (KII-KOS-08)

Our engagement with the Ministry of Justice has produced fruitful results, with our involvement expanding across various stages of program development for youth at-risk. As a result, we have secured permanent authorization to operate within correctional centers. Presently, discussions are underway to extend our program to additional correctional facilities throughout the country, indicative of the program's growing impact and relevance. (KII-KOS-01)

Meaningful collaboration was built between SIT and the Ministry of Justice, paving the way for the implementation of Program Y+ across both the open and closed facilities of the Lipjan Correctional Institution for Minors. The initial Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Justice and SIT was signed in December 2022, set for a one-year duration. However, given the evident positive changes observed among at-risk youth and recognizing the significance of Program Y+, the Ministry of Justice extended its partnership with SIT by signing another MoU, ensuring the continuation of workshops for minors for an additional two years. In the meantime, our partner YMCA forged a collaboration with the Social Center of Gjakova, offering training to social workers on the Program Y+ methodology in April 2022.

The significance of Program Y+ and the collaborative efforts of the Ministries of Justice were prominently showcased during a collaboration conference held in November 2023 in Tirana. At this event, Deputy Ministers of Justice from Albania and Kosovo not only exchanged best practices but also acknowledged the remarkable outcomes of Program Y+ and emphasized the necessity of minors undergoing the topics covered within the program for effective rehabilitation.

YMCA actively participated as part of the Civil Society Organizations in the working group on the Law on Youth and played a significant role in the development of Kosovo's inaugural Youth Strategy (2024 – 2032) by the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports. (Progress report)

CARE's partners in Kosovo, SIT (Centre for Counseling, Social Services, and Research), and YMCA Kosovo have maintained close contact and collaboration with key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI) and the Ministry of Justice. This collaborative effort has successfully achieved all targets and objectives. (Progress report)

One significant accomplishment of CARE's collaboration with MESTI was the accreditation obtained for the next two years, spanning from March 2021 to March 2023. Additionally, fruitful cooperation among partners and CARE led to the establishment of a working group

	<p>comprising representatives from the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation MESTI. This group proposed the institutionalization of Program Y within thematic modules focused on child protection. The thematic modules on child protection aim to address the interconnected issues of human rights, violence prevention (in accordance with the Istanbul Convention), and combatting hate speech, preventing sexual harassment, and promoting gender equality. One module in this package is Program Y as a tool to be used into all schools, thereby raising awareness among children on these critical topics. The joint launching event with MESTI, CARE and local partners took place on September 25, 2023. Furthermore, CARE has obtained the accreditation on Program Y from MESTI spanning from February 2024 until February 2025. (Progress report)</p> <p>Established cooperation with SIT has resulted with great feedback from teachers and we plan to continue supporting them on this topic to further implement the strategy for combating GBV. (KII-KOS-02)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> How did the project activities mobilize communities to have an impact on influencing educational policies?</p>	<p>In a society transitioning like ours, the focus has often been on infrastructure rather than personal development. However, within our project, young people were given a platform to freely express themselves. Our students participated in the sessions, and based on their interest, we integrated gender studies and sexual behavior topics into the psychology curriculum. Students appreciated the opportunity to discuss various topics such as gender equality, prejudices, stereotypes, and drug abuse, feeling heard and valued. (KII-KOS-04)</p> <p>The local education strategy and action plan encompass various activities addressing issues such as school violence, gender-based violence (GBV), and the deconstruction of harmful narratives. A local coordination mechanism for combating domestic violence and GBV exists in the form of a formal working group within the City Administration, overseen by the Deputy Mayor. This group also explores additional capacity-building opportunities for school staff and other relevant personnel. Experience and achievements gained from this project have been very important for moving forward in this direction. (KII-KOS-02)</p>
<p><b>Sustainability and follow up/</b>To what extent have the seven project partners improved their organizational capacities for self-sustainable function as well as lobbying and advocacy?</p>	<p><u>Partner 1:</u></p> <p>The CSO has made adequate efforts to ensure gender inclusiveness in its advocacy activities. By focusing on fair representation and considering the diverse needs of various genders, the organization has laid a foundation for equitable policy influence. Engagement with stakeholders on youth and gender issues has been satisfactory, and this collaboration is notably contributing to policy improvements. Effective stakeholder engagement is essential for driving policy change and enhancing the CSO's credibility and influence.</p> <p>The CSO has developed an organizational structure that supports advocacy and policy influence with a clear internal strategy and operational planning linking activities to policy goals. Internal communication is maintained regularly, which is crucial for coordinating advocacy campaigns and ensuring everyone in the organization is aligned with the advocacy goals.</p>

The engagement of staff and volunteers and the attempt to align tasks with expertise demonstrate an understanding of the importance of leveraging human resources for effective advocacy, though some gaps in this alignment remain.

The organization has moderate sustainability with a mix of short-term and long-term funding sources. This diversity in funding is important for financial health and the ability to maintain advocacy efforts over time.

Documented cases of policy influence show a potential for sustained advocacy; however, the efforts are not yet fully institutionalized, which would be necessary for long-term impact and independence from external fluctuations in support.

The advocacy efforts of the organization have resulted in a tangible impact on policies, particularly those related to youth and gender issues. This indicates that the organization is not only active but also effective in influencing policy decisions.

Partner 2:

The CSO's efforts have had a substantial impact on policies related to youth and gender, suggesting that its advocacy work has led to transformative changes or advancements within policy frameworks. This indicates a deep and meaningful engagement with the policy-making process.

The organization has secured multi-year funding commitments, which indicates a stable financial foundation. The development of additional revenue streams to support its advocacy work also points to a strategic approach to ensuring long-term sustainability. The presence of impact assessments that inform strategic adjustments underscores an ongoing influence on policy agendas and a proactive approach to advocacy.

With a clear, comprehensive, and adaptable advocacy strategy, the CSO is well-equipped to respond to changing circumstances.

The exemplary stakeholder engagement showcases a holistic involvement with key figures and groups, which is significantly shaping policy developments and implementations. This indicates that the CSO is not only involved in policy dialogue but is also a driving force in shaping outcomes for youth and gender issues.

**Sustainability and follow up**/To what extent have the key actors (partners and other stakeholders)

In our efforts to promote sustainability and ensure ongoing impact, we advocate for increased dialogue about toxic masculinity and femicide awareness. While prioritizing victim rehabilitation, we recognized the importance of engaging with perpetrators. As part of this initiative, we organized a "Fathers' Festival" to highlight positive role models. Additionally, our appearances on ten television programs provided crucial platforms to discuss contemporary masculinity. Notably, these discussions marked the first of their kind. Our comprehensive campaigns received significant coverage, contributing to widespread awareness. A significant achievement of the project has been fostering an environment where young people feel empowered to openly share their emotions, thereby advancing gender equality awareness. (KII-KOS-01)

prepared to take over the responsibility and carry on with the implementation of the developed strategies and commitments (ownership and leadership) considering institutional level (beyond project duration)?

Initiated as Program M (Male) in Kosovo back in 2012, Program Y underwent an extensive 18-month review process before receiving authorization to proceed. Today, it stands as an institutionalized program, serving as a blueprint for the Ministry in crafting other school curriculums addressing children and youth rights. However, there remains a pressing need to enhance the capacity of school staff to effectively implement the program. Recognizing its efficacy, the Agency for Gender Equality has recommended Program Y guidelines for the development of schoolbooks grounded in Gender Equality principles. (KII-KOS-01)

Although there has been visible progress, there is still a need for greater emphasis on integrating our program into school curricula to ensure sustainability. While 500 young people have participated in the program, this alone is insufficient for creating lasting change without institutionalizing the program. There is a necessity for further capacity building for social workers to support sustainability efforts. (KII-KOS-01)

We as local authorities have identified a critical need for the establishment of rehabilitation centers to address various forms of violence affecting youth in the community. Despite resource limitations, there is a clear consensus on the necessity of providing essential services to both perpetrators and victims of violence, including those involved in school-related incidents. Current strategies, such as transferring perpetrators between schools, are recognized as ineffective in addressing the underlying issues. Therefore, prioritizing the establishment of these centers is essential, focusing on providing comprehensive life skills education through tailored programs such as Program Y and Y+. (KII-KOS-02)

Integrated into the action plan for 2024 is an information session aimed at parents focusing on gender equality, human trafficking, and domestic violence issues. These sessions are most effective when attended by a combination of parents, teachers, and school administrators. Priority is placed on working closely with rural teachers and parents to address these issues effectively. The total number of information sessions planned for gender equality is yet to be determined, while sessions on human trafficking are set at four based on identified needs, and the number of sessions on domestic violence will be determined based on research results. (KII-KOS-03)

The Ministry of Education is committed to addressing gender issues, human trafficking, and domestic violence, particularly in rural areas. To achieve this, they will collaborate closely with school principals and teachers, implementing a Training of Trainers (ToT) program led by experienced teachers. Teachers attending the ToT will earn 24 points towards their licensing requirements. Additionally, a network of experts will be established to facilitate information exchange between relevant stakeholders. The next step involves formalizing this network into a working group to review and improve policies related to gender issues within the education system, showcasing the Ministry's ongoing dedication to this cause. (KII-KOS-03)

Furthermore, our capacity to organize activities, such as football matches against staff members, has greatly improved. Football has served as a catalyst for improved communication and understanding among us. I am enthusiastic about potentially becoming a peer educator for the next generation or, at the very least, sharing my experiences as a speaker during orientation sessions for newcomers. (KII-KOS-07)



Looking ahead, we intend to further enhance our staff's capabilities, including social workers, guardians, educational officers, and medical officers, through continued training. This will enable them to better recognize and respond to the diverse challenges youth encounter, employing non-formal methodologies where appropriate. Collaborating with our partner organization, we aim to expand the frequency of sessions to once a week, a plan supported by the director of our juvenile correction center and relevant officials within the Ministry of Justice. (KII-KOS-08)

Both SIT and YMCA have maintained fruitful collaborations with various stakeholders, including international and local organizations. They have successfully expanded elements of Program Y to reach more individuals. YMCA, for instance, utilized a small grant received from the Kosovo Women's Network in December 2022 to scale up Program Y and establish BMC clubs in Peja. Moreover, both organizations have joined the K10 Coalition, focusing on sexual reproductive health and rights among youth. (progress report)

## Albania

Criterion and questions	Evidence
<p><b>Relevance and coherence/</b> To what extent has the project responded to the <b>needs of the local communities and the relevant sectoral policies</b> of the target countries and proven to be feasible?</p>	<p>The addressed gaps in reaching more young people through school workshops and outdoor activities. Needs were identified based on previous project experiences and aligned with youth, educational, and local strategies in the City of Tirana. (KII-ALB-02)</p> <p>The project's significance is in addressing taboo topics like GBV often overlooked in Albania. As someone from a patriarchal background, for me the project was very relevant as it has emphasized the importance of challenging gender stereotypes and addressing sensitive issues such as sexuality and substance abuse, filling critical gaps in traditional education systems. (KII-ALB-04)</p> <p>As an organization, we've collaborated with BMC during high school, providing workshops on STDs and HIV. BMC concept is remarkably relevant within Albanian culture, tackling crucial issues that aren't typically addressed in schools, extracurricular activities, or NGO initiatives. These topics are essential for young people, yet often overlooked or denied by teachers and parents due to entrenched traditions, sensitivities, stigma, and discrimination prevalent in our society. (KII-ALB-06)</p> <p>Gender equality in sports, especially in leadership positions, is a priority for the university. Despite existing disparities, initiatives focusing on gender equality topics provide an opportunity to address these issues within the sports field. The university's mission includes promoting gender equality, reflecting its commitment to fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment within sports education. (KII-ALB-01)</p> <p>In the Kavaja Correctional Centre, there is a team consisting of psychologists, social workers, and supportive staff dedicated to working with juveniles. However, due to resource constraints, it's challenging for them to address all aspects effectively. Our goal is to reintegrate juveniles into society as law-abiding citizens while also nurturing their individual growth. We identified a gap in our capabilities, and the project was precisely designed to address this shortage by offering programs that our current staff cannot deliver. With a focus on essential programs for juveniles and limited staff capacity, we cannot provide comprehensive life skills programs alongside education, employment, and psychological support. (KII-ALB-07)</p> <p>Finding people who are cool with talking about stuff like sex and gender equality is tough. But meeting folks like BMC coordinators and peer educators, who are open-minded, really made me realize how important it is to have those conversations. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>The project's uniqueness lies in its focus on neglected issues like self-improvement and gender equality. It's been eye-opening and totally changed the way I see things. It's my best project ever because we select the topics cared about. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p>

	<p>We're really into discussing women's rights and stuff. I'm a big feminist, so talking about gender roles with this crew feels right and very much related to my interests. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>Talking to different people has helped us learn more about ourselves and what we're passionate about. That's why I see this project very relevant. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>Program Y+ successfully transitioned to becoming part of the daily operations of correctional centers, despite being initially piloted. Although this was not originally planned by the project, proactive efforts led to its integration into the correctional centers' curricula. This integration highlights the program's effectiveness and relevance in addressing the needs of the correctional system and its beneficiaries. (KII-ALB-02)</p> <p>The Albanian government has been implementing juvenile justice strategies, with the current focus on crime prevention and youth participation. The second strategy emphasizes rehabilitation to prevent recidivism. This project aligns with this strategy by strengthening juveniles' individual resilience during their time in the correctional institution. Through various activities, they have been engaged in decision-making exercises, which enhances their reasoning and empathy, potentially influencing their future behavior. For instance, one participant, now released, has volunteered as a trainer, sharing his experiences to dissuade others from making similar mistakes. (KII-ALB-07)</p> <p>National Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2029 in Albania have been aligned with the 2030 UN Youth Strategy which is based on the global vision of a world in which the human rights of every young person are realized; every young person is empowered to reach their full potential; and which recognizes the capacity, resilience and positive contribution of youth as agents of change.</p>
<p><b>Relevance and coherence/</b> Are there any <b>gaps or limitations</b> in the project's design or implementations that affect its relevance?</p>	<p>During the implementation phase of the 2021-2024 project in Albania, the local and central elections played a significant role in shaping how the project unfolded. The central elections held in April 2021 marked a pivotal moment, particularly regarding changes in key ministries responsible for project implementation. One notable change occurred within the Ministry of Education. Before the elections, the previous Minister of Education had exhibited a greater level of cooperation with both international and local organizations involved in educational projects. After the elections, there was a shift in the approach of the Ministry of Education. The new leadership implemented bureaucratic regulations that altered the access procedures for primary and secondary schools. These changes resulted in longer delays and heightened levels of control, particularly concerning primary schools due to the sensitivity and age of the students. Despite encountering difficulties in primary school education, the Act for Society (AfS) partner organization managed to successfully provide access to secondary schools in Tirana. Their remarkable cooperation was evident when the Y program became an elective subject for the University of Sport students, effectively accrediting the Y program to train teachers and peer educators. Despite the challenges, thanks to the understanding of the program's E importance by the director of the school, access was provided in one of the primary schools. (progress report)</p>
<p><b>Relevance and coherence</b> How well does the intervention fit with other</p>	<p>The organization's initiatives align closely with regional youth agendas, especially regarding youth peace and security. Their work with juvenile correction center beneficiaries contributes to creating a non-violent, non-discriminatory society. Additionally, they directly support the Ministry of Education's strategies to combat GBV and promote healthy lifestyles, thereby influencing new youth laws and strategies. (KII-ALB-06)</p>

<p>similar regional initiatives? What is its added value?</p>	<p>This project's focus on peer relationships and gender-based violence aligns well with the regional agenda of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) in the Western Balkans. RYCO aims to promote reconciliation, cooperation, and understanding among young people in the region. By addressing these crucial topics, the project contributes to RYCO's objectives of fostering dialogue, tolerance, and mutual respect among youth across the Western Balkans. Additionally, the bottom-up approach employed by the project resonates with RYCO's emphasis on youth empowerment and grassroots initiatives to drive positive change in the region. (KII-ALB-02)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> To what extent have stakeholders (school staff, parents, representatives of institutions, etc.), beneficiaries (youth) as defined <b>gained new knowledge and changed their behavior?</b></p>	<p>The pilot of Program E in Albanian elementary schools provided valuable insights that have informed the subsequent implementation of Program Y in high schools. This experience served as a learning opportunity, allowing for the refinement of strategies and approaches tailored to the educational context. By leveraging the lessons learned from Program E, the implementation of Program Y in high schools has been enhanced, ensuring its effectiveness in addressing the needs of students and promoting positive outcomes. (KII-ALB-02)</p> <p>The project's overarching aim is to help these juveniles recognize their potentials beyond their past mistakes, facilitated by young mentors who understand their struggles. The project has not only impacted the juveniles but also transformed our staff's approach to working with them. We're incorporating new models learned from the project to improve our interventions. Additionally, the summer school initiative has redirected the energy of juveniles towards constructive activities, reducing conflicts and negative behaviors. (KII-ALB-07)</p> <p>Finding individuals who are willing to engage in open discussions about taboo topics such as sexuality and gender equality can be difficult due to differing mindsets and societal norms. However, encountering individuals like coordinators, who are open to diverse ideas, has been incredibly impactful. Their openness has shown me the importance of addressing these topics and the need for more inclusive dialogue. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>Since joining the project, I've become more confident in public speaking and I'm not afraid to speak my mind anymore. It's like finding my inner leader. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>We played these intense role-playing games and shared personal stories that helped us understand each other better and tackle tough topics like gender equality and self-improvement. This also made us more informed and aware about how masculinity is about. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>Through workshops and discussions, we've learned to respect each other's opinions and support one another through tough times, like helping a friend who was dealing with domestic violence. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>We've created a space where everyone feels comfortable talking about their feelings and experiences, which has helped us grow as individuals and as a community. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p>

	<p>By participating in the project, I've gained valuable leadership skills and learned how to stand up for my rights, just like the girl who bravely shared her bullying experience in front of the BMC members. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>We've had so many new experiences and learned things we never thought we would, like writing letters to our future selves and discussing topics that are often brushed aside. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>The project has made me realize that it's okay to make mistakes and learn from them. It's all about personal growth and understanding ourselves better. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>Through role plays and personal stories, we've tackled sensitive topics like drug dealing and domestic violence, providing support and understanding to those who need it most. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> What are the potential positive or negative outcomes that were not intended because of the intervention?</p>	<p>In another workshop focusing on gender and sexuality, a student revealed their identity as pansexual, highlighting the ongoing relevance of topics addressed in the project. Despite progress, there are still areas that require attention, but we remain committed to supporting individuals in navigating these discussions and embracing diverse identities. (KII-ALB-04)</p> <p>A network of students formed from the program, facilitating continued engagement beyond the university, including activities addressing gender issues in sports leadership. Both male and female students participated in these initiatives, underscoring the program's inclusive approach. In this module implementation, over 300 students have participated, with 100 now part of the alumni network, aiming to increase the number of women in sports leadership roles. The project has facilitated collaboration, shared methodologies and experiences, while also aiding personal growth, especially in understanding healthy masculinity. The manual serves as a valuable resource for both bachelor's and master's studies. (KII-ALB-01)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> To which extent campaigns and/or programs implemented by the project have increased awareness of key target groups about promoting peaceful</p>	<p>As a result of the project, beneficiaries have become more actively engaged in human rights and gender equality, leading to shifts in their mindsets and increased involvement in society. For instance, a former participant in BMC now works as a DJ, continuing to promote gender equality rights and reproductive health. Others have become peer educators in UNFPA projects addressing domestic and gender-based violence. However, challenges persist in working with high schools and teachers, as there is resistance to changing curricula and integrating comprehensive sexual education into their identity. Despite efforts since 2014 to introduce sexual education into the curriculum, teachers remain disinterested due to stigma, often requesting external support for implementation. While training sessions have been conducted, more support is needed to encourage teachers to fully engage with the comprehensive sex education manual and Program Y. (KII-ALB-06).</p> <p>The awareness among youth beneficiaries has been significantly enhanced through the Program Y curricula and BMC activities, especially regarding gender identities, conflict prevention, and non-violent communication. These initiatives have provided valuable education and resources to young people, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate complex issues surrounding gender, conflict, and communication. By focusing on these key areas, the program has empowered youth to understand and actively promote these societal challenges, fostering a culture of respect, empathy, and cooperation within their school community. (KII-ALB-02).</p>

<p><b>masculinities, gender equality and addressing hate speech and intolerance?</b></p>	<p>Within schools, policies prohibit the division or categorization of young people by gender. Consequently, extracurricular activities have been organized to provide opportunities for engagement with diverse gender identities. One notable outcome involves the transformation of a formerly homophobic individual who, through interaction with a transgender youth, has become their close friend. (KII-ALB-06).</p> <p>This project has been a game-changer for me. It's given me the confidence to speak up with my peers about empathy to understand others, but also actively to promote no-hate speech importance in other classes. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p> <p>When we're all chatting directly, it's much easier for us to be open and friendly during those BMC activities. Our coordinator kicked off this whole thing back when we were in high school, setting the stage for meaningful discussions. And, you know, the campaigns and programs we've been running? They've really helped us and others understand more about being respectful guys, promoting fairness, and not tolerating hate or prejudices. (Feedback from a focus group participant)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> Have there been any positive changes or beneficial effects observed <b>in policies and strategies</b> that incorporate life skills topics, because of the project?</p>	<p>The Albanian government has been implementing juvenile justice strategies, with the current focus on crime prevention and youth participation. The second strategy emphasizes rehabilitation to prevent recidivism. This project aligns with this strategy by strengthening juveniles' individual resilience during their time in the correctional institution. Through various activities, they have been engaged in decision-making exercises, which enhances their reasoning and empathy, potentially influencing their future behavior. For instance, one participant, now released, has volunteered as a trainer, sharing his experiences to dissuade others from making similar mistakes. (KII-ALB-07)</p> <p>The key success of the AfS partner organization stems from their ability to forge strong relationships with the Ministry of Justice. This was exemplified in February 2022 when AfS signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, specifically with the Department for the Prevention of Juvenile and Youth Crimes, to pilot the Y+ program. Following the commencement of workshops for young people at the correctional center in Kavajë in September, AfS embarked on a successful endeavor to train the correctional center workers. This initiative aimed to enhance their understanding of young people at risk, raise gender sensitivity, and equip them with the necessary skills for conducting Y+ workshops. For their tireless dedication to working with young people at risk, AfS was honored with a certificate of appreciation from the Ministry of Justice in September of 2023.</p> <p>In a bid to further assess the impact of their work on the rehabilitation of young individuals, the Ministry of Justice took a significant step by issuing an order for the integration of the Y+ Program into the drafting of rehabilitation plans. This development marked yet another success in the institutionalization of Y+ in Albania. On November 15, 2023, CARE together with AfS and Tirana hosted a significant gathering. Among those present were the Deputy Ministers of Justice from Kosovo and Albania, along with the Austrian Ambassador to Albania. Also in attendance were officials from the ADA office in Tirana, and CARE's partner organizations from Kosovo. This collaborative event aimed at sharing the most effective practices and insights. The focus of the event was on highlighting the transformative impact of workshops implemented through the Y+ program within correctional centers in Kavajë and Lipjan. These discussions included frontline workers from the correctional centers as well. Together, they delved into the challenges surrounding the rehabilitation of young individuals and explored strategies to prevent cases of recidivism. It was a comprehensive gathering that underscored the collective commitment to fostering positive change within the criminal justice system. (progress report)</p>

	<p>Through cultivating meaningful relationships with various stakeholders, AfS has actively worked towards bringing about substantial positive changes in the lives of youth. One notable example of AfS's impact is its involvement in the review and discussion of Law on Youth, including the national youth strategy for the years 2022 to 2029. Collaborating closely with organizations like UNFPA, AfS participated in the consultations facilitated by the Ministry of State for Youth and Children, bridging the gap between governmental bodies and non-governmental entities. (progress report)</p>
<p><b>Effectiveness and impact/</b> How did the project activities mobilize communities to have an impact on influencing educational policies?</p>	<p>The integration of the manual into the bachelor's project started with students for physical education (PE) teachers, coaches, followed a year-long discussion within the department. This initiative, implemented as a pilot project, offers a unique approach to topics such as gender equality and diversity, supplementing the regular curriculum. Utilizing non-formal education (NFE) methodologies, the module provides practical workshops and seminars over 15 weeks, fostering meaningful discussions among participants with diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Last year's module on gender equality concluded with a round table discussion that provided students with a valuable platform to discuss various topics and perspectives, revealing differences based on gender viewpoints and regional backgrounds. Engaging debates followed, covering issues like domestic and gender-based violence, with surprising and optimistic outcomes. Due to its success, the module transitioned from elective to compulsory, becoming integral to social science education. (KII-ALB-01)</p>
<p><b>Sustainability and follow up/</b>To what extent have the seven project partners improved their organizational capacities for self-sustainable function as well as lobbying and advocacy?</p>	<p>There is evidence of satisfactory stakeholder collaboration, particularly in the fields of youth and gender issues, which is a positive indicator of the partners' influence and engagement capabilities.</p> <p>Efforts to ensure gender inclusiveness have been recognized as adequate, suggesting a commitment to fair representation of diverse genders in advocacy activities. This is crucial for creating equitable policies that reflect the needs of all community members.</p> <p>The organization possesses a basic strategic framework for policy and advocacy. However, this framework is not yet fully developed or applied consistently, which could limit its effectiveness. Internal communication appears to be reactive, which might lead to missed advocacy opportunities.</p> <p>The organization's advocacy has a moderate impact on policy decisions related to youth and gender, with observable changes in policy frameworks. There is a mix of short-term and long-term funding, which points to moderate sustainability. Cases of policy influence hint at a potential for sustained advocacy impact, but these practices need to become fully institutionalized.</p> <p>A strategic approach to impact assessment is in place, though it may not be fully integrated. This suggests that while there is awareness of the importance of impact assessment, it has not been fully operationalized across the organization's work.</p>

	<p>The organization is actively involved in advocacy activities at various levels and has established networks like the Youth Voice Network with UNFPA support. It holds full membership in the National Youth Congress and has been a working group member for important legislative advocacies. Collaboration with key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Justice and ADA is crucial and has been very helpful in obtaining necessary approvals, indicating a well-established understanding with important institutional actors.</p> <p>There is an acknowledgment of a lack of training in advocacy, but there is willingness to continue and improve, which is a positive sign of organizational learning and development.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability and follow up/</b>To what extent have the key actors (partners and other stakeholders) prepared to take over the responsibility and carry on with the implementation of the developed strategies and commitments (ownership and leadership) considering institutional level (beyond project duration)?</p>	<p>For us as academia, the inclusion of the module in the curriculum is a permanent feature, with opportunities for future updates. Plans include expanding this initiative to other universities, including master's level programs, and offering more credits to current teachers and coaches. (KII-ALB-01)</p> <p>Significant progress has been made with the implementation of Program Y and Y+ through partnerships with the Ministry of Justice and the City of Tirana. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) have been signed to sustain these programs, with Y+ being implemented in juvenile correctional institutions and BMC activities expanding in schools. Additionally, with support from a UNFPA project, BMCs will be established in 10 more cities across Albania. This expansion aims to reach smaller communities lacking opportunities to address issues such as gender stereotypes and sexual and reproductive health, thus broadening the network and impact of these vital programs. (KII-ALB-02)</p> <p>Moreover, AfS has forged partnerships with local organizations to advocate for the importance of sexual and reproductive education, recognizing it as a critical aspect of youth development. Through these collaborations, they've sought to raise awareness and promote informed decision-making among young people. AfS has successfully managed to scale up Program Y and BMC in 9 other municipalities outside Tirana with UNFPA support. (progress report)</p> <p>The organization's curriculum for students ensures sustainability and will be shared with universities in Elbasan. Expanding the BMC program to various regions involves collaborating with new NGOs, schools, and partners. Multiple NGOs in Albania can engage in gender transformative actions and can adapt their programs accordingly. To upscale the program, efforts are being made to decentralize its implementation, focusing on rural areas where these issues are more prevalent. Additionally, there is a need to involve parents more actively in the process. The BMC model should be advanced beyond high schools to become community centers, with plans to involve universities. There is also a growing emphasis on collaborating with teachers and accreditation agencies, with advocacy being a key component across all initiatives to strengthen sustainability. (KII-ALB-06)</p> <p>Regarding sustainability, both the manual and trained staff are vital. Without competent staff, even the best manual is ineffective. Ideally, similar initiatives should be expanded to involve more centers and activities to cater to a broader range of juveniles, including those under probation. The Albanian government's significant investment includes establishing the region's first Institute for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Juveniles. This institute aims to provide services to approximately 300 juveniles annually, including those under educational or diversion measures post-prison. Collaborations with international partners, such as the French government, are underway to develop</p>



training programs for professionals working in juvenile justice. As we navigate through this transformative period, we see this project as a very important element in capacity further building of our staff and strengthening life skills of our beneficiaries. (KII-ALB-07)

I plan to remain committed to initiating new projects, spreading awareness, and sharing our personal journeys with other young people that still haven't been part of BMC. (Feedback from a focus group participant)

If there's talk of forming a club, count me in for organizing workshops. Let's rally our friends and BMC peers to support this cause. (Feedback from a focus group participant)

#### Annex 4: List of informants

No.	Gender (M/F/Other)	Institutions/organizations	Position	Country
1	M	SIT	CEO	KOS
2	M	SIT	Project Coordinator	KOS
3	F	SIT	Facilitator/Trainer	KOS
4	M	SIT	Facilitator/Trainer	KOS
5	F	SIT	Program Manager	KOS
6	F	YMCA	Director	KOS
7	F	YMCA	Project Coordinator	KOS
8	F	University of Prishtina	Professor	KOS
9	F	University of Prishtina	Professor	KOS
10	M	University of Business and Technology	Professor	KOS
11	F	High school "Hoxhe Kadri Prishtina"	Director of school	KOS
12	F	High school "28 Nentori"	Teacher	KOS
13	M	High school "28 Nentori"	High school student	KOS
14	M	High school "28 Nentori"	High school student	KOS
15	F	High school "28 Nentori"	High school student	KOS
16	M	High school "28 Nentori"	High school student	KOS
17	F	High school "Hoxhe Kadri Prishtina"	High school student	KOS
18	F	High school "Hoxhe Kadri Prishtina"	High school student	KOS
19	F	High school "Hoxhe Kadri Prishtina"	High school student	KOS
20	F	Lipjan Juvenile Correctional Center	Social Work Officer	KOS
21	M	Lipjan Juvenile Correctional Center	Youth at risk/Juvenile	KOS
22	F	Education Faculty from Gjakove	Professor	KOS
23	F	Ministry of Education	Senior Gender Equality Officer	KOS
24	F	Municipality of Pristina/Directorate of Education	Inclusive Education Officer	KOS
25	F	Vocational High School (Hospitality-trade-tourism school)	Social worker	BIH
26	F	Juvenile Correctional Centre in Banja Luka	Psychologist	BIH
27	F	Day Center for Children "Nova Generacija"	Psychologist	BIH
28	F	Perpetuum Mobile	Project Coordinator	BIH
29	M	Perpetuum Mobile	Executive Director	BIH
30	F	Perpetuum Mobile	BMC Coordinator	BIH
31	F	Hospitality-Trade-Tourism School Banja Luka	High school student	BIH
32	F	Hospitality-Trade-Tourism School Banja Luka	High school student	BIH
33	F	Hospitality-Trade-Tourism School Banja Luka	High school student	BIH
34	M	Hospitality-Trade-Tourism School Banja Luka	High school student	BIH

35	M	Hospitality-Trade-Tourism School Banja Luka	High school student	BIH
36	M	Hospitality-Trade-Tourism School Banja Luka	High school student	BIH
37	M	N/A	Parent	KOS
38	F	N/A	Parent	KOS
39	M	Center E8	Executive Director	SRB
40	F	Center E8	Project Coordinator	SRB
41	F	Center E8	Creative Director	SRB
42	F	St. Sava Grammar School Belgrade	Pedagogue	SRB
43	M	Center E8	Peer educator	SRB
44	F	Center for the Protection of Children and Youth	Head of Center	SRB
45	F	Center E8	Peer educator	SRB
46	F	St. Sava Grammar School Belgrade	Trainer in ToT	SRB
47	M	Center E8	BMC Coordinator	SRB
48	F	Center E8	Peer educator	SRB
49	M	Center E8	Peer educator	SRB
50	M	Center E8	BMC Member	SRB
51	F	Center E8	Peer educator	SRB
52	M	N/A	Parent	SRB
53	M	Center E8	BMC Member	SRB
54	F	Center E8	BMC Member	SRB
55	M	Center E8	BMC Member	SRB
56	F	Center E8	BMC Member	SRB
57	F	St. Sava Grammar School Belgrade	Psychologist	SRB
58	M	Center E8	BMC Member	SRB
59	F	Act for Society	Program Manager	ALB
60	F	Act for Society	Executive Director	ALB
61	F	Act for Society	BMC Coordinator	ALB
62	F	Consultant	Trainer of teachers	ALB
63	F	Head of Department	Ministry of Justice	ALB
64	M	Youth Voice Network	Executive Director	ALB
65	F	Act for Society	BMC Facilitator	ALB
66	F	Besnik Sykja High School	Teacher	ALB
67	F	Besnik Sykja High School	Director of school	ALB
68	F	Ministry of Justice	Director of Department	ALB
69	F	Faculty of Sports	Professor	ALB
70	F	CARE Balkans	Gender Advisor	N/A
71	F	CARE Balkans	Project Manager	N/A

## Annex 5: List of stakeholders

- Ministry of Justice of Kosovo
- Juvenile Correctional Center in Lipjan, Kosovo
- City of Pristina Directorate for Education,
- Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation of Kosovo
- Electro-technical High School "Gjin Gazulli" in Pristina (Kosovo)
- "Naim Frashëri" Primary school in Pristina
- Technical High School "28 Nentori" in Pristina (Kosovo)
- Education Faculty in Gjakove, Kosovo
- AAB Private University in Pristina, Kosovo
- Center for Social work in Pristina and Gjakova, Kosovo
- Faculty of Philosophy and Faculty of Psychology within the University of Pristina
- Ministry of Education of Albania
- Ministry of Justice of Albania
- City of Tirana Department for Education
- Faculty of Sports and Physical Education at the University of Tirana
- Besnik Sykja" High School in Tirana
- Youth Voice Network of Albania
- Juvenile Correctional Center in Kavaja, Albania
- Juvenile Correctional Center in Banja Luka, BiH
- Vocational High School for Hospitality, Trade and Tourism, in Banja Luka, BiH
- Center for Children "Nova Generacija" in Banja Luka, BiH
- Children's Centre for Neglected Children "Rada Vranješević", in Banja Luka, BiH
- Children's Ombudsman from Banja Luka (BiH)
- Ministry of Health and Social Protection of RS (BiH)
- Ministry for Family, Youth and Sports of RS (BiH)
- Center for Social Work Banja Luka (BiH)
- Center for Children at Risk Banja Luka (BiH)
- Association of Penologists, in Banja Luka, BiH
- Children's Ombudsman of RS
- Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sport of RS
- Center for the Protection of Children and Youth from Belgrade, Serbia
- Center for the Protection of Infants, Children and Youth, Belgrade, Home Moša Pijade
- St. Sava Grammar School in Belgrade, Serbia
- Graphical and Media High School, Belgrade, Serbia
- National Association of Youth Work Practitioners NAPOR, Serbia

## Annex 6: Evaluator's Terms of Reference

Link to the [document](#).

## Annex 7: Presentation of additional evidence for developed findings

<b>Relevance</b>
To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities and the relevant sectoral policies of the target countries and proven to be feasible?
<b>R1. The project demonstrated a strong relevance by directly addressing the priorities and needs of young people, as outlined in relevant international sectoral policies, with a particular emphasis on youth and gender-related issues.</b>
<p>In the sphere of gender equality, the project aligns with the Austrian Development Cooperation's (ADC) Regional Strategy for the Western Balkans which prioritizes gender equality as a foundational issue. Social inclusion is also tackled by the project, particularly through initiatives aimed at preventing extreme and radical behaviors among youth in correctional institutions.</p> <p>The initiative has fostered regional cooperation and supported EU accession efforts by establishing a regional dialogue on life skills education and gender equality, alongside fostering harmonized educational reforms. This comprehensive approach of advocacy, institutional support, and the cultivation of a regional, youth-driven social movement underscored the necessity for life skills education, contributing significantly to improved governance and the reinforcement of human rights, in accordance with ADC's thematic priorities.</p> <p>The project is in line with the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, with a significant contribution to safeguarding physical and psychological integrity while also enhancing political and civil rights. This strategy emphasizes a gender-transformative approach, which involves scrutinizing and challenging rigid gender norms and power imbalances that disadvantage women and girls, leading to discrimination across all age groups, starting from early childhood. Through this document the EU aims to promote a shift in social attitudes by actively involving men and boys and prioritizing young people as agents of change.<sup>16</sup></p> <p>This initiative resonated with the Regional Cooperation Council's findings<sup>17</sup> which mention that integrated educational and social welfare programs for at-risk youth are highly effective in preventing extremism.</p> <p>The project is closely aligned with several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably SDG 3, focusing on health, with specific emphasis on SDG 3.7 regarding access to information on sexual and reproductive health. Furthermore, it pertains to SDG 4, which underscores inclusive and quality education, as well as SDG 16, concerning the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence. Additionally, the project contributes to SDG 5 by working towards achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.</p> <p>Moreover, the project is relevant to United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security, recognizing the pivotal role of young people in maintaining and promoting peace. It also aligns with UN Resolution 1325 and UNSCR 2242 on Women, Peace, and Security, emphasizing the importance of women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality in conflict prevention and the maintenance of international peace and security.</p> <p>The project has been strategically aligned with CARE's 2030 Vision, which encompasses the organization's long-term goals and aspirations for achieving sustainable development and gender equality by the year 2030. Additionally, the project has been directly linked to</p>

<sup>16</sup> EU GENDER ACTION PLAN III, p. 4

<sup>17</sup> Initiatives to Prevent/Counter Violent Extremism in South East Europe, p. 6

the Istanbul Convention, an international treaty aimed at preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. This alignment signifies the project's commitment to advancing gender equality, addressing violence against women, and promoting the empowerment of marginalized communities, in line with the objectives outlined in both CARE's 2030 Vision and the Istanbul Convention.

**Relevance**

To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities and the relevant sectoral policies of the target countries and proven to be feasible?

**R2. The project demonstrated a strong relevance by directly addressing the priorities and needs of young people, as outlined in relevant national sectoral policies, with a particular emphasis on youth and gender-related issues.**

Serbia	<p><b>National Strategy for Youth</b> for the period 2023-2030 highlights a special focus on developing a network of peer support for young people who are victims of violence or are exposed to the risk of becoming one. In addition, the strategy recognizes the need for programs that will prevent all forms of discrimination, strengthen tolerance and intercultural understanding, fight against hate crimes, hate speech and similar negative social phenomena. Special attention will be paid to programs to improve the position of the LGBT+ community, considering that they are one of the most discriminated groups of young people.</p> <p>The <b>Strategy for Prevention and Combating Gender-Based Violence</b> against Women and Domestic Violence for the period 2021-2025 aims to establish effective prevention and protection against all forms of violence against women and girls, domestic violence, and develop a gender-responsive system of victim support services. The specific objectives of this strategy, which are relevant to youth policy as well, relate to enhanced action by all actors in the prevention of gender-based violence and domestic violence, ensuring effective and efficient protection of victims and adequate support services for victims of violence.</p> <p>The <b>Public Health Strategy</b> in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2018-2026 supports the improvement of health, prevention of diseases, and extension of the quality of life of the population. Planned measures include community health promotion, prevention and combatting of smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke, harmful alcohol use, and drug abuse.</p> <p>In the <b>Mental Health Protection Program</b> in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2019-2026 youth (aged 15-24) are recognized as one of the particularly vulnerable populations, and it is envisaged that work on the prevention of mental disorders and improvement of mental health will be specifically directed towards youth, and that the development of a network of specific services will be supported in this regard.</p> <p>The <b>Law on Gender Equality</b> regulates, among other things, measures and mechanisms for achieving and improving gender equality, institutional frameworks for achieving gender equality, oversight of law enforcement, and other matters of significance for achieving and improving gender equality. The law also regulates measures to combat and prevent all forms of gender-based violence, violence against women, and domestic violence.</p>
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	<p>The <b>Law on Prohibition of Discrimination</b> defines the concept of discrimination, indirect discrimination, segregation, forms, and cases of discrimination, emphasizes the general prohibition of discrimination, and procedures for protection against discrimination. The Law strictly prohibits discrimination based on age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, health condition, and other personal characteristics, including religious and national affiliation.</p>
BiH	<p>Newly adopted <b>Youth Policy of RS</b> (January 2023) recognized a set of key priorities in promoting healthy lifestyles. The strategy has a strong focus on violence prevention and the engagement of men and boys in gender equality activities.</p> <p>In the Policy Strategic goal 3: Develop healthy lifestyles for young people, is stated that health is a fundamental prerequisite for the overall development of society. Within this goal, the most significant projects in the previous period are mentioned, among which the Perpetuum Mobile's "Be a Man" project, in which 6,648 young people went through the workshops held by peer educators, 14,943 young people participated in the online workshop.</p> <p>Within the <b>strategic documents of the City of Banja Luka</b>, there is a clear recognition of the significant role played by youth NGOs in shaping priorities aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles. Specifically, these strategic documents underscore the crucial contribution of such organizations in advancing initiatives targeted at enhancing the overall well-being of the city's youth population. This acknowledgment reflects a commitment to fostering collaboration and partnership between governmental entities and youth-focused non-governmental organizations to address pressing issues related to health and well-being among young people in Banja Luka.</p>
Kosovo	<p>In the <b>Education Strategy 2022-2026</b> with the specific objective 2.4 Provision of healthy, safe and appropriate school environments according to norms and standards, which enable quality teaching and learning is stated that activities that contribute to the implementation of measures to prevent and report all forms of violence (physical, psychological, sexual, neglect, sexual harassment, and exploitation), homophobia, bullying, hate speech and extremism in schools should be planned. Also, activities related to the obligations of educational institutions to identify, refer and support children who, potentially, are direct victims of domestic violence, or witnesses of domestic violence, in their own homes.</p> <p><b>Program for Gender Equality 2020-2024</b> defines a set of action within the strategic objective 2: Promoting gender equality through quality education and health, inclusiveness and human capacity utilization as factors contributing to sustainable human development and the elimination of gender inequalities and stereotypes. The key actions are professional capacity building (for health promotion and education, including reproductive health and specific health needs of women and men; organization of awareness-raising activities on mental health (bullying, sexual harassment, bulimia, anorexia, sexuality, etc.); harmonizing with training for teachers in schools on information, education and communication on reproductive and sexual health;</p> <p>The <b>State Strategy for Youth 2024-2032</b> has one of the specific objectives that emphasizes the need for empowering or equipping young people with essential life skills for a successful and prosperous life and continuous</p>



	<p>improving the availability, accessibility, and quality of services (online and live) and support provided to young people that effectively address their needs.</p> <p>The Kosovo Government implemented the <b>Strategy on the Prevention of Violent Extremism and Radicalization Leading to Terrorism 2015 – 2020</b>. The intervention is aligned with this Strategy, contributing to awareness raising in schools and with parents and supporting young people at risk to extremism.</p> <p>Furthermore, the project has contributed to the <b>Law on Gender Equality</b> and the Kosovo <b>Program for Gender Equality 2020-2024</b> particularly related to Specific goal 2.1 Gender equality is treated as a condition for inclusive quality education.</p>
Albania	<p><b>National Youth Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2029</b> in Albania have been aligned with the 2030 UN Youth Strategy which is based on the global vision of a world in which the human rights of every young person are realized, every young person is empowered to reach their full potential, and which recognizes the capacity, resilience and positive contribution of youth as agents of change.</p> <p><b>National Action Plan for Equality, Inclusion and the Participation of Roma and Egyptians</b> in the Republic of Albania – Specific objective 4. Reducing the number of members of Roma and Egyptian minorities' diseases and sexually transmitted infections. It's identified that information about health services fail to be forwarded to members of both communities. The new plan foresees design and dissemination of promotional materials for various health issues including information about sexually transmitted diseases and reproductive health.</p> <p><b>Local Action Plan for Gender Equality in Tirana 2022-2024</b> is focused on reducing gender stereotypes, harmful practices, discrimination and multiple disadvantages.</p> <p>The <b>National Strategy for Combating Violent Extremism and Action Plan</b> intend to provide a comprehensive training for a variety of different actors, who will deal with violent extremism, in the framework of this Strategy. Also, it's envisaged to draft the instructions for frontline employees for identification of signs of radicalism and intervention in cases individual.</p>

<b>Relevance</b>
To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities?
<b>R3. The project addressed the priorities and needs of various beneficiary groups, including high school students, teachers, school professionals, juvenile law offenders, other at-risk youth, and professionals working with at-risk youth.</b>
For <b>high school students</b> in all four countries, the BMC environment is typically the only space in their community where they can freely express themselves, engage in discussions on topics of interest, and participate in non-formal activities facilitated by peer educators who better understand their needs due to the absence of a generation gap. They perceive the program's uniqueness as essential because without it, they would rely solely on internet searches for information, particularly on sensitive topics such as sexual and reproductive health, drug abuse, and responsible use of social media. BMCs have grown into youth hubs that promote gender equality and serve as platforms for preventing extremism, discrimination, hate speech, bullying, and violence.

*Finding people who are cool with talking about stuff like sex and gender equality is tough. But meeting folks like BMC coordinators and peer educators, who are open-minded, really made me realize how important it is to have those conversations. (Feedback from a young focus group participant in Albania)*

The baseline and endline school **assessments' findings highlighted the urgency of targeted interventions for young men to address regressive attitudes, especially concerning homophobia.** Alarming trends in psychoactive substance use emphasize the influence of peer norms, while mental well-being challenges underscore the need for holistic support. Variations in reproductive health knowledge and gaps in check-up practices call for ongoing education programs. Violence-related findings highlight a level of understanding among young individuals, but concerns persist, underscoring the necessity for extended and intensified prevention programs.

**School professionals** (teachers, psychologists, pedagogists, etc.) and other **professionals working with at-risk youth** widely recognize Program Y and Program Y+ as valuable resources for their work with beneficiaries. As per their feedback, these programs deliver relevant content on significant subjects for young individuals and present a well-defined methodology for staff to effectively engage with their beneficiaries through non-formal educational techniques.

*As a social worker within a juvenile correction institution, I've found this project to be among the most relevant initiatives over the past five years of my tenure. It has been particularly commendable for its targeted focus on meeting the needs of both beneficiaries and staff members. By facilitating discussions on previously neglected topics, it has empowered our beneficiaries with newfound opportunities for expression. (Social worker from Lipjan Correctional Centre, Kosovo)*

*Even now, when I prepare a class, I find myself turning to Program Y because I know I will find a valuable workshop that can contribute to our ongoing efforts in addressing some of the important issues such as violence, hate speech and tolerance in school. This ongoing availability and relevance of workshops from Program Y have made it an invaluable resource for our school community. (School pedagogist from Serbia )*

The **youth at risk** involved in the Project (Program Y+) have shared that the program has offered a safe environment for them to openly express their emotions and opinions on topics they find significant. In most cases, these project activities have been the sole initiatives aimed at addressing such aspects within the educational and social support programs provided to beneficiaries in juvenile correctional centers.

*I've noticed a significant shift in how I navigate and express my emotions since participating in these sessions. Topics such as violence cases have been openly discussed, allowing us to collectively brainstorm appropriate responses to everyday challenges within the correctional center. These positive changes go beyond my personal experience. Members of my group have noticeably become less prone to anger and violence. Moreover, our increased engagement in discussions about shared interests has fostered a stronger sense of connection among us. (Juvenile law perpetrator in Kosovo)*

*The peer educators have demonstrated a deep sensitivity towards the children's needs and understand the importance of embracing diversity. Our beneficiaries, children and youth without parental care, find these topics highly relevant as they are often victims or witnesses of violence. Additionally, topics such as LGBT issues, violence, and gender equality are rarely addressed in other activities, especially not in a manner that resonates with them. (Head of the Center for Children and Youth Without Parental Care, Serbia)*

For **academia**, the project has established a platform facilitating interactive discussions where students engage in topics directly relevant to the courses offered during the semester, including gender equality and gender-based violence. By integrating these topics into the curriculum, the project enhances the educational experience by offering practical insights and fostering critical thinking skills among students. Additionally, addressing issues like gender equality and gender-based violence within academic settings contributes to creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, preparing students to become informed and socially responsible members of society.

*This format has allowed a more interactive and engaging learning experience, enabling students to explore deeper into the subject matter through active participation. Additionally, the project encouraged role-playing exercises and small group discussions, fostering collaborative learning environments where students could explore different perspectives and exchange ideas. These activities not only enhanced understanding of the course material regarding gender equality and gender-based violence, but also promoted critical thinking, communication skills, and teamwork among the students. (University Professor from University of Pristina Department of Psychology).*

### **Relevance**

To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities?

**R4. The life skills education program created and implemented by the partners has proven its relevance by effectively addressing critical topics often overlooked in formal education curricula.**

In countries like Serbia, Kosovo, BiH, and Albania, the absence of life skills education in formal curricula, especially in vocational schools, is a prevalent issue. Despite the recognition of young people's needs in various sectoral policies related to education, gender and youth, there **remains a significant gap in addressing these topics within the educational system**. This gap is particularly obvious in vocational schools across these countries, where general subjects such as biology, human rights or civic education may be lacking or not adequately implemented. As a result, young individuals in these project countries may not have access to essential life skills education, hindering their holistic development and preparation for adulthood.

The project successfully bridged the gap in life skills education within different types of curricula in the project countries. Understanding the importance of meeting the diverse needs of young individuals, the project implemented tailored life skills education programs. These programs, such as Program Y in schools and Program Y+ for youth at risk, directly tackled key challenges faced by young people, including sexual and reproductive health, peer violence, gender equality, and inclusion. By customizing the curriculum to address these topics, the project ensured that educational content resonated with students' daily experiences.

Moreover, close collaboration with educational authorities, schools, and stakeholders facilitated the integration of these programs into formal curricula. Through advocacy efforts, the project promoted the inclusion of life skills education as a fundamental aspect of formal education. This approach aimed to institutionalize the programs and ensure their sustainability beyond the project's duration.

*The project's significance is in addressing taboo topics like GBV often overlooked in Albania. As someone from a patriarchal background, for me the project was very relevant and effective as it has emphasized the importance of challenging gender stereotypes and addressing sensitive issues such as sexuality and substance abuse, filling critical gaps in traditional education systems. (BMC Coordinator in Albania)*

*Given my role in two schools, particularly in the High School of Architecture, where topics related to reproductive health are not addressed, there's a significant gap in the formal education curriculum. While grammar schools typically cover general subjects like biology, chemistry, and health education, vocational schools often lack such topics entirely. It's essential to focus more on working with vocational schools and extending these critical discussions to reach them. By doing so, we can ensure that students across all educational backgrounds receive comprehensive education on reproductive health and related topics. (School psychologist from Serbia).*

The project's initiatives not only filled the immediate gap in life skills education but also contributed to building a more relevant and responsive educational system. By equipping young people with essential life skills, the project empowered them to navigate challenges in their personal and professional lives effectively.

## **Relevance**

To what extent has the project responded to the needs of the local communities?

**R5. BMCs have demonstrated remarkable relevance by actively contributing to the advancement of gender equality, the prevention of extremism and violence, and the cultivation of safety and security within local communities.**

BMCs play a crucial role, offering much-needed support beyond the scope of promoting gender equality and preventing extremism and violence. Usually, BMCs represent the sole option available for such activities within the community, highlighting their irreplaceable significance as central hubs for youth engagement and development.

The BMC environment has served as a **safe space for young people** to establish their own agenda, free from the fear of judgment or humiliation from adults or peers. During these sessions, concrete answers are provided to address their daily concerns related to their identities, habits, and ongoing challenges as they transition into adulthood. This supportive environment allows young individuals to openly discuss and explore issues that are important to them, fostering a sense of empowerment and confidence as they navigate through various aspects of their lives.

Especially after the mass murder of children in a school in Belgrade, the **need for greater safety was particularly evident among youth**, as well as among their parents and teachers. The subjects covered in BMC workshops have proven to be highly relevant, as they contribute to enhancing safety measures. Additionally, these workshops have enabled state authorities, mental health organizations, and peer violence prevention groups to gain a deeper understanding of the specific needs of young individuals. By incorporating the innovative and non-formal approaches pioneered by Program Y, these workshops have effectively addressed these needs, emphasizing their practical relevance and impact within the community.

*This safe and supportive environment, where individuals can freely share their experiences, is something we rarely find elsewhere. (Feedback from a young focus group participant from BiH)*

*BMC for me is the initial occasion where we've had the chance to select the topics, we wish to discuss without guidance from a teacher on what to do or how to proceed. Typically, it's been the sole environment where we, as young individuals, can freely express our thoughts without fearing rejection, judgment, or hostility. (Feedback from a young focus group participant from Kosovo)*

*As a parent of a student who took part in the Y program, I am pleased that the school has recognized the significance of addressing violence as a subject with teenagers through peer-to-peer education. This is something that neither we as parents nor teachers can fully accomplish on our own. Therefore, I believe the project has also played a role in enhancing safety and security within the school environment. (Feedback from a parent of a BMC member).*

## Effectiveness

**E15. The project has successfully met or exceeded most of its targets, indicating a strong positive impact in promoting gender-transformative life skills education.**

**Outcome: Gender-transformative life skills education fostered to become an integral part of education programs at schools and juvenile correctional institutions.**

Indicator	Baseline/Target/Achieved	Status
Indicator 1: Percentage of youth that demonstrate increased knowledge and awareness, and improved attitudes and behaviors related to healthy lifestyles, and gender equality.	<b>Baseline:0</b> <b>Target: 20%</b> of youth that demonstrate increased knowledge and awareness, and improved attitudes and behaviors related to healthy lifestyles, and gender equality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Endline assessment findings:</b> The average improvement in reproductive health knowledge, compared to the baseline, ranges from 4% to 21% across most cities.<sup>18</sup></li> <li>• <b>Endline assessment findings:</b> Attitudes towards gender norms are generally more equal among participants who were more involved in the program, compared to those who participated minimally. Statistically significant progress has been observed in Pristina. This suggests that individuals who participated in more activities, whether workshops or events related to campaigns, developed more gender-equal attitudes towards gender norms.<sup>19</sup></li> </ul>
Indicator 2: Percentage of youth that have increased knowledge and awareness and improved attitudes and behaviors related to violence	<b>Baseline:0</b> <b>Target: 20%</b> of youth that have increased knowledge and awareness and improved attitudes and behaviors regarding violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Endline assessment findings:</b> Young individuals who actively participated in workshops, campaigns and events tend to have more negative attitudes towards violence.<sup>20</sup></li> </ul>
Indicator 3: Number of new institutional strategies for the integration of life skills training in education programs	<b>Baseline: 0</b> <b>Target: 4</b> <b>Achieved: 4</b>	(100% of the target achieved) <b>Achieved</b> (Developed in Serbia, BiH, Albania and Kosovo)  Documents submitted to CARE.
Indicator 4: Number of national (or BiH units/entity) accreditations of CARE's gender transformative life skills program (Program Y) as part of the teacher's professional development	<b>Baseline: 5</b> <b>Target: 10</b> <b>Achieved: 10</b> (Serbia 1, Albania 1, RS 1, Kosovo 1, 5 BIH Cantons, 1 Brcko District in BiH)	<b>Achieved</b> (This indicator is a result of the project and the regional movement activities). <b>The project made significant contributions to the activities of this movement.</b>

<sup>18</sup> Endline assessment, p. 26

<sup>19</sup> Endline assessment, p. 18

<sup>20</sup> Endline assessment, p. 30

<p>Indicator 5: Number of educational and juvenile correctional institutions implementing CARE's gender transformative life skills education programs – Program Y and Y+</p>	<p><b>Baseline:</b> High schools: 76 Elementary schools:0 Universities: 3 Juvenile correctional institutions:1</p> <p><b>Target:</b> High schools: 100 Elementary schools:4 Universities: 7. Juvenile correctional institutions: 5</p> <p><b>Achieved:</b> High schools: 89 Elementary schools: 7 Universities: 3 Juvenile correctional institutions: 5</p>	<p><b>Overachieved</b> for two categories of beneficiaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elementary schools: 150% of the target</li> <li>Universities: 142 % of the target</li> </ul> <p><b>Achieved</b> for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing PY+: 100% of the target</li> <li><b>Not achieved</b> for: High schools: (94% of the target) due to COVID outbreak in the first project year and challenges in receiving permissions to continue working with schools in Serbia and BiH in the last two school years .</li> </ul>
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**Output 1: Elementary schools, high schools and universities are equipped to effectively deliver and lead the implementation of CARE's life skills program (Program Y) to support young people in their safe transition to adulthood**

Indicator	Baseline/Target/Achieved	Status
<p>Indicator 1: Number of teachers certified for Program Y implementation in elementary and high schools</p>	<p>Baseline: 1045 Target: 1545 Achieved: 1704</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In this project phase: <b>659</b> teachers under 30 years: 2 Male and 4 Female</li> <li>Teachers over 30 years: 170 Male, 483 Female, 0 other)</li> </ul>	<p>(163% of the target achieved) <b>Overachieved</b></p>
<p>Indicator 2: Number of teachers/educators trained to become Program Y trainers</p>	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 0 <b>Target:</b> 24 <b>Achieved:</b> 62 (22 Male and 40 Female, 0 other )</p>	<p>(258% of the target achieved) <b>Overachieved</b> It can be attributed to several key factors. Firstly, there was a significant level of interest and demand among educators for the training. The partners were very effective in promotion and outreach.</p>
<p>Indicator 3: Number of youths that are trained to become certified Program Y peer educators and engage in the delivery of Program Y in elementary and high schools</p>	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 20 <b>Target:</b> 40 <b>Achieved:</b> 254 (108 Male, 146 Female, 0 other)</p>	<p>(635% of the target achieved) <b>Overachieved</b></p>
<p>Indicator 4: Number of Schools of Excellence established as a reference model in the implementation of CARE's Program Y</p>	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 0 <b>Target:</b> 4 <b>Achieved:</b>4 (in all project country one school of excellence)</p>	<p>(100% of the target achieved) <b>Achieved</b></p>

<p>Indicator 5: Number of students (elementary and high school, university) participating in Program Y workshops</p>	<p><b>Baseline:</b> Elementary school students: 0 High school students: 13.907 University students: 1.099.</p> <p><b>Target:</b> Elementary school students: 500 High school students: 23.407 University students: 1.499</p> <p><b>Achieved:</b> Elementary school students: 930 (469 Male, 461 Female, 0 other)</p> <p>High school students: From school-based campaign and workshops: 11739 (5172 Male, 6,569 Female, 0 other))</p> <p>University students: 648 (238 Male, 410 Female, 0 other)</p>	<p><b>Overachieved</b> for all categories of beneficiaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elementary school students: (153% of the target achieved)</li> <li>• High school students: (117% of the target achieved)</li> <li>• University students: (116% of the target achieved)</li> <li>• Youth reached through school-based campaigns: 9356</li> </ul>
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<b>Output 2: Juvenile correctional institutions pilot CARE’s life skills program tailor-made for youth at risk (Program Y Plus) to prevent radicalization and contribute to re-socialization.</b>		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline/Target/Achieved</b>	<b>Status</b>
Indicator 1: Number of youths participating in Program Y Plus in juvenile correctional institutions	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 43 <b>Target:</b> 243 <b>Achieved:</b> 243 (164 Male, 79 Female, 0 other)</p>	(100% of the target achieved) <b>Achieved</b>
Indicator 2: Number of juvenile correctional institutions and social welfare staff capacitated to deliver Program Y Plus in correctional institutions	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 0 <b>Target:</b> 160 <b>Achieved:</b> 163 (under 30 years of age 5 Male and 20 Female, over 30 years 46 Male and 92 Female, 0 other)</p>	(102% of the target achieved) <b>Overachieved</b>
Indicator 3: Percentage of juvenile correctional institutions and social welfare staff that report increased skills for working with youth at risk	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 0 <b>Target:</b> 20%</p>	<p>Limited data availability for these indicators is due to constraints in data collection within juvenile correctional centers and inadequate data collection instruments. However, proxy interviews with representatives from local partners, available staff members, beneficiaries, and officials from the Ministries of Justice in Albania and</p>
Indicator 4: Percentage of youth from juvenile	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 0 <b>Target:</b> 20%</p>	

correctional institutions engaged in program showing positive change in behavior	<b>Achieved:</b> Based on Status M report after analyzing pre/post questionnaires with young law violators, in average, attitudes shifted by approximately <b>46.8%</b> towards more gender-equitable perspectives within the sample population after the intervention.	Kosovo indicate that staff have improved their capacities, and beneficiaries have shown improved attitudes, particularly towards peer violence, assertive communication, and tolerance.
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**Output 3: Communities are mobilized and take an active role in initiating the educational policy change, securing stronger public voices for youth within Future 4 You(th) Movement.**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline/Target/Achieved</b>	<b>Status</b>
Indicator 1: Number of new members of the regional movement supporting life skills education "Future4You(th)"	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 107  <b>Target:</b> 2000  <b>Achieved:</b> 4046 (under 30 years 972 M, 1095 F, over 30 years 873 M, 1106 F)</p> <p><b>ALB</b> (Male 463, Female 510, 0 other); Type: CSOs, International and Government institutions  <b>KOS</b> (Male 567, Female 490, 0 other); Type: CSOs, International and Government institutions  <b>SRB</b> (Male 401,621 Female, 0 other ); Type: CSOs, International and Government institutions  <b>BIH</b> (M 414, F 580, 0 other); Type: CSOs, International and Government institutions</p>	(202% of the target achieved) <b>Overachieved</b>
Indicator 2: Number of movement members actively engaged in the development of Strategic Plan and in task force groups for advocacy	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 107  <b>Target:</b> 207  <b>Achieved:</b> 115 in this project phase</p>	(115% of the target achieved) <b>Overachieved</b>
Indicator 3: Percentage of movement members that report increased capacities for advocacy and movement building	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 0  <b>Target:</b> 20%  <b>Achieved:</b> 43% based on pre/post test with participants.</p>	Regarding the participants' <b>understanding of capacity building and advocacy tools</b> related to movement activities, there was a notable increase in knowledge from the pre-test to the post-test, with 43% of participants reporting a shift from moderate to proficient or expert levels of understanding.
Indicator 4: Number of institutional stakeholders reached by advocacy and awareness-raising activities organized by the Future4You(th)	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 292  <b>Target:</b> 492  <b>Achieved:</b> 610</p> <p>Disaggregated by country</p>	<b>Overachieved</b>  In this project phase partners put more focus on developing strategic partnerships and collaborations with a diverse range of institutions due to Program Y



<p>movement (disaggregated by country, and type of institution).</p>	<p><b>ALB</b> 38 (Tirana Municipality, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs)  <b>KOS</b> 42 (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ombudsman office, Ministry of Sports)  <b>BIH</b> 23 (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Sports)  <b>SRB</b> 15 (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Institute for Advancement knowledge)</p>	<p>institutionalization and working with correctional juvenile centers. Effective communication, advocacy strategies, and campaigns increased interest in different types of institutions and maximized their inclusion.</p>
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**Output 4: Governmental bodies empowered to develop strategies to institutionalize life skills programming through multi-stakeholder consultation processes**

Indicator	Baseline/Target/Achieved	Status
<p>Indicator 1: Number of national working groups (entity-level in BiH) with representation from duty-bearers and teachers-parents-students councils established and working towards the institutionalization of Program Y as an instrument for life skills education (disaggregated by country)</p>	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 0  <b>Target:</b> 10  <b>Achieved:</b> 10 (Serbia 1, Albania 1, RS 1, Kosovo 1, 5 BiH Cantons, 1 Brcko District in BiH)</p>	<p>(100% of the target achieved) <b>Achieved</b>   <b>(This indicator is a result of the project and the regional movement activities).</b></p>
<p>Indicator 2: Number of MoUs with governmental bodies and institutions pertaining to the integration of life skills education in schools and juvenile correctional institutions (disaggregated by country and governmental body/institution).</p>	<p><b>Baseline:</b> 7  <b>Target:</b> 19  <b>Achieved:</b> 19   Disaggregated by country  <b>ALB</b> 4 (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Tirana Municipality)  <b>KOS</b> 4 (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ombudsman office, Ministry of Sports)  <b>BIH</b> 2 (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Sports)  <b>SRB</b> 2 (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education)</p>	<p>(105% of the target achieved) <b>Overachieved</b></p>