

Fact Sheet

The impact of the Program Y on gender attitudes, violence prevention, sexual and reproductive health, prevention of alcohol, drug abuse and sexual violence



In 2013, CARE and its partners started shaping a new program for young people, based on revolutionary gender synchronized approach. For more than a decade, Program Y has been tested in different contexts and achieved great results – such as official accreditation from ministries of education in 5 countries, Innovation Award by GENE and became part of official curriculum in some parts of the

Balkans. With this fact sheet, we want to summarize changes that occurred during the program in the perception, attitudes, and behaviors of young people in the field of gender attitudes, violence prevention, sexual and reproductive health, prevention of alcohol, drug abuse and sexual violence, and determine the methods and approaches that have produced the best results.

Program Y is an evidence-based educational curriculum that contributes to the development of functional knowledge, attitudes and psychosocial skills of young people, which are important predispositions for their healthy and safer growing up. Based on modern pedagogical methods of work, which include collaborative and participatory learning, Program Y prepares young people to recognize and understand risks, to think critically about the consequences and it prepares them to make decisions that are in the best interest of their health and the health of their peers.

Program Y coverage

Main results

- Participants reported the most significant or positive changes experienced at the **personal and social skills** levels. They claimed to have gained self-respect and felt greater self-esteem as a direct result of the program activities. They have learned how to express their views more freely and openly as well as how to embrace diversity. They developed greater resilience to peer pressure and improved their communication skills. They claim their critical thinking is more developed and they learned how to deal with their own emotions.



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> The program had a positive influence on all four areas: **knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors**. It had an impact on gender attitudes and recognition of different types of violence, and impact on knowledge related to sexual and reproductive health. Attitudes towards gender and different forms of violence were positively impacted. Program led to positive changes in behavior, such as increased participation in household activities, decreased perpetration of violent behavior, increased responsibility towards contraception, and increased readiness to prevent violence. The program has shown positive impact on changing attitudes towards sexual harassment and better knowledge about types of sexual violence. No consistent progress was identified in the level of psychoactive substances consumption.

> **Best working approach** is combination of all aspects of the intervention: workshops, campaigns and participation in the Be a Man Club (BMC). When it comes to knowledge, attitudes and behavior, the workshops directly influenced changes in some spheres of life. However, those changes became stronger thanks to the campaigns and their involvement within local BMC. The campaigns mostly contributed to widening the Program in the community, while the BMC maybe left deepest and longest individual changes.

During the first event at Sava Center, a skinhead walked onto the stage. We were all scared of what he would say. He said: 'Ouch, I have stage fright.' Huge applause erupted in the room. That detail reflects the entire Program and its success. It's a great thing that youngsters got in touch with their emotions, i.e. with themselves.

(F, (ex) ministry representative, Serbia)

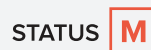
During and after the program, children started to express their views more freely; they explored more, cooperated with each other, and their way of thinking changed. They perceived peer pressure differently. They were more supportive of each other.

(F, school representative,
BiH – Bosnian-Podrinje Canton)



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Fact Sheet

Gender attitudes

The impact of the Program Y on gender attitudes



In 2013, CARE and its partners started shaping a new program for young people, based on revolutionary gender synchronized approach. For more than a decade, Program has been tested in different contexts and achieved great results – such as official accreditation from ministries of education in 5 countries, Innovation Award by GENE and

became part of official curriculum in some parts of the Balkans. With this fact sheet, we want to summarize changes that occurred during the program implementation in the perception, attitudes, and behaviors of young people in the field of gender attitudes and determine the methods and approaches that have produced the best results.

Program Y is an evidence-based educational curriculum that contributes to the development of functional knowledge, attitudes and psychosocial skills of young people, which are important predispositions for their healthy and safer growing up. Behaviors, attitudes and values of boys and girls differ and are influenced by gender norms, so the gender sensitive approach seeks to respond in line with existing differences but with the same goal, creating additional opportunities for boys and girls to live better and healthier lives. Based on modern pedagogical methods of work, which include collaborative and participatory learning, Program Y prepares young people to recognize and understand risks, to think critically about the consequences and it prepares them to make decisions that are in the best interest of their health and the health of their peers.

Program Y coverage

Main results

Involvement of youth in household activities

Before the intervention, the highest level of participation of young men was in activities like fixing and repairing and chores like house cleaning or washing clothes was on the lowest level. After the intervention, the strongest impact of the Program Y on young men was seen in the field of cooking, and washing clothes, and for young women on fixing and repairing in the house. Reports indicate the overall positive impact that Y Program had on both skills and behaviors. Young men participate more (up to 63%) in household activities traditionally assigned to females, and young women participated more in activities traditionally assigned to males.



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Attitudes on gender roles

At the end of the program, attitudes towards gender roles were more gender tolerant in all cities (in phase 1 progress up to 17%; in phase 2 up to 26%).

Most notable positive overall impact on both young men and women was on attitudes on the role of women in taking care of home, cooking, and taking care of children as well as on the decision making process at households.

Attitudes on gender norms

Compared to gender roles, gender norms are more equal. Attitudes about gender norms in the final survey are more equal in all cities, progress shows up to 20% of positive impact.

Homophobia

Research captured high levels of homophobia in all cities. That was more evident with young men than with

young women. Interventions to a certain extent reduced that level, but the percentages are still alarming.

Results from focus groups and interviews on the impact of the program on gender attitudes

According to interviews and focus groups, impact of the program on gender relations was realized and manifested in different ways:

- > Better understanding of differences between gender and sex;
- > Reducing stereotypes on gender roles;
- > Greater participation of young men in house choirs;
- > Greater acceptance of LGBT+ persons;
- > Different perception of marriage relationship, etc.



The biggest impact was made in the area of gender norms as that is something we dealt with the most. The youth changed their behavior. It is OK to be different and think differently.

(F, program participant , Banja Luka)

A number of parents came to school as they've seen a change in their children. They asked what had happened. Young men started doing some house choirs, became more tolerant towards each other.

(M, School representative, Pristina)



There is a positive trend in increasing gender equality as a result of intervention, ranging from 2% to 30%. This level of impact was seen in the level of norms, attitudes and behaviors of young people. Young women are more oriented towards gender equality than young men. Participants pointed out that gender attitudes are probably the area where the biggest impact has been made.



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Fact Sheet

Violence prevention

The impact of the Program Y on violence prevention



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became part of official curriculum in some parts of Balkans. With this fact sheet, we want to summarize changes that occurred during the program implementation in the perception, attitudes, and behaviors of young people in the field of violence prevention and determine the methods and approaches that have produced the best results.

Program Y is an evidence-based educational curriculum that contributes to the development of functional knowledge, attitudes and psychosocial skills of young people, which are important predispositions for their healthy and safer growing up. The Program seeks to build the skills necessary for young men and women to develop healthy relationships based on gender equality, to understand their physical, sexual, and emotional development and to address all forms of violence in their everyday lives.

Program Y coverage

Main results

Attitudes towards violence

Between 60–80% of youth had generally negative attitudes towards violence. About 10% of respondents had more negative attitudes towards violence in the endline phase compared to the baseline phase.

Program intervention had a positive effect in all cities on changing attitudes towards violence. However, some young men and women do not perceive verbal and psychological violence as actual violence, indicating a need for further work in this area.



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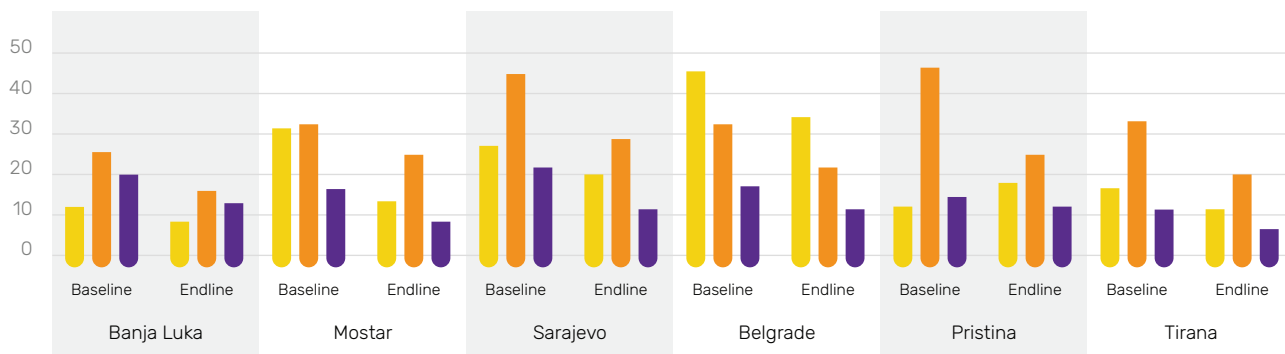
Effects of the program on different types of violence

The intervention had a greater impact on reducing physical violence towards peers than psychological violence. In most cities, physical violence was 5–15% lower in the endline stages than in the baseline.

In the endline stages of the studies, higher levels of negative attitudes towards gender-based violence were identified, and lower levels of violence in relationships were observed.

Graph | Perpetrated physical violence towards peers

● Phase 1: 2013–2016 ● Phase 2: 2017 – 2020 men ● Phase 2: 2017–2020 women



Results from focus groups and interviews on the impact of the program on violence prevention

Participants of the focus groups and interviews described how the program impacted the relationship of youth towards violence:

- Reduced number of violent behavior cases in schools;
- Recognizing different types of violence, especially psychological violence;
- The program led to greater resilience and assertiveness of youth. Participants engaged less in the violence at the end of the intervention;
- Youth became more empowered; thus they were more proactive in preventing violence;
- Youth who were involved in violence become aware of causes and roots of violence;
- Greater capacity of youth to understand position of the other side involved in the conflict, and to have empathy;
- The Program participants largely became aware of consequences of violence;
- Young women were empowered and educated how to resist gender-based violence.

The greatest impact was on violence. I was not violent, but it helped me recognize types of violence. I learnt how to react, i.e. that it is not ok to silently observe violence. That IS my business. I should influence it and stop it. Thanks to the Program, I have a much wider scope of possible interventions.

(M, program participant, BiH – Banja Luka)

Program had a positive impact on changing attitudes towards violence and decreasing violent behavior towards peers, particularly with regards to physical violence. The program also had a positive effect on reducing negative attitudes towards gender-based violence and strengthening positive behaviors in relationships. However, there is still work to be done in addressing the perceptions.



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Fact Sheet

Sexual and reproductive health

The impact of the Program Y on sexual and reproductive health



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With this fact sheet, we want to summarize changes that occurred during the program implementation in the perception, attitudes, and behaviors of young people in the field of sexual and reproductive health and determine the methods and approaches that have produced the best results.

Program Y is an evidence-based educational curriculum that contributes to the development of functional knowledge, attitudes and psychosocial skills of young people, which are important predispositions for their healthy and safer growing up. Adolescents are a generally healthy population, but their life habits, individually or collectively, are a key factor in the occurrence or prevention of chronic diseases in adulthood.

Based on modern pedagogical methods of work, which include collaborative and participatory learning, Program Y prepares young people to recognize and understand risks, to think critically about the consequences and it prepares them to make decisions that are in the best interest of their health and the health of their peers.

Program Y coverage

Main results

The initial research findings on sexual and reproductive health knowledge in baseline stages were poor. On average, participants answered only around 40% of the questions correctly. In contrast to the baseline research, the endline research showed significant improvement in knowledge about sexual and reproductive health. The percentage of correct answers to the questionnaire statements varied between 19-90%, with most participants scoring over 50% on average. In the majority of cities, there was a progress of 10-15% in the endline stage.

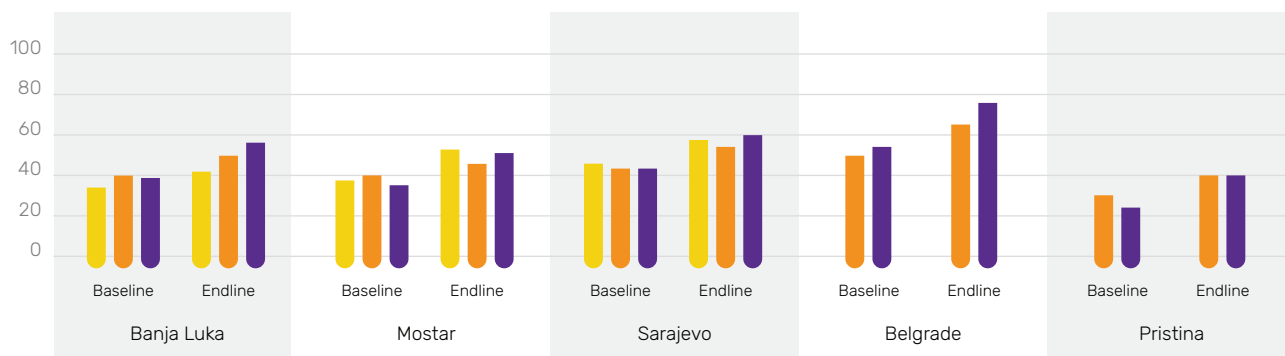


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Graph | Knowledge of SRH index

● Phase 1: 2013-2016 ● Phase 2: 2017 - 2020 men ● Phase 2: 2017-2020 women



Results from focus groups and interviews on the impact of the program on sexual and reproductive health

- > The majority of participants reported an increase in knowledge about sexual and reproductive health, contraceptives, sexually transmitted infections, etc.
- > Students more openly talk about sexuality, contraceptives, and health in general;
- > Many students for the first time had the opportunity to gain information coming from experts, and not half-true information;
- > In some schools extra-curricular activity 'Healthy lifestyles' was started;
- > Students more often use psychological counseling services that also provide information on sexual and reproductive health;
- > Teachers went through certain trainings so they can continue education in future;

Conclusion on Sexual and Reproductive health

The conclusion of the research shows that there was a significant improvement in the knowledge of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and use of contraception among young people after the intervention. However, certain topics such as HIV, sexually transmitted infections, and the use of reliable contraception need more coverage in future educational activities. The intervention had a positive impact on students' attitudes towards sexuality and

Of course it had impact. A number of students did not know a single sexually transmissible infection, and now they do know. Condom is not the only form of contraception. They did not know anything about prevention, potential consequences, etc. This is where BMC impacted. Those topics are no longer a taboo; they started openly talking about them. This is important as these topics are not part of the formal education. This is something that was supposed to be discussed even earlier as youth are sexually active earlier.

(M, program participant, BiH - Banja Luka)

The greatest change is probably in this field, especially as this is something we do not talk about in the school. This is usually a taboo in the society. Through the Program they were able to be informed and discuss about their experiences.

(F, CARE staff)

reproductive health, and the training of teachers ensured that education on SRH will continue in the future. The findings emphasize the need for comprehensive SRH education for young people, particularly in areas where knowledge is still lacking.



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Fact Sheet

Prevention of alcohol and drug abuse

The impact of the Program Y on prevention of alcohol and drug abuse



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official curriculum in some parts of Balkans. With this fact sheet, we want to summarize changes that occurred during the program implementation in the perception, attitudes, and behaviors of young people in the field of **prevention of alcohol and drug abuse** and determine the methods and approaches that have produced the best results.

Program Y is an evidence-based educational curriculum that contributes to the development of functional knowledge, attitudes and psychosocial skills of young people, which are important predispositions for their healthy and safer growing up. Adolescents are a generally healthy population, but their life habits, individually or collectively, are a key factor in the occurrence or prevention of chronic diseases in adulthood. Unhealthy lifestyles such as the use of alcohol, tobacco products and drugs are an important factor in the occurrence of non-communicable diseases and addictions, which can lead to chronic diseases that affect individuals, their families and communities, as well as burden the health care system. Therefore, many countries strive to introduce effective prevention programs based on life skills development as part of primary prevention.

Based on modern pedagogical methods of work, which include collaborative and participatory learning, Program Y prepares young people to recognize and understand risks, to think critically about the consequences and it prepares them to make decisions that are in the best interest of their health and the health of their peers.

Program Y coverage

Main results

Quantitative research has shown that young people consume more psychoactive substances as they get older. In some areas, the use of alcohol is part of the mentality and culture, seen as a symbol of maturity, and it is difficult to prevent these trends through any program. The reason for this trend is the lack of concern or even a positive attitude of the community towards alcohol consumption by males, influenced by socialization and religious and cultural variations.



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The results of interviews and focus groups show that Program Y has had a positive impact on preventing further use of alcohol, drugs, and other psychoactive substances in the following ways:

- Participants reported a positive impact of the program on prevention of alcohol, drug and other psychoactive substance use.
- The program has contributed to a more responsible attitude and behavior of young people towards the use of psychoactive substances.
- The program emphasizes the importance of avoiding the excessive use of psychoactive substances that may harm health and encourages awareness of their negative consequences.
- It encourages building personal resilience to harmful influences and emotional awareness to understand why people engage in substance use.
- The program offers youth with addiction tendencies resources to seek help.

The program did not forbid but it pointed out to the consequences. If you do something, that will happen. Two young men used narcotics, but stopped doing it during the Program.

(M, program participant, Croatia)

➤ Conclusion on Sexual and Reproductive health

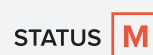
While there is a concerning trend of increasing alcohol and marijuana consumption among young people in the Balkan region, the qualitative findings suggest that prevention programs have positively impacted the awareness of the harmful consequences of substance abuse. Participants have recognized the importance of responsible use of

substances and building personal resilience against harmful influences. With continued efforts, it is possible to further address the cultural and societal factors that contribute to substance abuse among youth in the region and promote a healthier and safer lifestyle.



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Fact Sheet

Prevention of sexual violence

The impact of the Program Y on prevention of sexual violence



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With this fact sheet, we want to summarize changes that occurred during the program implementation in the perception, attitudes, and behaviors of young people in the field of prevention of sexual violence and determine the methods and approaches that have produced the best results.

Program Y is an evidence-based educational curriculum that contributes to the development of functional knowledge, attitudes and psychosocial skills of young people, which are important predispositions for their healthy and safer growing up.

Gender norms and social constructions of masculinity often contribute to these harmful behaviors and practices. The imbalance of power in decision-making, vulnerability to violence, difficulty accessing certain health services, and social inequality, which limits opportunities and possibilities, are just some of the consequences of gender norms and traditions. Sexual violence in particular is also rooted in inequitable gender norms – especially those that define male sexuality as uncontrollable and aggressive and female sexuality as passive. Successful interventions that work with men to deconstruct hegemonic masculine identities and support community and institutional change have shown the positive contribution that men can make as allies and anti-violence activists.

Program Y coverage

Main results

Based on modern pedagogical methods of work, which include collaborative and participatory learning, Program Y prepares young people to recognize and understand risks, to think critically about the consequences and it prepares them to make decisions that are in the best interest of their health and the health of their peers.



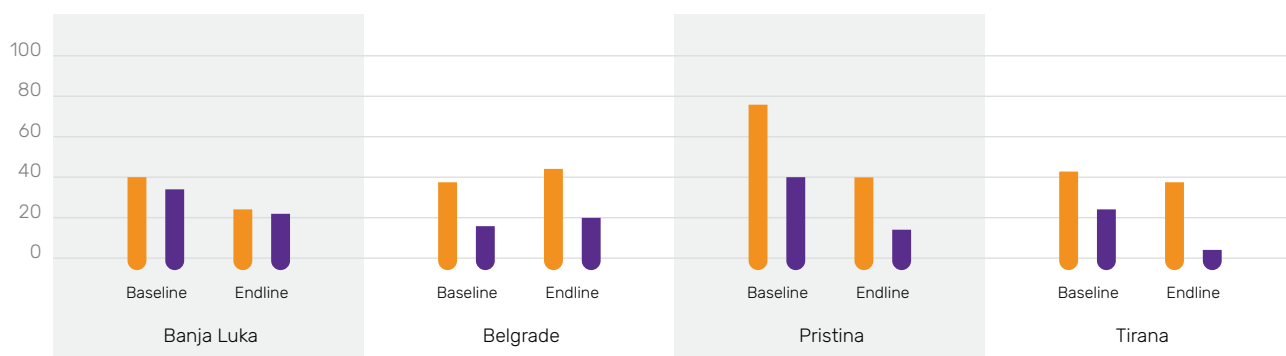
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A low level of sexual violence is generally measured and that is why significant and consistent impact of the intervention was not identified.

Positive impact in changing attitudes towards sexual harassment has been reported in all cities, with fewer young men and women attributing the cause of sexual violence to the way young women dress due to the program.

Graph | When a woman is sexually harassed, it is usually because the way she is dressed. ● 2017-2020 men ● 2017-2020 women



Results from focus groups and interviews on the impact of the program on prevention of sexual violence

Program participants are more sensitive about meaning and types of violence, so they are more informed about types of sexual violence. Additionally, reporting show that they tried to prevent some forms of sexual harassment in school. The impression is that in future more attention should be given to education on 'sexting'.

That is a taboo topic. They have no one to go to; neither have they received information from friends. Through workshops they do receive information. They also learn about risks. This is something we should talk about more, as the surrounding send completely different message.

(F, School representative, BiH)

The participants understood that at any given moment they have the right to change their mind. If they did not learn that here, it is a question if they would hear about it anywhere else as that is something nobody talks about.

(M, program participant, Serbia)

Conclusion on Sexual and Reproductive health

The intervention has shown promising results in reducing sexual violence and changing attitudes towards sexual harassment. The positive impact on changing attitudes towards sexual harassment has been observed in all cities. Program participants are more informed about types of sexual violence and have demonstrated efforts to prevent some forms of sexual harassment in school. With continued efforts and attention to education on these topics, there is hope for further progress in reducing sexual violence and promoting a culture of respect and safety.



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