



Young Men Initiative

Program promoting gender equality, non-violence and healthy lifestyles



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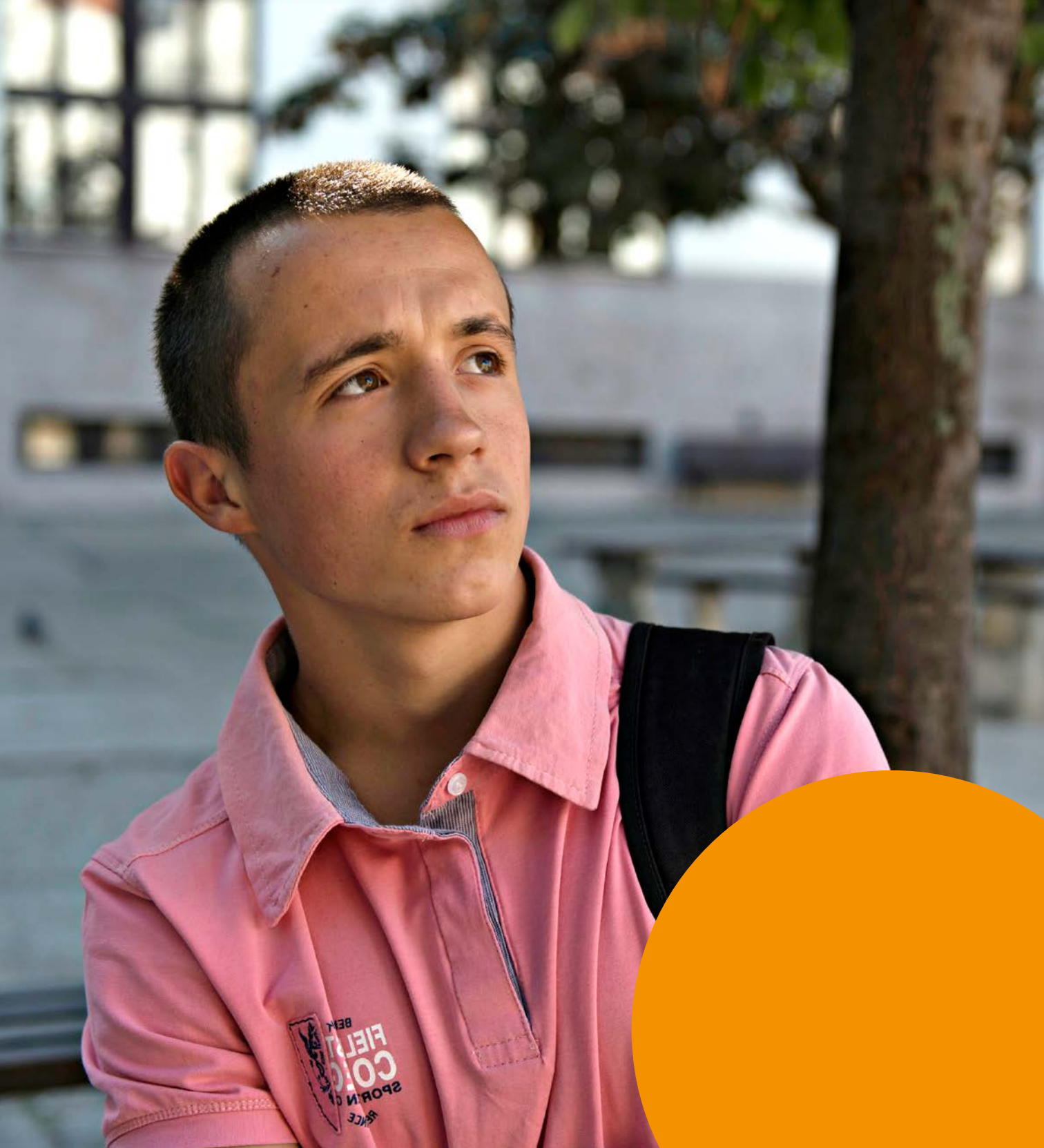




CARE International in the Balkans

In the Balkan region, **CARE International** has over **25 years of experience** in program implementation. During the '90-es wars and conflicts, CARE responded to the destruction, traumatization, displacement and inter-ethnic distrust with its massive humanitarian and life-saving work all over Balkans. From year 2000, CARE's orientation shifted to developmental work and its aim in the Balkans today is to ensure that social, economic and political rights of vulnerable and marginalized groups are recognized and fulfilled, contributing to sustainable peace in the region. CARE

Program Strategy is based on two pillars a) **Socio-Economic Inclusion** of vulnerable minorities and other marginalized groups by contributing to stronger capacities and improved opportunities for them, enabling them to integrate into society and access their rights. b) **Gender Equality** of vulnerable and marginalized groups by promoting the values and practices of gender equality, diversity and non-violence, strengthening the capacities of local, national and regional human rights and social justice actors and creating opportunities for innovation, participation, learning, cooperation and advocacy. CARE nourishes partnerships with local civil society sector and governments dedicated to contributing positive changes in the societies.



Young Men Initiative Program

Young Men Initiative (YMI) project started in 2006 and it is being implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, Kosovo* and Albania. The project builds on CARE's comprehensive and programmatic effort to prevent interpersonal and gender based violence (GBV) as well as to promote gender equality in the region. YMI is targeting youth to build their knowledge and attitudes concerning gender equality and healthy lifestyles and to decrease levels of all types of violence. YMI started with a small size qualitative research exploring young men's attitudes and behaviours, then over the years grew into a comprehensive program with different components targeting young people, parents, teachers, educational workers, university students, journalists and other important stakeholders. Since the beginning, program directly reached over 30,000 young people through implementation of around 2,000 different project activities.

Educational Programs

The core of the YMI intervention is a series of group educational workshops accompanied with social norms campaign that promote a critical and personal reflection on gender, masculinities and health, with a strong focus on violence prevention. The workshops are highly participatory and address health and relationships issues from a gender lens, including sexual

and reproductive health, communication and negotiation, drug and alcohol use, anger management, and violence prevention.

One of the most important CARE and partner organization's goals is to introduce Program M (working with young men) and Program Y (working with young women and young men) into high school curriculum. So far, the program has been accredited in Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo* by relevant educational ministries. Most importantly in Herzegovina – Neretva Canton and in Sarajevo Canton in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it has become mandatory, being 25% obligatory part of head teacher classes. In this process, a successful cooperation with ministry representatives initiated series of trainings for teachers where they learn about Program M & Y methodology and also receive technical assistance from youth partner organizations for program implementation at their schools.

In addition to Program M & Program Y, CARE and partner organizations also developed special educational programs which arose from the work with young people and needs of the communities in the Balkans and they are as follows: Manual D – on working with young women, Gender Sensitization Manual on Media Reporting on Gender Based Violence – on working with

* Resolution 12 44 (applies to whole document)

media representatives. CARE and the partners have adapted Manual T – the program for fathers, caregivers and health and social workers for promotion of involvement of fathers in caregiving.

For the purpose of responding to the emergency needs during the migrant crises since 2015, CARE has developed Engaging Men and Boys in Emergencies Program which is designed for work with young men – unaccompanied minors who have been travelling alone and are temporary settled in the Reception Centers along the Balkan route.

School based interventions

YMI is implemented in high schools, allowing it to achieve high levels of participation among young men and young women ages 15 to 18. In participating schools, YMI sessions are led by trained facilitators, and are integrated into the regular class schedule over the academic year, with a focus on four key program areas: (1) gender attitudes; (2) violence; (3) sexual and reproductive health; and (4) alcohol and drug use. YMI also extends beyond the classroom. The program includes an optional residential retreat where the facilitators lead additional sessions and team-building activities in a more immersive setting. The other important aspect of the program is “Be A Man” lifestyle campaign, which is intended to reinforce key YMI messages and foster change at the school level and beyond. The campaign is supported by a variety of educational materials, social media,

and “actions” organized and carried out by student members of “Be a Man” clubs (BMK). In the Balkan region there are 40 active BMK clubs with 1.500 active members.

Community interventions

YMI spreads its activities within and out of schools. YMI partners with young men and women design different community actions, theatre plays, BMK TV and radio, forums, round tables and conferences with the aim to gather all relevant stakeholders to discuss the importance of work with young men around prevention of violence and gender equality promotion. Each year, partners organize different conferences and round tables. In all counties Real Men Forums are formed which represent the forum of VIP (actress, musicians, politicians and all other public figures) who declared themselves as promoters of non-violence and who act as allies in the promotion of more peaceful masculinities and identities around manhood.

One stream of YMI interventions is directed towards the work with sport groups, pedagogy students, journalists and basically all the groups that have impact on young people in their everyday life.

One of the highlights of the YMI related community actions is the development and realization of a theatre play called “Macho men” so far seen by more than 10,000 people all over the Balkan region and Europe.

Campaigns

The YMI program is mostly recognized by its **BE A MEN CHANGE THE RULES CAMPAIGN**. The overall theme of this campaign is challenging rigid norms of masculinity. The accompanying sub-themes include the prevention of violence against women, the prevention of peer violence (or bullying) and the promotion of sexual health and healthy relationships, many of the same topics addressed in the workshops. The campaign tone is provocative, but not preachy. It uses an attractive visual identity to get young men thinking about the benefits and "coolness" of engaging in more equitable and non-violent behaviors and lifestyles.



Pazisex.net/Kujdessex.net is an educational website around sexual and reproductive health intended to be used by young people but also by educational workers engaged on this topic. The website is designed by young people and professionals and is being promoted among youth as web place where they can gather relevant information, learn and discuss related issues.

www.pazisex.net
www.kujdessex.net



pazi se **X**.net

**SUPER
DAD**

The Young Man Initiative program is active in a global effort by implementing the **Global Fatherhood Campaign – MenCare** that promotes men’s involvement as equitable, non-violent fathers and caregivers in order to achieve family well-being and gender equality. The MenCare campaign is coordinated by Promundo and the Sonke Gender Justice Network in collaboration with the MenEngage Alliance that most of the YMI partner organizations are members of. MenCare has active campaigns and ongoing activities in over 25 countries on 5 continents.



**REACT AS
HUMAN**

**AGAINST
VIOLENCE**

If a girl says NO, I will repeat it to you
in case you didn't hear it good!

No!

powered by
bmk

YMI partners are also engaged in the implementation of a Violence Prevention Campaign – **REACT AS HUMAN**, focused on by-standers. The campaign includes different programmatic and promotional activities and include young people, but also fathers, coaches, families and other relevant individuals and groups in the society.



Future


CARE and the partners regularly evaluate and improving project activities and assess the level of success to learn and inform future programming. In this phase, we are focused on the development of a Program for prevention of youth radicalism and extremism and on the adaption of the Program Y to be used in elementary schools. These additional program lines will enrich our intervention and support us reach all youth groups. These new programs will be accompanied with social norms campaigns that should raise awareness on challenges and adequate answers to challenges that youth are facing in their transition to adulthood.

Partner organizations

Since its start, the YMI program is being implemented by CARE and partner organizations – youth NGOs from the region. At first, CARE used to provide technical assistance for partner around work with young men, but over the years partner organizations have gained solid knowledge and experience on this topic and they've become agents of change and leaders in this area of intervention. They've become Resource centers in their own countries and are being publicly recognized as most important players on the issues on engaging men and boys in violence prevention and promotion of gender equality. CARE's partners are the following: **Status M Zagreb, Center E8 Belgrade, Peer Education Network Pristina, Association**

XY Sarajevo, Institute Perpetuum Mobile Banja Luka, Youth Power Mostar, Synergy North Mitrovica and Act for Society from Tirana.

Smart Kolektiv, also a project partner, is a non-profit organization specialized in the field of social marketing, based in Belgrade. Within YMI they are the lead facilitator in the process of campaign development. They use participatory approach by involving young people and combining their opinions and creativity with those of the professionals involved. This methodology has proved to produce extremely successful social campaigns implemented by YMI partners and BMC members.



Awards

YMI's success has also been recognized by the international as well as national communities in a form of different awards:

- **2010 – The best social norms campaign –**
by Serbian Association for Public Relations
- **2016 – 1st Ron Kovic Peace Prize at My Hero International Film Festival**
for the film “Post War Machismo: Be a Men” done by Thompson Reuters Foundation which made a short documentary about BMK member from Banja Luka, Dragan Kisin.
- **2017 – Innovation Award Winner –** by Global Education Network Europe



Links:

www.youngmeninitiative.net

<https://vimeo.com/user18428677>



Donors:

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