

YOUNG MENS INITIATIVE



PRESENTED BY CARE INTERNATIONAL BALKANS

The Young Men's Initiative is a school-based program that merges accredited curriculum with social change campaigns to transform the school environment, combat harmful attitudes and stereotypes, and promote a culture of nonviolence.

THE PROBLEM

Gender Violence and Inequality on a Global Scale

One billion women—or one in three—will be victims of gender-based violence (GBV) despite the fact that 143 countries constitutionally guarantee equality between men and women.

Western Balkans: A Man's World

In the Western Balkans—including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo—patriarchal and rigid gender norms are common, influencing the attitudes and behaviors of young men and boys and their relationships with young women, their families and communities. Many are affected by the tumultuous post-conflict recovery from the Yugoslav wars. With condoned aggressive and violent behavior, they not only limit their personal success but also the potential achievements of their female victims.

THE INNOVATION

A Change in Mind and Heart

The Young Men Initiative (YMI) is a school-based program in the Western Balkans that merges educational curriculums with community campaigns to transform the school environment while supporting and nurturing gender equality and a culture of nonviolence. Now accredited in three countries in the region, YMI offers a systemic approach for students to recognize harmful gender norms and provides safe spaces to question these ideas in order to foster healthy behaviors. In addition, the YMI "Be a Man" lifestyle campaign develops educational materials, social media, the arts and more, celebrating peacefulness and equality.

BY THE NUMBERS

The Life Cycle of Violence

42% of boys and 37% of girls are exposed to violence from their peers. Youth who have perpetrated or suffered violence during childhood are three times more likely to perpetrate violence later in their life. Children who witnessed parental violence are more likely to be perpetrators of violence as youth.

OUR CURRENT IMPACT:

The YMI Effect:

- Shifting attitudes and improving mindsets related to: violence against women, homophobia, and gender roles
- 70% of targeted young people in our program show more equal gender attitudes, use less alcohol and are less tolerant towards violence
- The program is being introduced in developed countries as well as low and middle income countries - German schools have implemented the program to help refugee children heal and peacefully integrate with their host communities

THE SCALE X FACTOR:

Introduces discussions on:

- Gender attitude
- Sex and violence
- Health and wellbeing
- Alcohol and drug use

POTENTIAL IMPACT:

More than 1 million young people!



THE IMPACT

2020 VISION

Scaling YMI requires continued and expanded public sector buy-in for a systematic approach in combating youth violence. CARE seeks to have the program implemented as mandatory education for secondary school students as part of national strategies with participating Ministries of Education in at least 2 out of 4 countries in the region. During the scaling up process, CARE would be building capacity in partnership with Ministries of Education for the program to be implemented jointly by educators and peer educators throughout all targeted schools. As the program is institutionalized into current or new strategies, CARE and its local partner will work with the ministry on the necessary tools, skills needed for schools to be able to participate and take the program forward. In building the self-sustainability of the initiative between government and local civil society partner, we are currently developing and testing a lower-cost model.

THE CHALLENGE TO SCALE

In addition to funding to scale in each of our accredited countries, we are now looking for funding, partners and experts who can support us to translate our program and curriculum to effective online tools and courses, understanding that a digital component is critical both for reaching today's youth and enabling scale. While we improve the scalability of the curriculum itself, we are exploring how the YMI program can inspire youth to build movements around violence prevention and changing gender norms in their communities.

Opportunities include:

Funding
Advocacy
Mentorships
Communications support

Join us in accelerating change for good!