

# Exploring Dimensions of Masculinity and Violence



Fieldwork conducted  
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**Western Balkan Gender-Based  
Violence Prevention Initiative**

**Exploring Dimensions  
of Masculinity and Violence**

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## Acronyms/Abbreviations



|      |  |
|------|--|
| BiH  | Bosnia and Herzegovina                     |
| GBV  | Gender-based violence                      |
| ICRW | International Center for Research on Women |
| LGBT | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender        |
| NGO  | Non-governmental organization              |
| PLA  | Participatory Learning and Action          |
| YSA  | Youth service agencies                     |

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## Background: Gender-Based Violence in the Context of the Yugoslavian Wars

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a major public health problem that results in devastating effects on mental and reproductive health and emotional distress. Gender-based violence also perpetuates broader structural inequalities that limit social justice and equity.

GBV, commonly referred to as violence against women, is defined by UNIFEM as “*violence involving men and women, in which the female is usually the victim and which arises from unequal power relationships between men and women.*”<sup>1</sup> Over the past decade, the international community began using the term “gender-based violence” instead of “violence against women” to shift focus from women as victims to understanding how gender norms, inequity and power relationships increase women’s vulnerability to violence. Within this discourse, increasing recognition is being given to understanding masculinity and the role that male socialization plays in promoting and supporting violence. Successful interventions working with men to deconstruct hegemonic masculine identities and to support community and institutional change have shown the positive contribution that men make as allies and anti-violence activists.<sup>2,3</sup>

During the Yugoslavian wars that took place between 1991 and 2001, numerous cases of gender-based violence were reported, including mass rapes of women and sexual abuses like castration of men and boys imprisoned in war camps.<sup>4</sup> Currently in the NW Balkans, an emerging culture of violence is visible. A report produced in 2004 on the state of violence in Serbia and Montenegro indicates that women and girls are subject to increasing levels of domestic violence,<sup>5</sup> while an opinion poll taken in Sarajevo by the non-governmental organization (NGO) Zena Zenama showed that 44 percent of the 169 respondents felt that violence against women in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) was “extremely high.”<sup>6</sup>

In the context of conflict and reconstruction, multiple masculine identities are shaped and formed according to the intersection of masculinity with religion, nationality and ethnicity. According to Nikolic-Ristanovic,<sup>7</sup> during the Yugoslavian wars nationalistic rhetoric and war propaganda in Serbia was not often used as a deliberate call to arms or aggression against other nations but instead

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1 UNIFEM, Gender Fact Sheet, No. 5.

<http://www.unifem-eseasia.org/resources/factsheets/UNIFEMSheet5.pdf> (Accessed February 2007)

2 Barker, Gary. 2006. “Engaging boys and men to empower girls: Reflections from practice and evidence of impact”, Expert Group Meeting *United Nations*.

3 Peacock, Dean and Andrew Levack. 2004. “The Men as Partners Program in South Africa: Reaching Men to End Gender-Based Violence and Promote Sexual and Reproductive Health”, *International Journal of Men’s Health*, Vol 3, No 3: 173-188.

4 Zarkov, D. 2001, “The Body of the Other Man: Sexual Violence and the Construction of Masculinity, Sexuality and Ethnicity in Croatian Media”, in C. Moser and F. Clark (eds), *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*, London: Zed Books, pp. 69-82.

5 The Western Balkan Gender-Based Violence Prevention Initiative Programme Information Document. 2007. CARE NW Balkans, Banja Luka.

6 Zena Zenama. 2000. (unpublished, untitled internal report on research findings, Sarajevo, 2000) as cited in Ward, Jeanne. “If not now, when? Addressing Gender-based Violence in Refugee, Internally Displaced, and Post-conflict settings”. *The Reproductive Health for Refugee Consortium*, 2002.

7 Nikolic-Ristanovic, Vesna. *Social Change, Gender, and Violence. Post-Communist and War-affected Societies*. 1. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002.

focused on the need to protect their “brothers” in other parts of the former Yugoslavia. By depicting images of massacred women and children, the war propaganda further appealed to men’s sense of “duty” to protect their homes and families and provoked anger and feelings of vengeance. To some men, war provided an opportunity to act out hegemonic behaviors that would normally not be tolerated in times of peace. Gender-based violence and violence against innocent people was carried out by men who went to war as volunteers to survive and avoid being treated as feminine, essentially protecting their masculinities.

Men retuning from war faced a “*masculinity crisis*”<sup>8</sup> because they were unable to regain the status they previously held in their families, provide financially for their families, be the leaders of households, or care for their families. Men were unable to find work and thus depended on their partners who had become empowered through their entrance into the job market. This caused stress, feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem among men, which increased their likelihood to perpetrate violence.

Youth represent a key opportunity to construct alternative definitions of masculinities and reduce gender-based violence. As Barker<sup>9</sup> argues, working with young men to reduce gender-based violence is critical because young men are more apt than older men to learn to use alternatives to violence in communicating respectfully with their partners. Furthermore, youth is a key developmental stage when gender identities are constructed and can be reshaped. Barker notes that behaviors toward women or partners are rehearsed and carried into adulthood, and reaching boys is a way of changing the way men interact with women. In the context of youth development efforts, working to support gender equitable constructions among youth also can strengthen their own leadership development, including their ability to engage as actors to advocate for gender equity more broadly.

Regional data and an emerging youth development sector point to the strategic importance of working with youth in the Balkans. In Serbia, one-fourth of primary school children are exposed to violence by their peers and nearly every third child is exposed to violent behavior from their teachers.<sup>10</sup> Youth in Montenegro are subject to various forms of violence from their teachers, including humiliation, slaps on the face, cursing and scorn.<sup>11</sup> The consequence of violence in the family and in the community can severely affect the development and health of young men and young women. As reported in UNICEF’s State of the World’s Children 2007 report, boys coming from violent families are twice as likely as their peers from non-violent families to become violent men, and girls whose mothers experienced violence are more likely to accept violence from their spouses when they grow up. Moreover, since the end of the war, a youth development sector has emerged in the Balkans and provided the basis for growing engagement by young men and women to shape their own development and that of the region.

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8 Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly (hCa) Banja Luka. *Study about Family Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina - The Excerpt*. [http://www.hcabl.org/pdf/publikacije/Izvod\\_iz\\_studije\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.hcabl.org/pdf/publikacije/Izvod_iz_studije_ENG.pdf) (Accessed February 2007).

9 Barker, Gary. *Instituto PROMUNDO: Engaging Young Men in Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Sexual and Reproductive Health Promotion*. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. [http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/issues/gender/gem/downloads/Prom-case.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/issues/gender/gem/downloads/Prom-case.pdf) (Accessed, May 2007)

10 UNICEF, *State of the Children in Serbia* 2006.

11 UNICEF, *Report on the Results of the Participatory Research on Poverty Affected Children in Montenegro*, September 2003.



## Western Balkan Gender-based Violence Prevention Initiative: Project Goal and Objectives

Working toward the reduction and elimination of gender-based violence, CARE International NW Balkans and CARE International is implementing a groundbreaking program working directly with young men between the ages of 13 and 19 to deconstruct masculinity in their cultures and determine how gender norms and male socialization lead to inequitable attitudes and behaviors toward women and girls. Funded by the Norwegian Government, the *Western Balkan Gender-based Violence Prevention Initiative* is working in collaboration with six youth service organizations from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro.<sup>12</sup>

The project is based on the hypothesis that “by addressing personal attitudes about gender equity and a broader definition of sexuality for men, there will be positive effects on a range of cognitive, behavioral and health outcomes for both specific gender norms and expectations that contribute to violent behavior among young men.”<sup>13</sup> Three main objectives guide the project:

- Objective 1:** To determine the specific gender norms and expectations that contribute to violent behavior among young men in Bosnia, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia;
- Objective 2:** To design interventions most effective at reducing levels of violence and increasing gender-equitable behaviors; and
- Objective 3:** To evaluate the effect of the interventions in reducing violence and increasing equitable behaviors.

### Overview of Research Methodology

CARE International NW Balkans is partnering with The International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) to provide technical assistance and support in action-oriented research, monitoring and evaluation of the project. To contribute to Objective 1, ICRW first supported a participatory learning and action (PLA) research activity from March 26 to April 17, 2007 in partnership with six youth service agencies (YSA) across the Balkans region at five sites.<sup>14</sup>

PLA is a research approach used to encourage participants to share knowledge and insight about their community and its needs, to determine ways to address those needs, and build capacity of partners to use PLA approaches. The main principles of PLA are to:

- involve people in issue identification and resolution, and increase their ability to act on their own behalf;
- learn from people and their experiences, and for development experts, “hand over the stick” so that people themselves analyze, present and determine the outcome of the information that has been collected;

<sup>12</sup> Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health “XY” Sarajevo, BiH; Youth Cultural Centre Juventas, Podgorica, Montenegro; Yugoslav Youth Association Against AIDS - The Youth of JAZAS; Youth Information Center - YYIC, Belgrade, Serbia; Croatian Association for HIV - CA HIV, Zagreb, Croatia; and Youth Association Perpetuum Mobile, Banja Luka, BiH.

<sup>13</sup> NW Balkans Gender-based Violence Project, project document.

<sup>14</sup> Two YSA conducted the PLA at one site in Belgrade, Serbia.

- adopt an informal approach and be flexible in changing it if necessary; and
- conduct field work in a relaxed manner by listening, probing, not imposing, and allowing all different types of people to have a say.

The overall goal of this first PLA activity is, on the basis of the understanding that emerges from the research, to help identify potential entry points for youth-centered interventions that CARE and its partners could consider. That is, the results of the first PLA are intended to provide context for CARE and its partners to undertake the project's second phase - developing an overall strategy and specific youth-centered interventions that contribute to increasing gender-equitable attitudes and behaviors of young men, and to reducing tolerance among youth for gender-based violence.

The primary focus of the participatory learning and action (PLA) research undertaken in March-April 2007 was to work with male youth, youth facilitators and youth service agencies (YSA) to determine the specific gender norms and expectations that contribute to violent behavior among young men in Bosnia, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. To determine these norms and expectations, the PLA was guided by the following five research questions:

**Research question 1:** What are the current social constructs, attitudes and experiences for young men, especially with regard to hegemonic masculinity?

**Research question 2:** How do social institutions such as media, school, religion, family and peers influence social constructs of masculinity?

**Research question 3:** What are the ranges of young men's attitudes and behavior toward women and their relationship with women?

**Research question 4:** How are social constructs of masculinity related to men's violent use of power?

**Research question 5:** For men who are not violent, what are the influencing factors and consequences?

A secondary focus of the PLA activity was to continue to foster the development of partner organizations' capacity to engage in learning, reflection and action related to masculinity, gender-based violence and youth in their local Balkan contexts. Partner staff attended two five-day trainings in December 2006 and March 2007 to build their collective understanding of gender, sexuality, masculinities and gender-based violence. To launch the PLA activity, staff from all partner organizations attended a two-day orientation on PLA and its specific methodologies. The international research team provided ongoing technical support for the partner organizations to lead the five-day PLA facilitation and to develop and present an initial analysis of the findings from the PLA exercise.

This report shares the details of this first PLA research activity including its process, the results, and their implications.



# Participatory Learning and Action (PLA)

## Research Design and Methodology

### Design

A rapid qualitative assessment was conducted over nine days: the PLA was preceded by a two-day training workshop, and then conducted over a five day period which included data collection. This was followed by two days of data analysis. Data were collected from Sarajevo, BiH; Zagreb, Croatia; Belgrade, Serbia; and Podgorica, Montenegro from March 29 to April 2, 2007, and Banja Luka, BiH from April 10 to April 14, 2007.

### Methodology

Participatory data collection methods were used in the PLA research and specific tools were selected based on previous implementation and successes in facilitating learning and discussion on a range of topics. The data were collected to explore numerous themes related to gender, masculinity, and violence, and included exploration of youth culture, gender norms and socialization of masculinity, power and influence, attitudes about violence, forms of violence, root causes and consequences of violence, exploring transition from boyhood to manhood, experiences of violence, and moving toward change.

Substantial consideration was given to the sequencing of the PLA tools used and sensitivity of information gathered throughout the five-day exercise. The first day began with exercises that were easy to complete by participants (like 24-hour cycles and Venn diagram) and focused on non-threatening information like social spaces and activities a young man does in a typical weekday/weekend day. Sensitive issues were discussed on later days of the PLA once participants had an opportunity to get to know one another and feel comfortable and safe sharing personal experiences and feelings. For instance, experiences of violence (as victims and/or perpetrators) were explored on Day 3 and Day 4 of the PLA. Because PLA is an iterative process, discussions on one issue led to discussions on other issues. Table 1 provides a brief overview of the participatory tools used and their purpose. Refer to Appendix 1 for the complete PLA guide.

Table 1: *Participatory Tools Used in 5-day PLA*

| Participatory Tool   | Purpose  |
|--|--|
| 24-hour cycle for male and female youth;<br>Mapping of local youth social space (Venn diagram) | To explore with male youth what it is to be a young man, and then to understand the role of <u>social spaces</u> in shaping male youth attitudes and behavior around masculinity.                        |
| 3-D Image of Masculinity   | To understand what attitudes and behavior are expected of men and women in their society as perceived by the participants.   |
| Focus Group Discussion   | To explore with male youth what it is to be a young man, and then to understand the role of <u>social institutions</u> in shaping male youth attitudes and behavior around masculinity.                  |
| Power Map Diagram  | To gain an understanding of how power is constructed and exercised; how participants feel and react when they “have” it and when they don’t.   |
| Agree-Disagree Continuum (or “Voting with Your Feet”)  | To explore young men’s attitudes towards gender equity and violence using statement developed on the the Gender Equitable Male (GEM) scale developed by Promondo and the Horizons Project. <sup>15</sup> |
| Listing & categorization of forms of violence;<br>Focus group discussion                       | To identify the range of forms of violence affecting young men and young women.  |
| Causal flow analysis   | To obtain participant perceptions of causes and consequences of different forms of violence.   |
| Mountains & Valleys (bidirectional timelines);<br>In-depth Interviews                          | To explore key markers of young men’s transition from boyhood to manhood; and to elicit specific experiences of gender-based violence.   |
| Listing;<br>Cartooning;<br>Force Field Analysis;<br>Action Plan                                | To summarize learning and insights into gender, masculinity and gender-based violence to engage participants in creating a future vision for youth culture.  |

In the course of implementing the PLA methodology, some teams made some minor modifications to the tools used based on their assessment of the individual research sites. These modifications did not affect the overall flow of the methodology or the types of data collected.

<sup>15</sup> Pulerwitz, Julie, Gary Barker, Marcio Segundo, and Marco Nascimento. 2006. “Promoting more gender-equitable norms and behaviors among young men as an HIV/AIDS prevention strategy.” *Horizons Final Report*. Washington, DC: Population Council.

## Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

A two-day training was held with staff of local youth service agencies, including senior staff and experienced youth facilitators from the youth service agencies, and local researchers. The training included both didactic lessons and hands-on practice. On the first day, participants learned about the project objectives and research questions, in addition to overall principles of the PLA approach and their respective roles and responsibilities. On the second day, the participants reviewed and revised the PLA guide (available in Appendix 1). Also on the second day, the participants had the opportunity to facilitate sessions and practice using the PLA tools.

The PLA research was conducted in local languages. There were four research teams, one per country, consisting of a local researcher, project coordinator (senior YSA representative), youth facilitator and team leader.<sup>16</sup> Data were recorded in two ways: (1) through observation and note taking; and (2) visual outputs produced by the young male participants. All members of the research team were responsible for taking notes of participant behavior and conversation. Visual outputs were photographed, translated and archived at the youth service agencies.

At the end of the five-day PLA research, the research teams spent two days analyzing the data by research question and noting gaps in the information collected. The four research teams reconvened at a two-day meeting where each presented preliminary findings and results to the other research teams. The lead researchers facilitated discussions among the teams to identify similarities across sites, nuances or differences among sites, and overall gaps in the data or emerging themes for further research.

The data analysis was conceptualized to address the research questions across the five sites where the PLA process was implemented. Daily reports, visual outputs, in-depth interviews, and PowerPoint presentations were analyzed using thematic analysis.<sup>17</sup> Consistent themes emerged in at least three of the five sites.

## Informed Consent

The research teams paid special attention to ethical considerations and informed consent procedures throughout the data collection process. On Day 1 of the five-day PLA exercise, participants read and signed informed consent forms to ensure voluntary participation in the research study including use of photographs in dissemination reports and presentations.

On Day 4 of the PLA exercise, the local researcher in each research team conducted three to four in-depth interviews with young men and obtained informed consent to tape-record these. Once transcribed and translated into English, the audio tapes were destroyed.

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<sup>16</sup> Team leaders were ICRW and CARE International staff.

<sup>17</sup> Ryan, G. & Bernard, H.R. (2003). Techniques to Identify Themes. *Field Methods*, 15, 85-103.





Image 1: Young male participants

## Community member profile

### Demographics of Community Members

Data were collected from nine to 15 young men at each of the five study sites in Bosnia, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. The participants in the five-day PLA sessions were high school students between the ages of 13-19 years old. Most participants are urban youth living in the cities where the PLA exercise took place. They attend different types of high schools including gymnasium, technical, vocational, dentistry and trade. At most PLA sites, at least half of the participants were coming from gymnasium high schools. The number of participants ranged by day at each site as presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: *Number of participants by PLA site and by PLA day*

| PLA site              | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Sarajevo, BiH         | 13    | 13    | 11    | 8     | 11    |
| Zagreb, Croatia       | 15    | 13    | 7     | 13    | 14    |
| Belgrade, Serbia      | 11    | 10    | 8     | 11    | 10    |
| Podgorica, Montenegro | 12    | 13    | 13    | 12    | 13    |
| Banja Luka, BiH       | 8     | 11    | 10    | 9     | 9     |

### How Young Men Were Recruited

The young men participants were recruited through the partner youth service agencies. In Podgorica, the YSA identified and selected young men who participate in the Volunteer Center Program organized by Juventas. In all other sites, YSA staff approached school psychologists and pedagogues from high schools across the cities and explained the purpose and the methodology of the research. School pedagogues explained to potential young men volunteers the research study and invited them to participate.



## Results

### Themes across Countries/Sites

For most of the young men who participated in the PLA, this was the first time that they had to openly discuss and critically reflect on masculinity and violence with their peers. The young men engaged in serious reflection to consider their influences, attitudes and hopes, listened intently to each others' ideas, debated different points of views, and shared a range of reactions spanning laughter, embarrassment and concern as they articulated their ideas about masculinity. Young men across sites expressed their appreciation for such an opportunity.

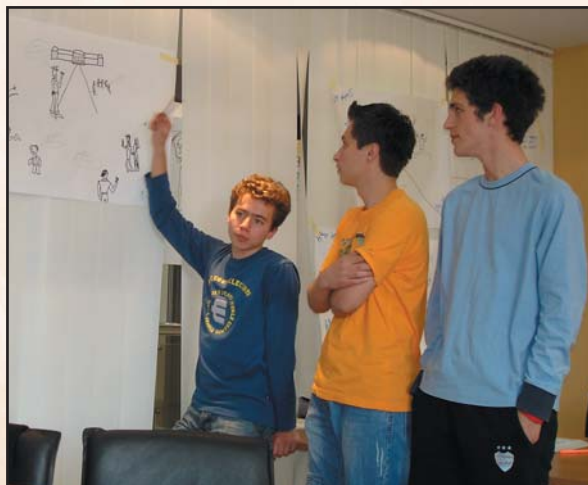


Image 2: Young male participants

*Here I am quite happy, because here I think of some things I don't normally think about.  
And I can hear what others think. (Banja Luka)*

The process of the PLA itself presented an opportunity for the young men to consider new norms of masculinity and use of violence. Below we present the key themes that emerged in young men's discussions across sites, related to each of the five research questions. We first highlight themes that were common across sites. We then note nuances in themes among sites. In some cases, these nuances seem to reflect distinctions among sites in the norms and attitudes expressed by young men; in other cases these nuances reflect themes that emerged in one or two sites, but not others, due to variation in specific probes and conversations.



Image 3: Young male participants

### Research question 1:

**What are the current social constructs, attitudes, and experiences of young men, especially with regard to hegemonic masculinity?**

Throughout the PLA, the participants engaged in a series of different exercises, activities and discussions to identify characteristics central to definitions of “hegemonic masculinity.” In spite of variation across and within the different sites, the young men identified some common defining features of masculinity for their communities. These key features emerged vividly in the exercise *3-D Images of Masculinity*, where young men used modeling clay to construct models of ideal men.

### Visible Strength and Related Characteristics of Ideal Men



Image 4: 3-D model, Banja luka

**Physical traits.** Visible physical characteristics, such as defined muscles and large penis size, show men’s strength, self-confidence, authority, respect and readiness for sex. The young men’s models used physical characteristics to show defining sex differences for men. These defining sex differences included body hair, represented by beards in several models as well as visible hair placed on the chest. “A lot of body hair in a man is a sign of masculinity” (Belgrade). The models also showed penises prominently, once the facilitators had explained that nudity was allowed in constructing the models.

Young men explained that their models’ broad shoulders and big muscles reflected physical strength as a defining characteristic of masculinity. Young men also explained that the big shoulders and muscles, as well as large penis size, represented other important masculine characteristics of self-confidence, authority, respect and power. Some young men’s models also showed solid legs and big feet as a sign of stability. Young men in Zagreb noted that “*Physical strength brings respect*” (Zagreb). A young man from Podgorica summarized that “*Strength, masculinity dominated in my model*” (Podgorica).

**Protecting and defending honor, especially of families but also among peers.** When asked about other less physically visible defining characteristics of an ideal man, the young men emphasized men’s crucial role as protectors. Young men in Banja Luka explained that “*You are not the man if you need someone to protect you.*” Young men in Zagreb talked of “*the shame if you cannot defend a family*” and that it is a man’s role “*to take all the hits for the family.*” Young men in other groups expressed similar sentiments, equally forcefully:



*A man should defend his honor, protect his family,  
and not let his children or his wife be insulted.*

(Belgrade)

*You have violence, and you have self-defense.  
Self-defense is justified. We gathered and we  
defended a friend. I am proud of that. I'm not proud  
because we got into a fight.*

(Podgorica)

*You must be protective of the opposite sex and family;  
otherwise you're not a real man.*

(Sarajevo)



Image 5: Young male participants

The role of being a protector as a defining masculine feature links strongly to men's violent use of power, and is discussed further under research question #4 below. It is interesting to note that although the ideal man is protector of his family, in Belgrade the ideal man was notably absent in the lives of the young men participants. Many fathers were not involved in their lives of their sons. For instance, one young man in Belgrade notes, *"I am learning how not to be a man from my father, who is absent."*

**Defending and sticking to strong opinions.** Many young men also emphasized that the ideal man is stubborn, and should have a strong opinion. Young men explained that even if a man realizes his position may not be correct, it is important that he does not change his opinion or else he would appear weak.

*Don't let people change your mind. (Belgrade)*

*Stick to your opinion... If you get in a verbal fight you have to stick to it (your opinion)  
until the end or else you will look weak. (Zagreb)*

*You must be strong-willed. (Sarajevo)*

**Maintaining a strong character.** Young men noted that strength of character was also a key defining feature of masculinity. By strength of character, young men meant knowing and following one's own set of values and beliefs. Young men in Sarajevo said, *"When we change something in ourselves, our character is considered weaker [so] we should never change our character for no one."*

**Being successful in everything.** Young men highlighted that, although not represented directly in the 3-D images, the ideal man is also "successful in everything." Young men cited success in work or sport as the most frequent examples of types of success important for men. But when asked to define what types of success are key to "being a man," most young men quickly added that to be a man one is expected to be a success in everything he does. Young men in Sarajevo noted, *"A typical man is to be successful in jobs, in the family, to be successful in everything he does."*

Young men also identified wealth and financial success as a defining expectation of being a man in some 3-D images. Young men described the expectation that men need to be successful financially, especially related to providing financially for their families. But they noted that, in the end, they did not think that being wealthy in and of itself was crucial to being respected as a man, especially in comparison with other characteristics of masculinity they identified. A young man in Belgrade said, *“It’s better to be with your family than to have a successful career.”*



Image 6: 3-D model, Podgorica

**Masculine activities: sports and drinking.** The young men described activities seen as characteristic of hegemonic masculinity, including participation in sports. Several of the 3-D images showed their models engaged in sports, such as in Image 6 where a basketball is leaning next to the male model. The young men from Zagreb chose to make images of what they envisioned as “typical” rather than “ideal” men in their community, where a typical man embodied male characteristics that included both ideal and imperfect traits. All of the 3-D images of men from Zagreb showed their models watching sports on TV, with one also including sports betting booklets and his sports ball by his side. Similarly, in Belgrade young men reported that participation in sports was necessary for the development of manhood - *“a man can’t be a man without sports.”*

Across sites, particularly in the discussion of social spaces and influence, young men described drinking as an important marker of masculinity. The models in Zagreb also highlighted men’s use of alcohol as key to defining masculinity, noting *“He has a big penis and a big beer - he is a typical guy”* (Zagreb).



Image 7: 3-D model, Belgrade

## Sexual Virility and Being Ready for Sex

**Large penis size.** Young men noted that a large penis was an important characteristic of the ideal man. Some young men referred to a large penis as a general indicator of “respect” and “strength” (Banja Luka). Other young men specified that a large penis represented the ideal of “being ready” for sex as a key masculine characteristic, although different groups emphasized different types of sexual activity.

*(He has a) big penis so that he can work hard  
(meaning sex) because he is a Balkan guy.  
(Belgrade)*

*A strong man has to have strong hands, especially  
the right one (to be used for masturbation).  
(Zagreb)*

*He is bare-naked, always prepared for action (sex).  
(Zagreb)*



For some groups of young men, being ready for sex focused especially on masturbation as a frequent activity; other groups implied that an ideal man should be prepared to have sex with a woman at any moment. Bragging to peers about sexual virility and conquest was identified as a characteristic of masculinity identified by some young men. In Belgrade, young men explained that some young men tell “hunting stories” to peers to boast about how many times he has intercourse in a short period of time, and how many young women he has had sex with at the same time.



Image 8: 3-D model, Podgorica

**Few to no signs of women.** Across sites, the young men's 3-D models of typical men for their communities contain few references to social interactions or relations with women as defining masculinity, with the exception of models depicting penises as a sign of men's readiness for sex at all times. In Zagreb, when young men were asked where the women were, in relation to the models of typical men seated in front of televisions, the young men said they were “in the kitchen.”

### Men are Not Women, Weak or Gay

Young men identified that a key part of being an ideal man and defining masculinity is not acting like or being perceived as a woman. Across sites, young men referred to commonly being called “a pussy” if a man appears weak. A young man in Zagreb described the importance of a father teaching his sons “*to defend themselves when necessary, to not run about like little girls* (Zagreb). Young men in Belgrade discussed how young men should never be a coward, and explained the continuum of cowardice; the continuum highlights women and then female body parts as markers of increasing cowardice.

“Coward” > “Woman” > “Tit” > “Pussy”

**Men don't cry.** Across most of the sites young men reported that real men do not express emotions, and especially do not cry. Crying was identified as a marker of being a woman and weak. One young man in Belgrade said, “*I choose never to show weakness, never and nowhere!*” Others said, “*The worst thing you could do is to cry and show that someone has hurt you,*” and “*The Balkan man should be like a machine and not show weakness.*” Young men in Sarajevo expressed that a “*typical man usually doesn't cry, but when he is drunk, it is acceptable.*” It is interesting to note that this was one area where some young men, especially in Zagreb, wanted a strong change in the ideal so that they could show their emotions more openly.

**Men are not gay.** At several points in the five-day exercise, young men were asked their attitudes about same sex relations. In all groups, about half of the young men expressed negative attitudes ranging from discomfort to strong feelings of disgust and violence. Several young men with negative reactions expressed that one cannot be a man and be gay.

*If a boy is gay, he becomes a female. He cannot be masculine because he is gay...  
It is in the nature not to be gay. (Banja Luka)*

*I was raised to be against a gay. I have a negative attitude towards it. It is not natural.  
(Belgrade)*

A few young men directly expressed support for the rights of an individual to be gay, saying for instance that “for me that’s a normal person, just with different sexual orientation” (Banja Luka). Across sites, most young men who expressed some support for same sex relations felt that if someone they had been friends with for a long time “turned out to be gay,” they would remain friends.

*If I found out one of my friends is gay I would continue being friends with him,  
but I would not accept a new friend who is gay. (Podgorica)*

*I am ready to continue friendship with somebody who I have known for a long time,  
even if he is gay. (Sarajevo)*

However, young men strongly expressed that it would be very important that their friends not display any signs of being effeminate and did not “make any moves” toward them. Young men also expressed a concern that being seen with someone who was visibly gay (through being effeminate) could cause a young man to be perceived as gay as well, and was very important to avoid. Some of the young men’s attitudes changed over the course of the five days. A number who initially expressed strong negative reactions toward sexual minorities said, by the last day of the PLA, that they felt a “little more” tolerant.



Images 9: 3-D model,  
Banja Luka



Images 10: 3-D model,  
Belgrade

### Nuances among Sites

**National identity and political context.** In two sites, Belgrade and Banja Luka (Images 9 and 10), young men identified visible signs of nationality and tradition as defining characteristics of real men in their communities. The young men in these two sites explained that “pride in nation” was a key defining characteristic of masculinity. In the 3-D models in Banja Luka, a young man noted that the visible Christian cross represents “loyalty to tradition.”



**References to the role of war or fighting as defining masculinity.** In most groups there were few explicit references to war. In Zagreb, however, one of the 3-D models was shown without a leg (Image 11) because *“he is a real man, and every real man has to go to war”* (Zagreb). In Podgorica, two of the young men’s models included weapons and references to fighting; as the young men in Podgorica noted, *“our models carry weapons.”* (Podgorica, Image 12).

**Strength: physical and/or mental.** In several groups, young men expressed different opinions about the relative importance of muscles and physical development, versus mental development, as defining masculine strength. Young men in Banja Luka and Zagreb emphasized that there are many forms of strength. In particular, some young men said that mental characteristics are more important than physical characteristics.



Image 11: 3-D model with missing leg, Zagreb

*I don't like that physical characteristics (are emphasized as showing strength). Mental are more important. For me it is important to be successful in job. (Banja Luka)*

*You can have a big muscle but it does not make you a bigger man. (Zagreb)*

Furthermore, some young men noted that physical strength alone would be empty without mental strength, and in fact sometimes emphasis on physical strength is a compensation for other weaknesses. Young men also varied in the degree to which they themselves felt that visible displays of physical strength or power and, by extension, violence, are important to proving masculinity versus intellectual power. *“It's always good to have power...If you are smart you always manipulate somebody”* (Sarajevo). Other young men across sites characterize the need to prove one’s strength for strength’s sake, including exercising power over others, as *“primitive.”*

**Models of ideal men for young men themselves.** The participants, in their discussions across sites, largely agreed on a set of ideal expectations of men in their communities. The young men referred to specific expectations related *“to be the man”* (Banja Luka). The idea of a *“real or ideal”* man - as a social type (or types) that could be depicted - resonated for the young men across the sites.

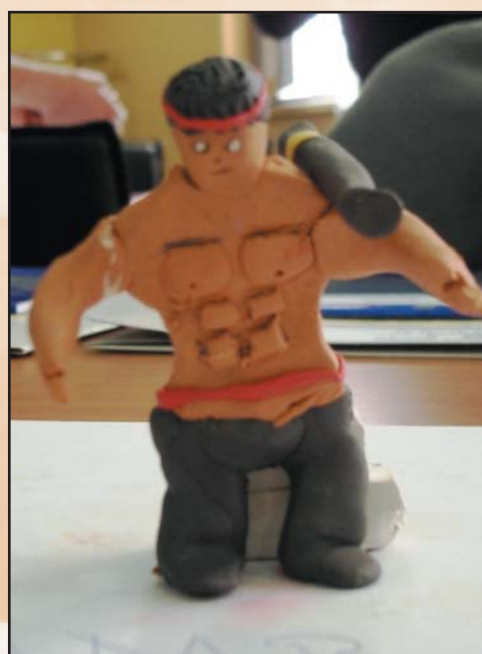


Image 12: 3-D model, Podgorica

However, it is important to note variation among groups about whether their 3-D models - and the hegemonic ideals represented - reflect an ideal to which they themselves as young men aspire. Most young men in Banja Luka said that the 3-D images were ideals to which they aspire. *I would like to be like that, apart from the haircut. That is what we are aiming for* (Banja Luka). By contrast, the young men in Zagreb constructed their typical (as opposed to ideal) male images of fairly passive, isolated men watching sports on TV and drinking beer; while seen as typical, these were not men they especially aspired to be. Young men in Belgrade talked about a variety of models of masculinity, such as “the family guy” and the “modern guy.” They discussed a changing set of social norms of masculinity, influenced by an increase in media images from the West, as can be seen in the observation that *“There's nothing wrong with Jamie Oliver [a chef].”*

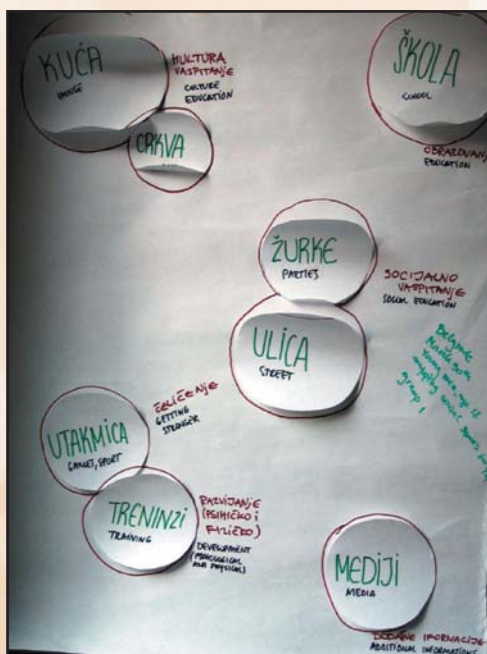


Image 13: Social spaces for young men, Belgrade

## Research question 2:

### How do social institutions such as media, school, religion, family and peers influence social constructs of masculinity?

Young men across most sites identified home and school as the two strongest social spaces influencing masculinity across the Balkans. Within these spaces, parents and siblings are strongly connected to the home while peer groups like friends, company, or “*raja*” (group of friends) are strongly connected to schools where young men learn of social “do’s” and “don’ts.” On Day 1 of the PLA, young men developed Venn Diagrams representing the social spaces that they occupy, and on Day 3 young men discussed the role that social institutions have in influencing violent behaviors (discussed in detail under research question #4).

**Home.** As reported by the young men, home is one of the stronger social spaces that influence the development of social constructs of masculinity. The home, specifically parents and siblings, provides positive and sometimes negative role models and is a space where young men learn how to be good people. As young men noted in Belgrade, *“Home is the place where you get positive role models,*

*how to be a good person, how to take care of yourself, how to stay cool.”* Different family members influence young men in different ways. For instance in Sarajevo one young man expressed that *“my father is most influential but my mother taught me how to communicate.”* Fathers do not always provide positive influences, as described by young men in the following statements:

*Family does not necessarily have positive influence. I am thinking about the patriarchal families in which father has the last word and these are led by the traditional principles.* (Podgorica)

*I didn't learn how to be a man from my father, I learned how NOT to be a real man (because father was an alcoholic).* (Belgrade)



**Religion.** Across most sites, religion (and tradition) plays a particularly strong role in constructing masculine identity and is usually connected to the home. As noted by young men in Banja Luka, the influence of religion depends on its relative importance in the family: *"If I'm religious, that will influence my behavior."* In Belgrade young men expressed that the church is a place that teaches them how to distinguish *"the good from the bad."*

By contrast, young men in Sarajevo noted that religion plays a very small role in influencing masculinity. This can be seen in Image 14 where religion represents the small circle in the upper right hand corner, and is furthest away from young men in that community (represented by an "X").

**School.** Schools are a key site of interaction with peers, teachers and young women. Besides the home, young men reported spending most of their time in a typical week-day at school. School is also the site of risky and vulnerable social spaces due to drug use, fights among peers, bullying, and an overall mistrust of the administration and teachers, particularly in Podgorica.

**Cafés and Clubs.** Cafés and clubs were present in most young men's Venn Diagrams. Cafés and clubs are a place for socializing with other young male peers and young women, and it usually involved some level of alcohol consumption. Young men in Sarajevo reported that the alcohol helped them feel more "relaxed" and thus able to approach young women, gaining the respect of their young male peers. Young men also reported negative influences at cafés and clubs including exposure to drugs, narcotics and violence.

**Peers.** Young men said that socializing with other young male peers strongly influences the expectations of how to "be a man." They highlighted that showing masculine characteristics and behaviors, especially in front of other men or peers, and proving themselves to be more masculine than others, is a characteristic of hegemonic masculinity.

**Sports.** Young men debated the relative importance of different social institutions in shaping masculinity, especially in terms of physical development versus social or intellectual. They discussed the role of sports as playing a key role in both physical and intellectual development:

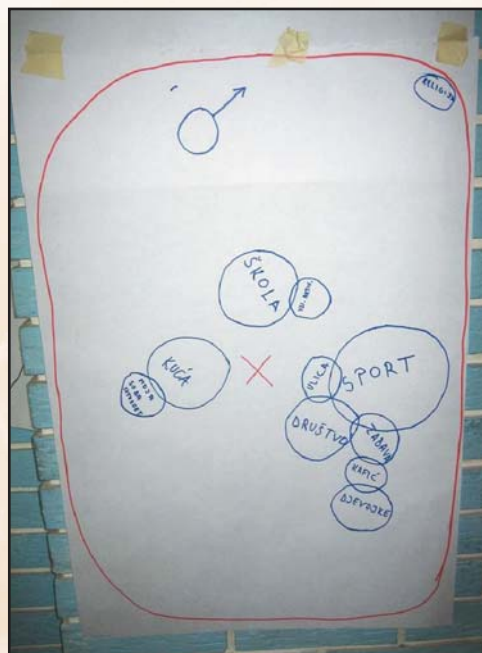


Image 14: Social spaces for young men, Sarajevo



Image 15: Young male participants

*Currently the gym has big role. It is increasing masculinity. But I think I'm strong in my head, and I also want to be strong in muscles. (Banja Luka)*

Besides enabling young men to "*build muscles for fighting*," participating in sports also imparts important life skills. "*In sports you learn how to lose*" (Belgrade). Young men said that games provide opportunities to learn good sportsmanship. In a game, men learn to be team players and develop skills to stay in control even when something goes wrong or they lose a match. Sometimes coaches even punish young men who they see fighting. Although some young men observed that sports promote cooperative values, they still felt that the dominant message in sports aligns more with traditional perceptions of hegemonic masculinity.



Image 16: Young male participants

**Media (global culture and fashion).** Young men across sites noted that culture and fashion were ways for men to show their individuality - and that being able to show one's individuality was connected to being a real man. Several clay images highlighted fashionable clothes, tattoos or a haircut (often a Mohawk). Interestingly, many of the signs for showing individuality have links to Western media culture, such as gold chains associated with hip-hop and Mohawks associated with the punk movement. In Sarajevo for instance, young men reported that David Beckham's Mohawk and dyed hair is a common hairstyle being replicated by their peers.

### Research question 3: What is the range of young men's attitudes and behaviors toward women and their relationships with women?

#### Young Men's 24-Hour Timeline for Young Women (Podgorica)

7:30 - in school: Not following the content of classes (not interested)

- **Gossip party**
  - Going to bathroom
- **Gossip party with coffee**
  - Going to bathroom
- **Gossip party with breakfast**
  - Going to bathroom
- **Gossip party with the new lesson from biology**
  - Going to bathroom
- **Gossip party while coming home**

19:00 - jogging with gossip

The young men's attitudes about women, including their aspirations and attitudes about relationships with women, emerged in the course of three PLA exercises: (1) when they described different 24-hour clocks and social spaces for young women and men; (2) in their analysis of their personal experiences of power; and (3) when they shared their opinions regarding statements related to gender equity. The young men had varying degrees of experience in romantic relationships with women; thus their observations were a mix of direct experience and expressed expectations.

The data on the young men's attitudes about women and their relationships with women are grouped according to what Connell<sup>18</sup> defines as four key gender "structures": (1) *symbolism*, referring to the representations and language used to construct gender differences; (2) *production relations*, or the *division of labor*, referring to the division of labor for paid and unpaid work; (3) *power*

Box A: 24-hour cycle for young women, Podgorica

<sup>18</sup> RW Connell, *The Men and the Boys*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000.



*relations*, referring to the relations of dominance and subordination between men and women; and (4) *cathexis*, or *emotional relations*, referring to norms and experiences of desire, intimacy and emotion. Each of these themes is explored in the context of young men's relations to female peers and romantic or marital partners.

## Symbolism / Gender Differences

**Stereotypical feminine activities and spaces.** Young men were asked to describe how their female peers spend their time and to identify differences between themselves and their female peers. In their initial observations, especially those shared in their constructions of young women's 24-hour timelines, young men's descriptions of young women's activities and priorities emphasized stereotypical notions of feminine culture (see Box A). Across the five sites, young men uniformly named two central female activities: gossiping and applying makeup.

*As soon as they (young women) wake up they are gossiping with their friends. (Sarajevo)*  
*Girl's daily schedule? Well that's very easy. Makeup, makeup, makeup. (Banja Luka)*

Young men across all five sites also emphasized activities related to stereotypical notions of female culture of gossip and makeup, including talking on the phone and spending time in bathrooms, which they see as particularly female pursuits. Young men see young women's use of phones to talk with female friends for extended periods as a defining characteristic of young women, in contrast to young men who *"talk on the telephone only because they have to, to get things done. Not because they like to"* (Banja Luka). The bathroom also was described as a female space of somewhat mysterious power where young men *"do not know what they (young women) do in there,"* except that it is a space where young women tend to go together and spend a great amount of time.

Young men described these activities with a great deal of laughter and joking. They often relied on their peers who had sisters to help fill in the details of the 24-hour day, since many said they just didn't know much about young women. In their initial presentation of their timelines, young men's caricatures of young women relied on sarcasm and joking, which seemed to diminish the importance of any other activities and priorities for young women besides gossiping and makeup. For instance, several 24-hour timelines, while noting that young women go to school, emphasized their time spent while at school on applying makeup and gossip.

One of the five PLA groups (in Podgorica) constructed 3-D images of women as well as men. One model also emphasized young women's beauty over brains. *"We paid attention to typically female characteristics of girls; this is a big head which is empty"* (Podgorica, Image 17).



Image 17: 3-D model of young woman who is (reportedly) covering herself with her hands, Podgorica





Image 18: Young male participants

Related to weekend evening activities, young men noted that young women were more likely to spend time in each other's houses for activities such as sleepovers. Young men also described young women's time spent in discos and clubs. They noted that young women typically arrive earlier than young men and definitely leave earlier due to parents' fears that they would be unsafe if they stayed out late.

Young men also ascribe differences to young women's use of alcohol, noting that young women often "drink to get drunk" on hard liquor, in contrast with young men who drink beer, and drink to enjoy. From the perspective of young men, "*young women do not know how to drink and they do not know their limits*" (Zagreb).

**Recognition of stereotypes and double standards.** At the same time they described young women based on stereotypes, many young men noted that these characterizations were not accurate and, in some cases, not fair. In particular, young men noted that young women also could share in attitudes and activities more typically defined as masculine.

*Let's not be dorks. Forget the make up. It's not all they do.* (Banja Luka)

*Just as some guys can be more feminine, some girls can be more manly.* (Zagreb)

*Positive things are not written here. For example, girls are also training in sports.* (Banja Luka)

Young men across several sites reported that the standards that apply to young women and to themselves are different with respect to social spaces inhabited at night. Parents fear that their daughters may be in danger when out late and require young women to call to inform them about their whereabouts and to be home earlier than young men. While young men have more freedom to go out at night, young women who come home alone late at night encounter judgments and gossip from neighbors.

*No one asks where I am going or when I come home, whereas my sister has limits. She cannot be a minute late ... I justify my parents' behavior because someone has to take care of these things.* (Podgorica)

*Young women are weak, if they are staying out late ... they can be in a dangerous position.* (Sarajevo)

Young men in Zagreb noted that if the community saw a young woman out at night in the park under the influence of alcohol, they would assume she is a "*drug addict and whore*," whereas if it were a young man they would think it was "*just some guy sleeping off his drink*." Young men in Sarajevo similarly noted:

*They (young women) are discriminated (against) because they cannot come home late or else be considered a slut. (Sarajevo)*

As a result, young women are often accompanied by their brothers at night in public spaces to protect them.

**Mother and sisters.** Young men describe relations of shared respect and authority with their female family members, especially their mothers and sisters. In their power maps, young men characterized their mothers and older sisters as having the power of “authority” or “experience” over them, and represented this authority as providing a sense of security to young men. Young men also labeled the power of “love” as being bidirectional with their mothers and sisters and implied that they valued emotional closeness. Young men explained that they learned the value of communication and had the opportunity to talk about their feelings, especially with mothers.

*Mother is gentler to me, she is more flexible. (Podgorica)*

*My older sister is the first one to point out my flaws and help me overcome them. (Podgorica)*

As mentioned above, young men expressed a need to protect and uphold their sisters’ and mother’s honor. *I will defend mother’s honor (Belgrade)*. A young man in Sarajevo explained that when his sister came home crying one day because someone called her a slut, he used violence to protect her. *A man should physically defend his sisters (Sarajevo)*.

## Division of Labor

**Division of labor in domestic space.** The social expectation of women’s role in the household as caretakers of children and domestic chores was discussed across several sites. Young men expressed that parents prepare their daughters to be responsible for domestic activities like cooking, washing clothes and ironing, while men work hard to provide financially for their family (see Box B). When probed about their role in household activities, young men in Sarajevo expressed that they “*clean their rooms only*” or “*clean windows because women can’t reach them.*” Young men in Banja Luka said that they typically did chores outside while their sisters did chores inside. In Podgorica, young men noted that parents favor sons over daughters and although sons will do the cleaning, they will not prepare their own food.

| Man's obligation in house is to:   | Woman's obligation in the house is to:  |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- provide for family, work overtime</li><li>- take care of the peace and order in the family</li><li>- make decisions</li><li>- do the technical stuff (changing the light bulbs and changing the fuses)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- cook</li><li>- wash</li><li>- iron</li><li>- take care of the children</li><li>- be there for her family in any kind of situation</li><li>- organize parties</li><li>- raise children</li></ul> |

Box B: *Traditional Division of Domestic Labor (Belgrade)*

*I notice my sister is obliged to work more. My family is patriarchal. It is difficult for me to understand and accept the difference. It is simply like that. (Podgorica)*



Image 19: 3-D model of women holding a broom, Podgorica

At the same time, young men noted that these traditional expectations were not uniform norms. Young men in Zagreb, Banja Luka and Belgrade, for instance, noted that while these expectations still hold true in more rural areas, they no longer apply in the city. Some young men expressed that they themselves did not necessarily adhere to the cultural norms with sharp divisions in household work. For example, some reported doing “women’s chores” when there are not other women present, especially to help their mothers.

*I don't have a sister. I help my mom.  
She cannot do it all alone. (Belgrade)*

*There are no male and female chores, only those  
I like and those I don't like. (Belgrade)*

## Power Relations

**The need to retain authority: how and to what degree.** Most young men felt the need to retain authority over women. Yet, some young men emphasized shared power, while others advocated for retaining their authority and power. There was thus some disagreement, and some open questioning, among young men about how to balance equality and a desire for authority in relationships with women. The following exchanges highlight these discussions:

### How to Balance Shared Power and Male Authority?

#### Exchange 1:

- *I think it is positive that a man should stay the head of the family as long as he does not use violence. (Young man 1, Zagreb)*
- *But how is total equity possible if anybody is head of the family? (Young man 2, Zagreb)*

#### Exchange 2:

- *He shouldn't have big authority, they should be equal. (Young man 1, Banja Luka)*
- *Man should be head of the house and they cannot be on the same level. (Young man 2, Banja Luka)*
- *A man should have some level of authority. Although there must be respect (she must respect him and they must have mutual respect). (Young man 3, Banja Luka)*



### Exchange 3:

The man should be *"head of family"* meaning that *"his word is respected"*. The man should make the decisions in the family, but it is up to him to provide standard of life that they deserve (in turn). In the plenary discussion all participants were unanimously agreed to this idea, however three participants explicitly stated that they do not choose this and would want the woman to be involved in making decisions as well. (Belgrade)

Linked to the idea of authority, young men across sites felt that they should “love and protect” their female partners. In Banja Luka, for instance, in a debate of men’s authority in relationships, a young man emphasized that a *“man must be the protector of the female, that’s why we showed big strength (in the 3-D models)”* (Banja Luka).

Interestingly, in many of these discussions that occurred after earlier PLA discussions of masculinity and power, young men who sought to retain male authority did so with an explicit qualification that this power would only be “small,” and would be with an understanding that it would perpetuate no harm and especially no violence. In Zagreb, for instance, young men stated that women could defend themselves if need be, but that a role for male protection is ideal: *A women can defend herself, but it is easier if she has somebody to help her* (Zagreb).

**Some desire shared power.** Several groups of young men included a contingent that expressed their ideals of shared power in their intimate relationships with women. On Day 3, young men carried out an exercise where they individually mapped the relations of power in their key relationships. When asked to reflect on what types of power relationships they would envision in their relations with women, several groups of young men expressed ideals of sharing power.

*Support should be mutual. They should be equal and trust to each other. (Banja Luka)*

*Marriage is about asking help from a woman to go through life together, with mutual respect. (Zagreb)*



Image 20: Young male participants

**The “slipper man” and “jam.”** In two sites (Sarajevo and Podgorica), young men named identifiable “types” of men which their communities label and denigrate for ceding power to women. When discussing 3-D images of typical masculinity, young men in Sarajevo described what is known as the “slipper man.” A man’s sharing in household tasks, especially while the woman earns the primary income from the family, is seen as emasculating. In another instance, young men described being labeled a “slipper man” when his girlfriend behaved in ways that his peers felt demonstrated the young man’s lack of control over her.

*I broke up with my girlfriend because my friends were making fun of me because she was going out late without me. I did not have problems with that but my friends were calling me a “slipper man.” I needed to preserve my status in my “raja” or group. So I broke up with her. (Sarajevo)*

In Podgorica, young men identified a type of man labeled as “jam.” The term describes men who are seen as dependent on either their mothers or romantic female partners. The term “jam” connotes being soft and dependent in contrast to desired masculine characteristics of hardness and independence. These labels “slipper man” and “jam” are used to denigrate men who are seen as effeminate for not displaying traditional male authority in a relationship.

**“The truth is that women have (a bit) more power.”** Facilitators asked young men specifically about what power young men have in their relationships with their girlfriends, and what power girlfriends have in their relationships with young men. Almost immediately, among young men who had experience with girlfriends, many expressed that they felt their girlfriends had more power. The degree of greater power assigned to girlfriends varied among the young men.

*The truth is that girls have a bit more power than young men. (Banja Luka)*  
*She has the power to break me. She can crush me. I have no power at all. (Zagreb)*



Image 21: Young male participants

Despite differences in the specific degree of power ascribed, there was a good deal of consensus across power maps and discussions that girlfriends had power over young men. Some young men in groups expressed that women exercised control over men through their sexual appeal. *“Men control the world, but women control men”* (Sarajevo).

Other group discussions were not thorough enough to explore the nuances of young men’s experiences. However, it seems the power ascribed to girlfriends power was related to the young men feeling out of their depth with their strong emotions for their girlfriends, and especially a fear that their girlfriends could leave them.

Notably, these young men did not indicate that they would change their relationships with women, or their sense of emotional vulnerability. In fact, these young men highly valued their relationships with girlfriends and marked entering their relationships with their girlfriends as mountains on their life charts.



## Emotional Relations and Desire

**Emotional intimacy.** Young men described their understanding of women's expectations of young men in their intimate and romantic relations. These expectations notably contrast with what male peers expect of men, especially with regard to emotional connection and intimacy. The analysis developed from details shared by young men in Belgrade capture young men's understanding across sites (Table 3).

Table 3: *Analysis of Emotional Intimacy from Young Men's Perspectives of Young Women and Themselves*

| Man's man                          | Woman's man         |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Cool guy                           | Makes her feel safe |
| Macho                              | Charming            |
| Knows everyone in the neighborhood | Intelligent         |
| Smokes                             | Witty               |
| Fights/aggressive                  | Gentle              |
| Has a lot of women                 | Faithful            |
| Stubborn, not changing his opinion | Knows how to listen |
| Never shows emotion                | Shares his emotions |

Some young men also expressed that not only did women expect emotional intimacy of their boyfriends, but the young men themselves wanted to be able to develop emotional intimacy with their girlfriends. Young men in Zagreb said that *"You are a bigger man if you put more into your relationship."* Similarly, while comparing themselves to the ideal man, young men in Sarajevo noted that communication and intimacy with their girlfriends was a characteristic they wanted to develop. Yet, some young men expressed fear that such emotional intimacy could allow young men to be manipulated by women. When one participant in Belgrade said, *"Your girlfriend will expect you to be open and tell her things, about your emotions,"* other participants responded, *"No, don't do that, she will take advantage of you"* (Belgrade).

**Sexual desire and relations.** The PLA did not explore young men's norms and experiences related to sexual desire in detail. In the course of activities, though, an initial if quite incomplete picture of social expectations and young men's own attitudes began to emerge.

In two sites (Belgrade and Zagreb), young men described societal expectations that young men have early sexual relations and multiple partners to demonstrate their masculinity. Young men in Belgrade, in particular, emphasized the expectations of fathers and male peers that young men should have multiple female sexual partners.

**Typical story of young couple:** *They spent their childhood together, kissed for the first time at the age of 11, at the age of 16 she dumped him and his father had to pay to a professional for his first sex (the story was told in a humorous way).* - Belgrade

*If you have not had sex by age of 18 then you're a gay.* (Belgrade)

*All fathers want their sons to be fuckers.* (Zagreb)



Although young men in Banja Luka identified a type of man called “the chaser” who has multiple sexual relations, they debated whether their community or themselves approved of “the chaser.” Young men in Banja Luka instead believe that fidelity is perhaps the community norm for men’s sexual behavior: *“In our society, it is expected to be with one girl”* (Banja Luka). Young men across sites similarly expressed that women expect men to be faithful, and that such fidelity is key to a woman’s sense of security.

Young men in several sites had an initial discussion of sexual pleasure, during which they were asked to either agree or disagree with the statement “A man should know what his partner likes during sex.” Young men were divided in their responses. A few young men agreed, and emphasized that sexual relations were an opportunity for mutual exploration, saying, *“Yes, it is good to know their erogenous zones”* (Sarajevo) or *“That’s the beauty, to explore”* (Banja Luka). Other young men explained that they supported the statement in theory, but the reality of communication about sexual pleasure with female partners was difficult.



Image 22: Young male participants

*Maybe the hardest step is to start this topic ... Especially if you have a short relationship, it is quite embarrassing to say “can you do this to me?”*  
(Banja Luka)

*If a woman tells him (he can know), but women tend not to tell and to fake so it is quite hard.*  
(Zagreb)

In discussing the statement, other young men shared a range of reasons for disagreeing. Some felt that it was man’s role to know himself what a woman likes, and therefore that men *“should search alone and understand alone”* (Sarajevo). Others noted that they did not think it mattered, especially in situations of one-night stands (Zagreb). And some also expressed that they would not do something that they considered disgusting (implying oral sex) unless it were a special occasion such as New Year’s.

### **Nuances among Sites in Discourse of Gender Equity**

At various moments, young men across sites expressed awareness of inequities that their female peers and women face. The group of young men in Zagreb, though, particularly used concepts and language describing *“gender equity”* in several of their discussions. When asked to imagine what needs to change to reduce violence in 2012, the first item they listed was “gender equity.” They elaborated that they were aware of pay inequities between men and women based on recent reporting and that women should be able *“to have the same opportunities to apply for and get any job that a man can”* (Zagreb).

Young men also emphasized ideals of equity in their depictions of women and men sharing similar physiques or at least symmetrical positions in family and intimate relations. On Day 5 of the PLA exercise, young men drew cartoons of what their ideals of masculinity and violence would include in the year 2012. In the Zagreb group, where a relatively large amount of discussion time was devoted to relationships with girlfriends, almost all of the images showed men and women of similar size and relative position in the 2012 cartoons. Image 23 emphasizes both the man and women in similarly muscled states.

The most vocal group of young men in Zagreb attend a school noted for its progressive education. It is not clear if this or other factors are linked to their relatively progressive attitudes.



Image 23: Cartoon image of 2012, Zagreb

## Research question 4:

### How are social constructs of masculinity related to men's violent use of power?

Young men focused their analysis of violence on Days 3 and 4 of the PLA. Exercises included listing and grouping types of violence, and developing causal flows or problem trees to identify causes and consequences of violence. Young men also reflected on their attitudes towards violence, stated whether they "agreed" or "disagreed" with a number of statements about gender equity and violence, and then discussed their responses. Some references to violent use of power also appeared in young men's power maps and their cartoons of their ideal community in 2012. On Day 5, as young men assessed what their personal ideals of masculinity would be, many explicitly described how they would like to reject many expectations of violence.

## Types and Sites of Violence

**Types of violence.** Young men listed and categorized types of violence into physical, psychological (emotional) and sexual violence. For most groups, the different categories resonated, and the young men referred to these categories and concepts throughout their subsequent discussions of violence. Young men themselves readily identified that all three types of violence had profound consequences. Some young men assessed that in fact emotional violence could have the most lasting and severe consequences.

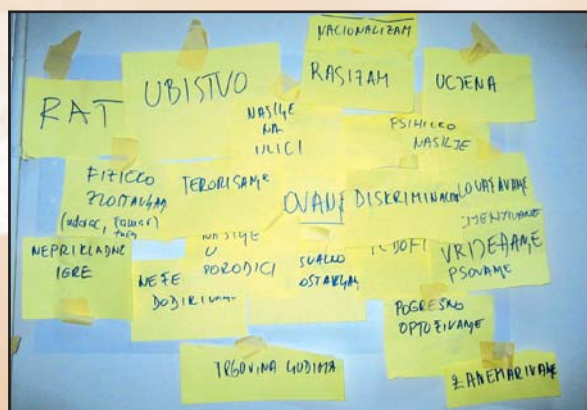


Image 24: Types of violence, Sarajevo

*With our conduct we can put fear in somebody or we can put love in somebody. Basically, the influence is emotional. If you bully, there is a certain physical effect. But the main consequences are emotional. (Banja Luka)*

*Psychological violence is an outcome of all types of violence. (Sarajevo)*



In Belgrade, Zagreb and Sarajevo, young men also named political violence as a type of violence, with reference to war as the main example.

**Pervasiveness of peer violence in young men's lives, especially schools.**

In terms of immediate experience of violence, violence among peers seemed to be the most pervasive and direct type that young men experience. Schools are a key site of peer violence, although streets and some other public spaces also were noted. In Sarajevo, young men said that physical violence is very present in schools, but is actually present everywhere. Young men in other sites shared this assessment.

**Institutional abuse of power.** In addition to being a site of peer violence, schools in some sites were identified as a site of fear based on teachers' abuse of power in what was seen as a capricious and harmful manner. Across sites, young men's power maps identified the power that teachers had over young men to arbitrarily assign grades or punish students.

*In the school we feel endangered, we feel like idiots. (Podgorica)*

Young men in Podgorica perceived especially pervasive abuse of power and use of violence by teachers. Young men in Podgorica also reported that areas around schools are populated by bullies and drug users, and that young men are vulnerable to being beaten up. (See nuances section below for further discussion.)

Emotional violence, related to **discrimination** based on nationality and religion, also was identified as a powerful and specific form of violence in Banja Luka. In particular, young men referred to a publicized case in which a teacher harassed a student on the basis of religion. The teacher was later dismissed, but young men said that this type of emotional violence is common.

Some young men also identified the **police** as an institution which they feared. In Zagreb, some young men experienced being harassed by police because of their appearance (e.g., heavy metal t-shirts and long hair). One young man in Sarajevo reported having been picked up and driven around by police, and then let go after having been intimidated. In Podgorica, young men report avoiding stadiums during sports matches to avoid police checks.

**Sexual violence seen as severe, and silenced.** Most groups identified sexual violence as the most severe type. Across groups young men identified sexual violence as the area of violence surrounded by the greatest silence. They noted that silence is due to the shame that survivors often face and wanting to avoid *"being a victim from the social group"* (Banja Luka) through stigma. Young men in Belgrade named rape as the worst trauma, especially if the victim was a man. They highlighted that sexual violence experienced by young men is also extremely silenced. One participant said, *"Real men don't go for counseling about this"* (Belgrade).



## Violence among Men

In the context of growing up, young men highlighted the pervasive role of violence in forming their identity and proving their masculinity within peer groups. In almost all sites (with the exception of Zagreb), most young men see physical fighting as both unavoidable for a man ("*Nobody gets away without fighting*") and formative ("*You cannot grow up to be a man without fighting*") (Belgrade).

**Establishing hierarchies and masculinity through bullying, starting in primary school.** In their categorization of types of violence, young men noted that bullying is widely experienced by young men, pervasive and unavoidable. Bullying was seen as both emotional and physical violence. Young men see both aspects as damaging, although they generally see emotional consequences of violence as more severe.



Image 25: Young male participants

Young men identify the pervasive role that bullying by peers plays in establishing violence, especially in primary school but extending through secondary school. Across sites, the young men report that violence among peers starts in primary school. Young men at most sites also report that the amount of physical violence that boys endure is greater in primary school and decreases in secondary school, although its severity increases. Young men in Zagreb describe bullying starting in primary school. In Banja Luka, young men said that violence starts in primary school at age 10 or 11 (or even younger), with older boys who will start fights with younger boys just for fun. But as time passes and peers mature, young men noted that bullying diminishes or changes in nature.

*It (violence by peers) is a part of your life, to be honest.  
All this happens. It just goes down as you get older. (Banja Luka)*

Young men noted that it is often older boys who pick on younger ones at school. Young men explain that groups of peers will also often choose to bully other young men who appear physically smaller, or who seem different for a particular reason:

*Bullies will unite against the kid who is different. (Zagreb)  
If you look different from others, that would be a cause of violence. (Sarajevo)*

Young men who show that they are different become the object of emotional and physical bullying. Those boys who are physically larger tend not to be bullied as much (see research question #5 for further analysis).



Image 26: School bullying in cartoon depiction of violence and masculinity in 2007, Zagreb

Many young men shared the experience that the only way for them to effectively end bullying is to use violence themselves.

*Those who are not violent, they go down. (Sarajevo)*

*It (physical violence) is normal for the self-defense. You can run but what about the next day? (Banja Luka)*

*Once you stand up for yourself then they leave you alone. (Sarajevo)*

*I was always the youngest in my neighborhood. They always bullied and molested me. My dad told me to ignore it, but if they attack you defend yourself. And then one day I picked up a rock and hit them and the bullying ended. (Banja Luka)*

It is interesting to note that young men imply that it is their display of violence that seems key to halting being bullied. That is, actually winning a fight or showing oneself to be stronger is not necessarily important; rather, to confront bullying it is most important to take action and be physically aggressive regardless of the outcome of the fight.

Some young men shared that, as time passes and peers mature, young men may be able to phase out of a period of being bullied - or they may also change physically and become larger and not be bullied (see research question #5 for further analysis). However, young men noted that for any of them, although they would prefer to have not used violence, that not using violence would mean that they continue to be subject to bullying.

**Power and protection.** Young men linked violence to the key masculine characteristics of being protectors, especially of peers, girlfriends and family - but also of themselves. Young men identify violence as an important way to display power and prove masculinity in their communities. Young men especially connect violence with men's need to protect their pride or reputation.



*We fight because of our dignity and pride. Revenge is a question of dignity. (Podgorica)*

*Through violence men are trying to prove their domination, trying to resolve problems, save their pride and express their power. (Sarajevo)*

*You are not the man if you need someone to protect you. (Banja Luka)*

For both their communities and themselves, young men express strong consensus that the ability to use violence is essential to men's responsibilities for self-defense and protection. Young men were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, "If someone insults me, I will defend my reputation, with force if I have to." A majority of young men agreed, with many young men noting that they would counter "words with words" to start, but then would use violence if required.

Table 4: *If someone insults me, I will defend my reputation, with force if I have to*

|          | Banja Luka | Belgrade | Podgorica | Sarajevo | Zagreb |
|----------|------------|----------|-----------|----------|--------|
| Agree    | 6          | 5        | 6         | 11       | 6      |
| Disagree | 3          | 2        | 6         | 0        | 1      |

While the notion of protecting one's own pride and reputation is important, the expectation that men must protect those close to them appears most closely identified with men's violent use of power. Young men affirm it is essential that, when necessary, men be able to use force to defend and protect.

*It's primitive to express aggression, but sometimes you should be violent. For instance, when some idiot is torturing our close friend, sister, or girlfriend. (Sarajevo)*



Image 27: Young male participants in "voting with your feet" exercise

Proving oneself among peers. In addition to acts of violence among peers related to bullying, young men described how they must often be prepared to use violence to show their masculinity, and thus to be accepted among one's peer group. As noted above, being prepared to defend one's friends is an important characteristic of masculinity. Another group explained that with peers young men must be sure to avoid the following signs of weakness: "Not to get in a fight, not to get drunk, to have a weak character and to lie" (Zagreb).

Fights can be a bragging point among peers. In Belgrade, bragging about "fights" is prominent in the "hunting stories" young men tell each other. In Podgorica, young men noted that "Some people brag about it. Someone will invent a story so he can be a 'maaaan'; and "guys who always fight are regarded as cool."



**Violence against sexual minorities, especially gay men.** Over the course of the five days, in most groups the issue of sexual orientation was mentioned in relation to various topics. At different sites, young men expressed attitudes ranging from abhorrence to, in some cases, acceptance of sexual minorities (see research question #1). In almost all groups, though, young men mentioned violence toward sexual minorities. In Belgrade, for instance, each of their discussions related to sexual identity ended in mention of violence toward sexual minorities (mainly gay men). In describing this violence, there was open blaming of the victim. Most of the group agreed that a cause of violence toward sexual minorities is visible demonstration of their identity, including public demonstrations such as “gay pride.” As other important causes of violence toward sexual minorities, young men in Belgrade mentioned upbringing: *“The safest way to keep your son from being gay is to teach him to hate them.”* In Banja Luka, one young man said that if he found out his friend were gay, *“I would say to him goodbye. I would kick his ass”* (Banja Luka).

## Violence against Women

*You can have a moment when you snap, but a moment to beat up a woman cannot come.* (Podgorica)

Young men shared fewer direct experiences with violence against women, except in specific cases where young men shared that their mothers had experienced physical violence. In at least one group (Belgrade), violence against women was less immediately identified as a type of violence.

Across all sites, it appeared that the information young men shared about violence against women thus is based more on their attitudes and expectations than on personal experience.

**Violence against women is opposed and seen as unmanly.** Young men almost unanimously opposed the use of violence against women, and said it was almost never justified. When asked “Are there times when a woman deserves to be beaten?” almost all young men disagreed.

Table 5: *There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten*

|          | Banja Luka | Belgrade | Podgorica | Sarajevo | Zagreb |
|----------|------------|----------|-----------|----------|--------|
| Agree    | 0          | 1        | 0         | 2        | 0      |
| Disagree | 9          | 6        | 13        | 9        | 9      |

Young men especially see violence against women as unmanly. As young men perceive that women are physically weaker than men, they see a man’s physical violence against a woman as a fight where the man knows he can win with no contest. By extension, a man who beats a woman is “a coward.”

*They are a weaker sex. They are more vulnerable. They can’t defend themselves.* (Sarajevo)

*Women are weaker than men, it’s not normal to hit her.* (Belgrade)

*A real man does not hit a woman.* (Zagreb)

*A real man should not allow himself to beat his wife, should stay cool.* (Belgrade)

**Slapping, hitting and other discipline may not be seen as violence.** At the same time that young men theoretically condemn violence against women, they found occasions where violence was justified. This apparent contradiction stems from how they perceive violence. Across sites, some young men could imagine situations when “slapping” a woman was justified, and even necessary “if a girl start swearing and using your father’s name” or “if she breaks up with you on purpose” (Sarajevo).

*Beating is not good, but slapping is sometimes OK. (Sarajevo)*

*I don’t agree that a man should beat his wife. I’ve seen my father slap my mother.*

*That is all right, not to beat her. (Belgrade)*

*If you push her it is not violence. (Zagreb)*

These instances seem related to young men’s notions of men needing retain some authority in their relations with women and, in this role, to exercise discipline. Some young men seem to identify a situation where “a woman has power over you” (Belgrade) as a possible justification for when they might use violence.

For young men who consider exercising discipline by slapping or hitting, such force is most often portrayed by young men as a last resort when women have not responded to other efforts by men to exert control. One group used a sports metaphor - the penalty system used in professional soccer - when describing the notion of different limits being set, with the red card being use of physical force against a woman: *They get the yellow card and then the red card.* (Sarajevo). The only participant in Belgrade who agreed that “There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten” said “Yes, *she deserves to be beaten. Sometimes there is nothing else to do, although it is not normal to hit women.*” This explanation basically presents violence towards women as one (last) option when a man thinks he is powerless.



Image 28: Young male participants

**Sexual violence condemned, although women’s culpability questioned.**

Young men also are uniform in condemning sexual violence. As noted above, in discussions of different types of violence, young men identify rape (of either women or men) as one of the most severe types of violence that could occur. Young men also note that sexual violence is one of the types of violence around which the most silence exists.





Image 29: Young male participants

At the same time that young men explicitly condemn violence and identify societal shame and blame in silencing sexual violence, some also shared opinions that women may provoke sexual violence. In particular, in some sites, some young men proposed that women's dress or presence in unsafe locations might invite sexual aggression.

Other young men in these same groups contested these descriptions, and instead placed the blame for sexual aggression on men who are "sick" or "not normal." Resolution about whether or not women can provoke sexual violence was not reached. There was, however, consensus on the idea that whether or not it is correct, society

still tends to blame women for sexual violence. The following exchange in Banja Luka exemplifies this debate:

*It's much up to the behavior of the victim. -Young Man 1, Banja Luka*

*I don't agree. The persons who rape are sick. - Young Man 2, Banja Luka*

*There is still a part of society which supports the attacker, even though it is bad.*

*-Young Man 3, Banja Luka*

**Young men's own attitudes, understanding and practices of sexual coercion unclear.** The PLA exercises did not explicitly set out to explore the young men's attitudes and experiences of sexuality and sexual relations. However, in the course of discussion, they did occasionally reflect on their sexual relations.

As noted above (in research question #3, on young men's attitudes towards women), young men referred to a range of potential, often conflicting societal expectations about their sexual relations with women. It is not clear to what degree young men may themselves experience societal pressure to be sexually active with young women, as a means to demonstrate masculinity.

Young men were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, "It is O.K. for a man to hit his wife if she won't have sex with him."

Table 6: *It is OK for a man to hit his wife if she won't have sex with him?*

|          | Banja Luka | Belgrade | Podgorica | Sarajevo | Zagreb |
|----------|------------|----------|-----------|----------|--------|
| Agree    | 1          | 0        | 0         | 0        | 0      |
| Disagree | 8          | 7        | 13        | 11       | 7      |



Almost all young men disagreed. Many young men disagreed with the use of force, ever.

*That's not real sex, if it's not mutual. (Banja Luka)*

*Men don't have a right to force sex. There is no situation where it is tolerable. (Sarajevo)*

The one young man who agreed expressed that he would be angry enough to give a slap, but not force sex.

*I would not hit her, but perhaps I would give her a gentle slap - not that that will change her mind - and I will be angry and go out. (Banja Luka)*

However, some other young men who had disagreed explained their disagreement was more based on tactics than principle. They would not use violence because it would likely result in a longer length of time until they would be able to have sex with the woman. During the reading of the question in Podgorica, young men laughed with comments like "This one is good" or "Have you heard this question?"

Related to sexual coercion, some groups' facilitators asked young men whether or not sexual coercion was a component of young men's relations with young women. Young men said that they themselves did not exert sexual coercion. They did know, though, of some peers who did. For instance, young men in Zagreb described that their peers by and large did not exert any physical force. However, they noted that some of their peers very likely use "psychological or emotional sexual violence" in the form of pressuring young women to have sexual relations because "everyone else is" or because the young man "will leave her if she does not." This is an area that would benefit from further research.

**Young men support women's rights to leave abusive situations and name barriers to women accessing justice.** Young men expressed theoretical support for a woman's right to leave a violent situation, generally relating to their own mothers. It is important to consider the contradictory way that young men express sympathy toward their mothers in violent situations and to a lesser degree toward their girlfriends as discussed above. Many young men articulated in detail, based on a combination of personal experience and information through media reports, the barriers women may face in leaving violent situations.

*Mum couldn't leave, because my father has a much higher salary. That would be bad for us. If my mother left, she wouldn't be able to take us with her. (Podgorica)*



Image 30: Cartoon depiction of violence in 2007 & 2012, Banja Luka;  
2007 - young woman is raped in a park and there is no legal consequence;  
2012 - police readily intervene to prevent violence against women

Across sites young men shared an analysis that if an abused woman were to seek help, she would not receive it. Young men especially highlighted the failure of the police and court system to bring justice to the victim. In Belgrade, young men noted that the police will not help as “they will never believe her.” Similarly, young men in Podgorica noted that “Sexual harassment of women is tolerated. A man sexually harasses a woman, and gets acquitted in court” (Podgorica).

Young men’s analysis that abused women will not receive justice from the police or legal system appears to resonate with a broader theme about the lack of implementation of laws. In Zagreb, young men named lack of implementation of laws as one of the barriers to achieving their ideal vision in 2012, and suggested a legal review of the implementation of laws as an action to reduce violence. In Sarajevo, young men noted that many criminals are not punished, and if they are put in jail they are released after a short time. Young men in Podgorica echoed this sentiment.

*Because of the inability to enforce laws, criminals stay in jail for only two to three days or a month and when they are out of jail, they look for revenge. (Sarajevo)*

### Causes and Consequences of Violence: “A Circle”

Young men analyzed the root causes and consequences of violence, and their interconnections. Most groups identified a range of causes and consequences, although one group in Belgrade found it difficult to identify systems or social institutions as causes or consequences. Across most groups, young men observed that their analysis showed the cyclical nature of violence.

*I think that frustration leads to frustration in the family which leads to violence which leads to more frustration. It is an endless circle. (Banja Luka)*

*New violence caused by violence is one of violence’s biggest consequences. (Zagreb)*

Young men identified the following key causes of violence:

**Exposure to family violence.** In about half of the sites, young men identified family violence as a key cause of further violence. They explained that children who suffered physical or emotional abuse in the home would be more likely themselves to perpetrate violence.

*If you are raised well in family you will not behave violently. Everything starts in the family. (Banja Luka)*

*My parents were always fighting, sometimes physical violence took place... he had a role to show me that was negative. In some respect, he has taught me how to defend myself in conflicts. He has shown me to do it physically. This probably contributed to me being a rough kid. (Belgrade)*



Image 31: Causal flow analysis of violence, Belgrade

In some groups, although young men emphasized the crucial role of family, they also emphasized that that family attitudes and violence did not have to determine a person's behavior.

*My father had a history in fighting. He played karate, but I inherited nothing of his character. (Podgorica)*

*Some boy can grow up in a racist family and not end up one. (Zagreb)*

**Exposure to media violence.** Several groups of young men identified media as a cause of violence, citing high amounts of violence in movies. Young men also name video games as another site of media violence.

**Individual feelings of inadequacy.** Young men make strong links between **feeling inadequate** - sometimes because of prior emotional or physical abuse - and use of violence. In Sarajevo, some may be violent because they feel socially isolated.

*He's unwanted in a group and all groups reject and insult him. One day he'll definitely be violent. (Sarajevo)*

**Young men in several sites also named sexual jealousy, and related feelings of insecurity, as causes of violence.** "Jealousy leads to fear, which leads to powerlessness, which leads to [rage which leads to] violence" (Zagreb).



**Stress related to economic insecurity and jobs.** Young men also named links between economic and work pressures, and violence. Young men in Banja Luka cited economic insecurity as a key cause of stress, leading to violence. *“Unemployment raises frustration which makes tension into the family, and this transfers on kids who then are more likely to be violent”* (Banja Luka). Although systematic identification of causes of violence was a challenge, young men in Belgrade identified poverty as one cause (Belgrade). Several young men in Zagreb characterized work-related stress leading to violence against women at home, for instance having a bad day at work and becoming violent at home when nagged by your wife (one young man in particular saw violence as justified in this case.) Young men in Podgorica noted that *it is very important to have stable economic situation so as to have stable development.* (Podgorica)



Image 32: Causal flow analysis of violence, Sarajevo

**Alcohol and drugs as a catalyst.** Almost all groups of young men identified a link between alcohol and violence. Young men felt that fights often escalate, when they might not otherwise, when drinking or drugs are involved. They also felt that alcohol can catalyze violent aggression toward those perceived as different. Young men in Belgrade noted that alcohol or drugs can have a key role in catalyzing the violent expression of discriminatory attitudes towards homosexuals: *“... alcohol makes it possible to beat someone.”* Several groups of young men identified use of alcohol and drugs itself as a consequence of psychological violence that leads to more violence.

**Expectations of masculinity.** Young men's causal flow analyses named “being smaller” or “being different” as causes of violence, especially related to bullying. In Belgrade, young men also identified “public unmanliness” (e.g. showing weakness, appearing feminine, being a “pussy”) as a trigger for getting beaten up. Young men also identified the role of proving oneself among peers, and sometimes to women, as other causes of violence. And, as also noted above, young men identified the use of violence most centrally when faced with the need to defend oneself and one's peers or family.

Of note, young men did not directly identify or name expectations of masculinity - such as having to demonstrate strength to be seen as manly - as causes of violence on their causal analysis maps. Rather, it was in facilitated discussions in which young men were asked about links between causes of violence and expectations of masculinity that they then made links between masculinity and causes of violence.

## Social Expectations of Violence for Young Men

### Encouragement by families, especially fathers.

Across all sites, young men described the central role of families, and *especially fathers*, play in encouraging the use of violence to defend themselves. Young men in Banja Luka said that the family's expectation is that *"If someone attacks you, you must defend yourself."* They noted that this was especially true of fathers. *"The dad will say, don't run away defend yourself"* (Banja Luka). In the cartoons that young men drew in Sarajevo, one group of young men projected that in 2012 a father will give his son a gun to kill someone who beat up his son in 2007 (Image 33).



Image 33: *Cartoon depiction of violence in 2007 & 2012, Sarajevo*

Across sites, young men noted that physical fights between men are a point of bragging (as opposed to silence that surrounds sexual violence, violence in the family and emotional violence). Society, especially peers and also often fathers, even encourage such fighting.

*If two male youth get into a fight, society will tolerate the violence and support them to fight.*  
(Podgorica)

Another young man in Podgorica identified the role of his uncle in supporting his use of violence. The uncle gave the young men 50 Euros when he had a conflict with the police in the stadium, telling him, *"Now you are a real man and fan."*

**Peers often support violence.** As noted above, many groups of young men expect their peers to join in fights to maintain allegiance to their peer groups. Peers may also approve of young men who show their strength and masculinity through fighting, and disapprove of those who do not. (See question #5 for the discussion of consequences of not using violence).

The role of societal and peer support appeared in cartoons young men drew to depict their communities now (in 2007) and their vision of a future society (in 2012). One group of young men in Banja Luka showed, in 2007, a fight that ended in one man shooting the other to death. The young men explained that the shooter had not intended to use the gun, but that the presence of the crowd supporting the fight - and specifically egging on the man by suggesting he would not actually use the gun - provoked the man to shoot.



## Nuances among Sites

**Biological nature emphasized in one group.** Some young men expressed that there may be a biological basis for violence. Young men in Banja Luka cited men's "adrenalin" as a cause of their violence. In Podgorica, in particular, some young men characterized themselves as biologically predisposed to react with violence with a correspondingly limited ability for quick change.

*The fights are mainly happening because of impulse, and sometimes too much alcohol.  
(Podgorica)*

*We fight because it is in our biological nature. Small things make us nervous.  
We are short for words. It depends on the moment. (Podgorica)*

*We are a temperamental kind. In time this will change and we will not be  
that kind of people anymore. (Podgorica)*

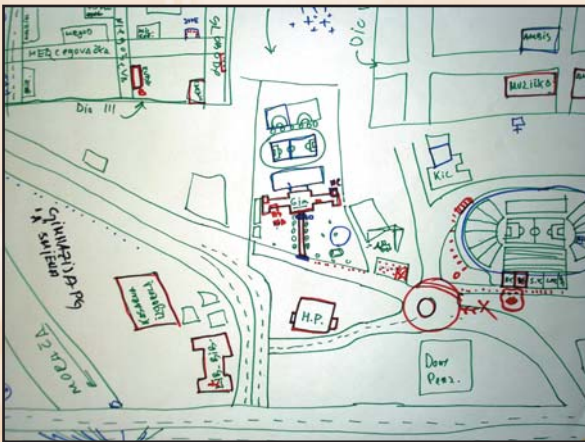


Image 34: Community map, Podgorica

**Institutionalized violence in schools.** While all sites named the abuse of power by teachers as a type of violence, young men in Podgorica described a situation where they felt "endangered" in the schools. Young men in Podgorica made community maps (Image 34), and indicated where they felt safe or threatened. Schools emerged as one of their sites of great danger. In particular, they identified their teacher's belittling and abusive behavior. They also identified feeling threatened in the bathrooms which are dirty and where drug use occurs, as well as in school yards and the areas surrounding schools. The following are some examples of young men's experiences:

*When I asked my teacher can I use the bathroom, she said no and I had to ignore the feeling until I peed in my pants. I was so embarrassed that I didn't tell anyone (Podgorica)*

*The policeman in our school is like a decoration. He is afraid of junkies. (Podgorica)*

## **Organized fights among young men (usually neighborhoods or teams).**

Young men in Banja Luka describe organized group fights, and also going out to find fights, as part of young men's growing up and proving themselves. This came up first when young men noted that one of the things they may do on a weekend night is either to go to a scheduled fight or to look for fight. Upon probing, they noted that some schools have a tradition of having fights between the schools after 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Group fights sometimes are agreed in advance and scheduled at a specific time.

**Debate on the role of war.** In most sites, there were few explicit discussions of war or its links to violence. Two exceptions were the site in Banja Luka and in Podgorica. In Banja Luka, young men debated whether war was a current influence on violence in their community and on themselves. Some expressed that war has big influence. One participant said, *“Our main toys were guns.”* But others strongly disagreed, saying it was an influence for their parents but not for them.

*I was two years old when the war was here. It did not influence me. (Youth 1)*

*The older (people) suffered, but it is not an influence for us. (Youth 2)*

Still others insisted that even if war was not a direct influence on the young men, it still is significant because of its huge influence on their parents, who in turn influence their children.

*But it was an influence on your mom and dad, which influences you. (Youth 3)*

*War is finished, but there are all of these consequences. (Youth 4)*

*The war is not finished. It still exists in families.*

*Some families hate for religion and there are big tensions. (Youth 5)*

To the degree that there was any consensus, it seems to be that the war has an indirect influence on the young men through its influence on their parents.

On the last day of the PLA in Podgorica, young men responded to a secret ballot question that asked them to choose either “Violence is a part of Montenegrin history and culture, and you cannot change that” - which five young men chose; or “Violence is a part of Montenegrin culture, but you can change that” - which eight young men chose. The resulting discussion featured an intense debate about how much their country’s history of war determines current options for non-violence, and how much time and effort change will take. The following quotations provide a sample of this discussion.

*Wars, blood revenge are a part of our history.*

*I doubt you can eradicate them anytime soon. - Youth 1*

*We are a difficult case. Lots of time needs to pass until we can accept the fact that we are a violent nation. I think a lot of effort and financial support needs to be invested in this issue. - Youth 2*

*I think it is bad to picture us as a violent and war thirsty people. We fought for our freedom and have been victims of violence. - Youth 3*

*Violence in families was present throughout the history. It can be eliminated. Maybe by new laws. There are countries which have almost no violence. - Youth 4*



In one in-depth interview in Sarajevo, a young man expressed that the war indirectly caused him to be violent because it created a culture of violence that was visible everywhere.

Young man: *I think that war had some influence (on my development) because I was born in 1991. It also influenced my neighbors; there were many violent neighbors in the building. There was one neighbor who was carrying a club and he liked to fight. He had beaten a few people....that really influences you when you see it.*

Interviewer: *What did you see?*

Young man: *A man was driving home with bread from the store and this neighbor couldn't pass him with his car and he started yelling, swearing and telling the other man to move. The other man told him to wait a little. Why can't he ask him nicely to move instead of swearing? It was an older man (that he was swearing at). The neighbor went out of car, took the club and started hitting the vehicle. Initially it was funny to us but I felt the fear 'cause that could have happened to me tomorrow too.*

Interviewer: *Were there any consequences to you?*

Young man: *Yes it did, on my behavior. It leads to a more aggressive behavior. All this violence we saw on the street, it definitely had some influence on my behavior.*

### **Research question 5: For men who don't use violence, what are the influencing factors and consequences?**

*They do not opt for violence because they understand that the violence is pointless and think that it cannot solve anything, because of fear for their own lives, and fear that they may hurt somebody else. (Podgorica)*

At different points in the five-day PLA, young men discussed when alternatives to the use of violence have been possible. Young men especially considered what enables young men not to be violent in discussions after their causal flow or problem tree analyses and in their individual interviews. Below is their assessment of when men are able to choose not to use violence, barriers to less use of violence, and how they would ideally like to reduce their use of violence.

#### **What Enables Men Not to Use Violence**

**Gaining maturity and self-control, and recognition of consequences.** Young men across groups saw age differences in fighting, noting that young men often develop more self-control as they grow older. In individual interviews and group discussions, they explained that with age they feel better able to control their reactions and to think before acting.

*Your fuse is shorter when you are younger - and consequences are lighter. (Belgrade)*

Young men also noted that, as they mature, they can better identify the consequences of engaging in violence - such as violence leading to more violence, possibility of harm, or the possibility of punishment from school or police authorities.

*So, now at our age it takes more to get into a fight and consequences are greater (guns and knives) so you learn how to "pass" on the fighting and stay cool."  
(Belgrade)*

*I sometimes wish to have a fight, when someone is being a jerk. But I stop myself. I think about consequences.  
(Podgorica)*



Image 35: Young male participants

**Seeing verbal responses and restraint as showing greater strength.** When asked "If someone insults me, I will defend my reputation with force," young men were split across groups in their opinions. The majority of young men agreed with using force, although there was a vocal minority who articulated why they disagreed. Those who disagreed with using force advocated using words instead, saying, "*I think you cannot make anything with force. You can defend your dignity with words*" (Banja Luka). Many of these young men feel that using force is stooping to the level of the person who insults.

Some young men pointed to the **use of words**, instead of violence, as an effective way to show power and superiority.

*I admire when I knock someone down with my words. (Podgorica)*

*You must be smart enough to reduce others. (Sarajevo)*

*Intellectual superiority is when someone is provoking you, you put him down. He cannot get to you. (Belgrade)*

*Sometimes words are not enough, and you must use physical power. But it's always good to first try and resolve the situation with words. (Sarajevo)*



Other young men identified mental strength as a key to **not responding at all** to violence. Young men noted that their ability to influence how they use their strength depends on *"if you are strong as a person, mentally"* (Banja Luka). In Belgrade, young men used the phrase "keeping cool" to describe their successful efforts to not respond with force.

*It does not mean that someone not responding to an insult does not have dignity of his own.*  
(Podgorica)

*When someone insults you, you have to find a way to be above it, to have it not touch you.*  
(Belgrade)

*You are not a pussy if you stay cool, that's intellectual superiority if you put him down.*  
(Belgrade)

Young men seem to link their decisions not to use physical violence with **self-control**, which they see as an important form of **strength**. Mental and intellectual power was mentioned in discussions about the kinds of power a man is expected to demonstrate in society.

#### Case study #1 (Sarajevo)

Damir is a football (soccer) player who injured himself when he was very young, limiting his ability to play. He is calm and usually does not participate in violence. Before his injury, there were times when he would insult his teammates if he found them not giving their all in a football matches. At these times, Damir gets angry and *"when I take it out on somebody, I feel better. After some time I realize that I shouldn't have said those things and so I apologize."* In other instances where Damir feels provoked or angry he washes his face with cold water *"to cool myself off. I get angry but it passes."*

Damir credits his father for his non-violent attitude. *"At home I have never seen my father raising a hand on my mother. Never! I pick up every part of his behavior and I put it in my head."*

Overall, Damir's personal philosophy of violence is to resolve conflicts and argument verbally and not through violence. *"Well it is easier to resolve it verbally than to have a blue eye for a month. That is my opinion. And in reality, I always think about my actions before doing something. In the process of thinking, the rage goes away. First I look at the consequences ... before taking any action."*

### **Having a “line” or “border” beyond which young men will use violence.**

Young men also identified the importance of having a “line” or “border” to guide decisions not to use violence. Across several of the sites young men express an ideal for both communities and for themselves that each man should establish “a line” up to which he tolerates insults or aggressions, and that force is only appropriate when this line is crossed. Young men in Zagreb discussed at several points their seeing not using violence as demonstrating more self-control, up until “a line” or a “point.” Young men in other sites also talked about a border.

*You have to have a border within you and when someone curses you, you stay cool. (Belgrade)*

*You have to be patient, but if harassed, then stand up for yourself. (Belgrade)*

This concept of a border implies that non-violence is a choice because young men still retain a point beyond which they will exercise violence. Keeping the option to use violent power in reserve seems to imply the importance of men being able to use power if needed.

In conclusion, there seems to be a fine line between fighting as a means to show manliness, and not fighting to show that a young man is “cool” and “intellectually superior” and demonstrates “mental strength.” The notion that there is a line beyond which young men will necessarily use strength also points to the degree to which the ability to use physical violence, especially for self-defense, remains a key component of masculinity for young men.

### **Mothers support conversation and non-violence.**

Across groups, young men highlighted that their mothers often supported non-violent alternatives to conflict resolution - especially emphasizing the value of conversation. Young men also portrayed their mothers as actively opposing their son’s use of violence. Some young men cited their mother’s influence as directly influencing their decision not to use violence.



Image 36: *Young male participants in “voting with your feet” exercise*

*Mothers do not use beatings so much. You should try conversation.  
Violence should be the last thing you use if it is necessary. (Podgorica)*

*My mother said she would break my fingers if I ever hit a woman. (Zagreb, said without irony)*

Mothers stand out as one of the few sources of messages supporting non-violence that young men receive.



### Case study #2 (Belgrade)

Up until the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, Dario bullied and terrorized his classmates, mostly younger and weaker students, to prove his strength and superiority. Fighting did not bring him joy or pleasure but he did it because it was expected of him by his friends.

Dario's parents used to fight a lot while he was growing up and sometimes his father would beat his mother, especially when he was drunk. His father always taught him never to fight but then Dario observed his father abuse his mother. Dario feels that the exposure to domestic violence influenced his bullying behavior as a child.

Looking back to those days, Dario realizes the pain he caused others and feels bad remembering the fights. But he says that at that age there was no choice; *"You are either a bully or a victim."* Dario does not consider himself violent anymore. His mother was a big influence in his changed behavior and told him not to use violence or fight when insulted by others.

**A few fathers have supported non-violence.** Many young men report their father's strong influence in using violence. One young man in Podgorica, elaborating on his peers' comments, reflected:

*I mostly get beaten up if I try to talk things over. So then I get confused about what to do. Then my father says, if someone hits you, you hit him back. (Podgorica)*

However, some young men pointed to examples where their fathers had supported non-violence and even intervened to help minimize any future violence. In the passage below, a young man expressed his concern when his father decided to become involved in a situation where he was being bullied. Even though the young man was fearful of being teased by his friends because of his "protective father" the bullying stopped.

*In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, he started harassing me on every break...He was always pushing me until I decided to hit him back. So I did, but when I hit him I hurt my thumb. When I arrived home my dad asked, "Why did you hit him?" I answered that the boy was bullying me. My father told me a story about a boy who was living abroad and suffered from being bullied, suffered, suffered, and when he couldn't take it any more he bought a gun to kill the harasser.*

*After a few days my father went to meet him and his parents. I was feeling some shame. I tried to talk my father out of going to this boy's place...because I thought others will make jokes about me and my protective father. The bullying stopped.*

**Some peers may respect strength of character, and some groups may support non-violence.** Young men felt that they ideally should be able to be respected by their peers for strength of character to make choices that did not conform to their peers' expectations, including the use of non-violence. In Podgorica, a young man said, *"I think that guys who are not violent are respected in the society. A guy who is quiet, educated and polite deserves respect and can serve as an example."*

Young men identified that “now that we are grown up there is more tolerance” to follow their own codes of behavior (Zagreb). One young man in Zagreb, for instance, noted that “I don’t drink, smoke or do drugs. Some think I am weird but others appreciate me” (Zagreb), and that peers’ admiration of him has increased as they have grown older.

Some young men also identify that peer groups or crowds may support non-violent behavior, or disapprove of violent behavior. That is, they felt it was possible to find peer groups who do not support violence.

*If the crowd is O.K., they will be embarrassed about what they have done (related to a fight), which is not the case with a bad crowd. (Podgorica)*

## Consequences of Not Using Violence

Despite their own ideals for decreased violence, young men ultimately present a picture that shows considerable social sanctions for choosing non-violence.

**Many young men would expect to experience more violence as a consequence of not using violence, especially among peers.** Young men across almost all sites emphasized the negative consequences they faced for not fighting (Zagreb was an exception; see the discussion below on agency). In Banja Luka, for instance, the young men elaborated a list of ideals for behavior in which violence was to be used only when absolutely necessary. Once elaborated, one young man noted:

*If I have all the values on this list, they will say you are not the man. Not gay. But not the man. Especially peers (will say this). If I say I will kick someone’s ass, you are a man. But if I say nothing (when someone insults me) I would have to go out and go back home. (Banja Luka)*

Young men’s responses in other sites seem to concur with this assessment. Young men in Podgorica commented:

*To insist on solving the problem by only words in school would be something that would get me ignored. (Podgorica)*

*Why would I stand out from others? I don’t want to be different, because then they will look for my flaws. (Podgorica)*

Young men identified that the decision to not be violent (and thus risk appearing unmanly) could itself trigger violence, and condemn them to more violence.



**Acting as an individual to intervene in violence is seen as risky.** Across groups were a couple of limited discussions about whether young men could imagine intervening to stop a fight. Young men in Podgorica could imagine trying to avoid violent situations, but not acting to confront them.

The cartoons by young men in Banja Luka depicting their ideal vision for 2012 included an intervention by a peer to stop a fight from escalating. In discussion of the image, they noted that it would be very difficult to stop a fight unless the peer intervening had considerable authority within their group.

*The main thing that I can do is not to be violent and try to avoid all risky situations. (Podgorica)*

*It is not easy to stop a fight. The person who tries to is very brave.  
But it is very hard to be against the majority. (Banja Luka)*

Participants seemed to concur that there was a gap between their ideal of less violent behavior for young men and what society, especially their peers, would demand or permit.



Image 37: Young male participants

### **Young Men's Own Ideals for Not Using Violence**

**Using words and showing tolerance, except in self-defense.** At the end of the five-day PLA exercise, young men were asked to identify what aspects of masculinity and violence they would keep or strengthen, and which they would want to change. Young men in most groups expressed that they would like to see less violence.

*Violence is not for human beings.  
(Sarajevo)*

Young men would like to see talking and greater tolerance as options for men to resolve conflicts more peacefully. They would choose to reject all forms of violence except for physical violence when needed in self-defense.

*We want to show (how) to be more tolerant.  
You do not need to solve all problems by force. You can talk. (Banja Luka)*  
*It should never be allowed, except when it is defense.  
When we are provoked and words cannot help. (Sarajevo)*

Within this construction, young men do not see a need to give up their sense of strength. Most young men emphasized that they would retain “self-confidence,” “muscles” and other visible forms of strength. They ideally would like to show their strength by using words and mental strength, and by exercising self-restraint. The notable exception to this is young men’s view that use of violence for self-defense is central to their personal ideal for what men should be. (See research question #4 and earlier in this section for further details).

**Ideals for fathers and sons.** Young men identify their fathers’ influence in promoting their use of violence to prove their masculinity. Many young men do not support their fathers’ expectation that they should use violence or force to “be men.” Yet, young men across different groups support a central role for fathers in teaching their sons self-defense.

*I would teach my son how to avoid conflict. But if need be, I'd teach him how to defend himself.*  
(Belgrade)

*Real parents know that every child should learn its lesson, because they won't be out there for them every minute. They know that they cannot make a “jam” out of them.* (Podgorica)

*It is good for a dad to want his son not to be weak as long as the dad does not cross the line... it is good (for sons) to learn to defend themselves when necessary, to not run about like little girls.* (Zagreb)

### Nuances in Young Men’s Sense of Agency to Choose

Throughout their discussions, young men expressed differences in the degree of agency they feel that they and other young men have to choose non-violent behaviors. While differences exist within individual groups, the Zagreb and Podgorica groups seem to sit at opposite ends of a spectrum and as such illustrate the variation in young men’s experiences.

The young men in the Zagreb group emphasized a sense of agency, expressing that individual men have the power to choose not to be violent. They also noted on several occasions that, while family is a powerful influence, it does not determine young men’s behavior.

*To be or not to be (violent). That is the choice men have.* (Zagreb)

*My dad always raised me to defend and stand up for myself violently. But I never took that form of behavior from him.* (Zagreb)

*I do not have a great situation at home, but I do not go out breaking things.* (Zagreb)

By contrast, the young men in Podgorica expressed that while they might try to avoid violence, they had little personal power to stop violence in their communities. They felt change would take a long time.



*... stopping violence is something only my grandchildren only can hope to see. (Podgorica)*

Similarly, the young men in Podgorica envisioned a world in 2012 where fathers would no longer celebrate their sons' violence. The change, however, would not result from an evolution in social relations or institutions. Rather, it would occur due to the invention of an anti-violence machine.

#### **Vision 2012, Podgorica**



**2012:** Parents take children to a special institution where they fry their brain and then they insert a new program so the person won't be so violent anymore.

At the same time, the space for discussion among young men during the PLA appeared to open new options for young men to consider their potential agency. Young men in Podgorica had emphasized their nature as a key component of violence. But by Day 5, when asked to reflect on options to choose non-violent behaviors, one young man suggested to his peers that violent behavior is something that is learned and thus can be unlearned. Another young man, near the end of the PLA, suggested that he saw new options not to behave violently.

*OK guys, what are you saying - that being violent is something we inherit?  
Isn't it something that we develop? (Podgorica)*

*Conversation is a better solution because most guys behave out of principle.  
Now I am going to do it intentionally. (Podgorica)*

## Strengths and Study Limitations

The five-day PLA activity demonstrated a number of strengths. The PLA activity produced a rich set of findings that describe the particular constructions of hegemonic masculinities that young men in the Balkans experience, and how these pertain to relations with women and gender-based violence. The findings point to patterns not previously anticipated by researchers on masculinity in the Balkans. The PLA showed that young men rejected many aspects of hegemonic masculinity while maintaining fairly strong gender stereotypes.<sup>19</sup> These findings also provide a wealth of information related to the specific language and images used by young men in their construction of their identities. Such information points to specific openings to support rearticulating masculinity by and for young men in the Balkans.


The PLA activity also achieved important process outcomes. The process supported the continued capacity-building of partner organizations and, for the majority of YSAs, resulted in their increased commitment to and understanding of options for engaging young men on issues of masculinity and gender-based violence. The overall methodology also enabled young men to engage in their own critical self-reflection. At the end of the PLA, young men across sites expressed the desire for continued engagement as well as a commitment to undertaking social action. The PLA activity thus achieved important results in engaging a constituency for future action, as well as validating the effectiveness of participatory methods related to masculinity and GBV in the Balkans.

At the same time, the PLA activity had limitations. The first pertains to a general limitation of qualitative research, its inadequacy in generalizing to larger populations. As such, the results of qualitative data collected from the 64 young men recruited from secondary schools in urban settings cannot be generalized to rural or semi-urban populations. Another limitation to the data is that there may be an over- or under- representation of young men who attend a particular type of school (e.g. vocational school versus one preparing students for university) captured in the PLA research. For example, students attending schools preparing them for university may have more liberal views on gender equity than those attending professional schools, or vice versa. Since the study did not control for these differences, study results might be slightly biased.

This first PLA activity set some important limits in response to discomfort among the implementing YSAs. The PLA activity undertook its research from the theoretical position that masculinities are constructed identities, through which gendered and other power relations are variously constructed, negotiated, resisted, perpetuated and transformed. Theory and research show that masculinities (as with all social identities) are constructed through the intersection of different social identities. In the context of understanding the construction of masculinities, especially in relation to GBV, sexuality is a key construct. However, due to the level of discomfort expressed by YSA in the two earlier capacity-building trainings, the research team decided to exclude specific questions and probing related to sexuality. Similarly, especially in the context of post-conflict situations, identities of nationality, ethnicity and religion and experiences of war are also

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<sup>19</sup> Personal communication, Professor Vesna Nikolic-Ristanovic, May 14, 2007.



crucial categories in the construction of masculinities and gender-based violence. However, also due to the levels of discomfort observed in the two previous capacity-building sessions among YSA, the research team decided to defer specific questions and probing related to these social contexts. Thus, the data from this PLA exercise only includes information related to these themes when it emerged without probing from the young men themselves. These are thus areas for future research and PLAs (see below).

The PLA also encountered a few limitations during its implementation. All of the specific tools worked well, with the exception of the focus group discussion activity on Day 2, which asked young men to reflect on the influences of various institutions (e.g., family, religion, and schools) in the construction of norms of masculinity. Young men instead focused on general expectations of these institutions. Thus, the data obtained for research question 2 is relatively thin. In addition, the leadership of YSA and youth facilitators as co-researchers presented some challenges. The YSA and their youth facilitators, both by their position and training as facilitators, were able to establish a high degree of rapport with the young men. At the same time, due to their background as trainers, in some instances the youth facilitators tended to ask direct questions rather than open ended questions with probes; in other instances some research team members did not probe as much in areas where they had some personal discomfort (such as sexuality, when it did emerge in conversation). Thus, some opportunities for further exploration and data collection were missed.



## Discussion and Implication of Results

The five-day PLA sought to answer the overall question: What are the opportunities to promote more gender equitable constructions of masculinity for young men, especially in preventing gender-based violence? In particular, the PLA exercise sought to determine specific norms and expectations that contribute to violent behavior among young men in Bosnia, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. This section first discusses what current openings there may be in constructions of masculinity that support more gender-equitable constructions and non-violent behavior. We then consider programmatic implications of the results, which span a range of intervention levels. These range from change in individual-level knowledge, attitudes and behavior, to community-level mobilization and broader institutional action and reform.

The actual development of specific youth-centered interventions will occur in Phase 2 of the project. In this phase, CARE and its partner organizations will assess the implications of these findings, along with other factors, to decide the overall strategy and specific types of activities they will implement.



Image 38: Young male participants

### Potential “Cracks” in Hegemonic Masculinity

*Different forms of masculinity exist together, and the hegemony of any given form is constantly subject to challenge.<sup>20</sup>*

Young men are able to identify dominant, “hegemonic” societal expectations for men. Young men also articulate a range of contradictory expectations in different social contexts, with some young men resisting identifying with any type of masculinity. At the same time, with support for critical reflection, almost all young men were able to articulate and envision personal ideals for masculinity and violence that differ, to varying degrees, from hegemonic forms. Many of these ideals were represented visually in the cartoons that young men depicted envisioning what they hoped for in 2012. These “cracks” in hegemonic masculinity might be nodes where change is already happening and could be accelerated through promoting a wider range of acceptable behavior for a man.



Image 39: Young men developing cartoons of violence in 2007 & 2012

<sup>20</sup> RW Connell, *The Men and the Boys*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000: 54.

**Showing emotions with people you care for, such as girlfriends.** In several groups, young men recognized the social constraint on men to be unemotional as most damaging. In addition, where young men had experience with girlfriends, a number of young men explicitly valued the possibility of emotional intimacy. Young men in Zagreb highlighted recent media portrayals of men as more emotional as a positive and would like more such representations. Most other groups were not as uniformly open to men displaying emotions publicly. However, young men still expressed a desire to enact different norms. For instance, in Belgrade, young men's opinions fell across a spectrum (see below) of when it is acceptable to show your emotions:

| Never | With people you love | Why not? It's acceptable, even in public |
|-------|----------------------|--|
|-------|----------------------|--|

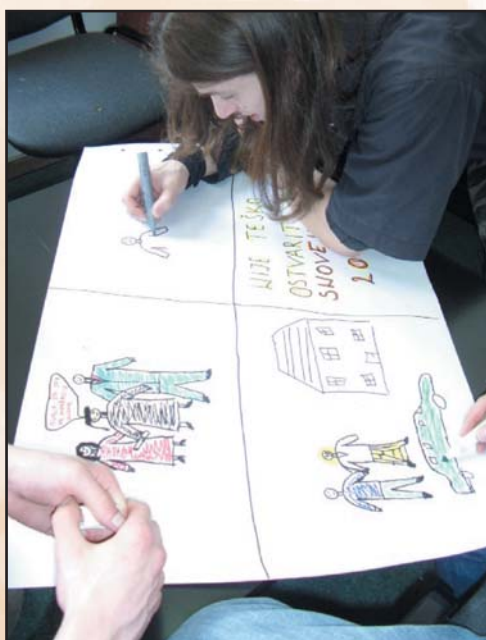


Image 40: Young man drawing cartoon of violence in 2007 & 2012

While during plenary discussion only one young man in Belgrade said he approved showing emotions in public, in individual (private and anonymous) statements five of them said that they would choose to show emotions. Showing emotions thus seems to be an area to support young men's openness to change.

At the same time, in exploring the display of a wider range of emotions with young men, it may be important deconstruct the perceived connection for many young men between weakness and emotions. Similarly, for some young men emotional intimacy is also tied to feelings of being out of their depth with and at the mercy of girlfriends whom they perceive as better equipped to handle feelings. This finding implies a need to support young men to feel comfortable and competent in intimate emotional relations and acknowledging and communicating feelings.

**Sharing power in intimate relations.** Young men's dialogues show many of them actively wrestling with how to reconcile their desire for retaining some "small" authority with their support for the ideal of sharing power with women. (See results of Question #3 for details). This contradiction was largely implied in young men's discussions.

This contradiction could be made explicit and further critical reflection supported to examine these tensions. Exploration of this contradiction also may lead to further exploration of sexual relations and attitudes, especially in the range of young men's attitudes suggested toward sexual coercion.

**Division of labor in the home.** One issue of relevance for everyday life is gender division of housework. Although few participants questioned man's role as provider for family, on issue of chores there was a variety of opinion. Some young men identified a strict division of "male" and "female chores;" other young men noted that *there are no male and female chores, there are only those I like and those I dislike* (Belgrade). One cartoon notably showed the issue of chores resolved in the future, with a robot performing chores so that neither women nor men would need to (see Image 23). While this vision affirms that domestic chores are not women's work, the appearance of an imaginary robot replaces any representation of men assuming direct responsibility to share in domestic work. Thus, domestic chores seem an area of openness for change, but with need for further support and reflection in order to realize this change.



### **Possibility of sexual pleasure in intimate relations.**

Young men shared a range of reactions to the statement that “young men should know what their partner likes during sex.” While some young men did not agree with the statement, others did while expressing doubts about the possibility of having the skills for such communication. Importantly, young men’s answers implied that women deserve sexual pleasure. This is a significant opening for building on as a positive “norm” that could be used for potential interventions. The discussions also showed that young men had doubts about their own skills in providing sexual pleasure to women, and a potential interest in improving their skills in this area. Given that much of societal acceptance of violence toward women and limitations for women’s mobility is related to control of women’s sexual pleasure, young men’s support for women’s right to sexual pleasure is a notable opening.

### **Recognizing the consequences of emotional, physical and sexual violence, and ideally choosing only to use physical violence for self-defense.**

In discussions across groups, young men readily agreed that emotional violence causes harm as great or greater than physical violence. Although young men wish to retain their sense of power and strength, they ideally would reject using violence as a way to establish their strength. In fact, young men articulated that they see *not* using violence as a sign of “mental strength,” although given the reality of violence they face from peers and their need for self-protection they doubt to what degree that can put their ideal in practice.

Young men thus ideally would choose violence only when it is needed for defense. When and where violence may be perceived as needed for defense raises many questions about links between violence and self-defense. However, young men’s broader de-linking (and even dislike) of violent displays of force as a means to establish masculinity is a key opening to changing this norm of hegemonic masculinity.

### **Attitudes opposing violence against women, and some public discourse supporting increased gender equity.**

Although there is a range of (mis)understanding about what constitutes violence, young men do express a shared opposition to violence against women. Young men also prioritized greater intervention by institutions, especially police and courts, to protect women in their discussions and ideal visions for 2012 (Zagreb and Podgorica). Young men in Zagreb also explicitly introduced “gender equity” as a desired goal for 2012, especially in relation to jobs. Young men in other groups, while not necessarily using the term gender equity, did reflect on changes in opportunities for behavior and activities (sports and jobs) available to women. Young men viewed these changes positively, though at the same time their initial descriptions of young women were rife with stereotypes. Young men’s commitment to justice for women and greater equity in opportunities is an attitudinal resource to draw from as young men further explore their own understandings and behaviors around power.

### **Values of tolerance and friendship, and potential links to a broader construction of gender equity.**

Young men identify the need to stick to one’s opinions as a desired characteristic of masculinity. At the same time, at different moments across various groups young men seemed to articulate the importance

#### **Vision 2012, Zagreb**



Images include an emphasis on women and men, together with their children, sharing love (hearts) and power (equal size and position in frames).



of “tolerance” for different sexual orientations, religions, ethnicities and nationalities. In one group (Banja Luka), the young men specifically added “tolerance” to their list of ideals for masculinity, and in group discussion it was retained as an ideal shared by the group. Although not explored in detail, the discourse of tolerance seems to have a particular resonance among young men in the region as an ideal.

Given the social cleavages in the region related to nationality, ethnicity, religion and war, further exploring “tolerance” may offer an important framework for supporting **the construction of gender equity in the context of other identities in the region**. In the Balkans, particularly, further research is needed to explore how young men understand and respond to the relational dimensions of masculinity specific to ethnicity, religion and nationality. A framework of tolerance may provide an opening to construct gender equity in the context of also deconstructing other differences that have been associated with, and sometimes seen as causes of, violence and inequity.

This discourse of tolerance was also invoked at several points by individual young men in different groups to advocate for respecting **diversity in sexual orientation**. Young men also strongly support the value of friendship and loyalty to friends. Many who expressed discomfort with homosexuality nevertheless would remain friends with a friend who was gay (if they had been friends before). Exploring discourses of friendship, linked with tolerance, may provide a base for expanding young men’s openness to considering greater tolerance for sexual diversity.

Although other peers often expressed hostile attitudes towards same sex relations, especially initially, young men did seem to become more open to discussions of sexual orientation over the course of the PLA. This evolution, though specific to sexual orientation, implies that a PLA methodology may be useful for understanding and action related to a broader framework of relational identities and tolerance.

In Belgrade, when asked on Day 5 “Did you learn something from other people, one young man said *“I am a little more liberal, could be friends with a gay person maybe”*.

This suggests that the PLA’s methodology of facilitated dialogue and critical reflection can help facilitate young men to more openly consider, if not agree with, tolerance for diversity.



Image 41: Young male participants

## Programmatic Implications

Building on these “cracks” in hegemonic masculinity, the core research team, research partner organizations, and young men themselves brainstormed a range of potential programmatic interventions. Of note, these ranged from activities focused on supporting changes in an individual’s constructions of masculinity and related knowledge, attitudes, and skills, to activities that promote community mobilization and advocacy for change in the institutions of media, schools, police and the courts.

We present these below, recognizing that any actual decisions about directions for implementation require further analyses and prioritization by CARE staff and partner organizations, and also may imply further research, to translate these into a plan of action.

## Possibilities for More Gender Equitable Messages

Young men's identification of models of hegemonic masculinity, and their own attitudes about aspects of masculinity they would choose to strengthen or diminish for themselves, suggest potential articulations of more-gender equitable messages. Further research would be needed to develop specific messaging. However, some emergent ideas are shared here.

**Linking current rhetoric to non-violence, and rearticulating notions of maturity, strength and masculinity.** Young men's discussions pointed to rhetoric and values they already use that could be linked to not using violence. One line of rhetoric connects non-violence to being a sign of strength.

- **Maturity and better control.** Young men's perception of having a short temper ("short fuse") as developmental stage, at ages 5-10, together with the fact that young men don't want to be seen as children could be used to send a message: Be a grown up. Be cool. Having a short fuse is childish. Fighting does not resolve anything.
- **Mental strength and attitude.** Given that young men see not fighting as a sign of mental strength, messages could emphasize *"I'm strong enough I don't have to fight. I don't have to prove myself that way."* When asked what helps them create this attitude of not needing to use force, young men across sites said *"Need to be physically strong, have a high self-opinion."* We could imagine a message "you are strong, you don't have fight to prove it," retaining the notion of power that is important to young men. This, for instance, could be one of the messages that fathers would teach their sons on manhood.
- **A cool attitude.** Young men valued "staying cool" as a sign of strength. Their discussion on "cool attitude" (having self-control and not getting into fights) and being intellectually superior shows that there is already a way to "be a man" without using violence, even when you are provoked and violence is expected. Messages could use the idea of a cool attitude; statements that "losing control is a sign of weakness" could actually work as a motivation to not use violence.
- **A bigger man.** Young men used the rhetoric of "a bigger man," stating that "muscles" or "hitting a woman" does not "make a bigger man." This suggests that the rhetoric of "being a bigger man" could be linked to non-violence.

Notably, these attitudes affirm, to different degrees, links between non-violence and hegemonic attitudes of masculine strength (for example, the link between resisting violence and "being a bigger man"). If campaigns are developed, it would be beneficial to provide the chance for critical analysis of different potential rhetorics for how they contest and reinforce different aspects of masculinity.<sup>21</sup>

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21 Flood, Michael. "Engaging Men: Strategies and Dilemmas in Violence Prevention Education Among Men" *Women Against Violence Journal* (Issue Thirteen), 2002-2003:18-32



**Linking rhetoric to other activities, such as sports or democracy.** Young men also identified the potential for sports rhetoric and experience to be used in articulating messages of non-violence. In Zagreb, for instance, young men quoted the rhetoric of a campaign already in existence which asks men to “hit the ball, not a women”. Young men at other sites pointed to values that sports promote related to non-hegemonic masculinity, such as the value of “*cooperation and working together as a team*” and sportsmanship being linked to ones conduct in “*how the game is played*” and “*letting everyone give their best*” (and not necessarily winning). Although young men noted that these values are often overshadowed by more dominant notions of competition, dominance and winning, they value sports for the opportunity it gives to learn these more cooperative values. Such values and rhetoric, tied to sports, may provide a resource for messages related to sharing power in relationships as well as use of non-violence.

One group of young men suggested that actions related to promoting non-violence would be an appropriate subject for their democracy class. Young men in other groups seemed interested in the values of tolerance, and opposition to discrimination. While more research would be needed to understand how these concepts are currently used and valued by young men, they suggest that rhetoric associated with **tolerance, diversity and democracy** may be a discursive resource for promoting greater gender equity and less violence. (Also see the discussion below on tolerance education).

**Fatherhood and the value of role models.** Young men identified learning from a role model as the most important way of learning about masculinity. In many instances the young men mentioned that their fathers taught them not to use violence as a means of resolving conflict. Strengthening the linkage between fatherhood and promotion of non-violence in the life of a young man may provide an arena of messages and communication of information to eliminate gender-based violence.

### **Potential Entry Points for Interventions to Reduce GBV**

Based on the analysis shared by young men during the PLA exercise, the core research and facilitation teams identified specific possible concrete entry points for interventions. Young men also identified actions that they could take to reduce violence, as well as actions that they would like to see organizations initiate. We also present an illustrative list of the ideas generated.

**Topics for awareness-raising and skills building.** Young men’s ideals for the masculine behaviors they would like to strengthen, as well as some of their apparent confusion or questions about other attitudes and options, suggest several possible topics and types of skills-building programs. While these topics are listed here, it is important to note that they need to be grounded in a broader approach and methodology which supports guided facilitation and critical reflection (see below).

- **Awareness raising and education to clarify definitions of violence, including sexual violence.** Although young men oppose violence against women, their own descriptions suggest they may not consider some violent behaviors as such. An important step could be to expand young men’s knowledge about what constitutes violence and coercion. Education related to sexual violence is also important, particularly because of silence around it.

- **Learning coping and anger management skills** could lead to new behaviors.. Young men need to have better problem-solving skills. More effort should be put to developing individual alternatives to violence, even when someone is trying to “control” you, so young men do not feel powerless. This seems tied both to learning better anger management as an important part of development and maturity. Young men also seemed to identify a role for anger management in response to redirecting men’s responses to feelings of stress, rage and insecurity.
- **Exploring sexuality and sexual pleasure.** As noted above, this appears to be an area that young men have little opportunity to discuss openly in a non-judgmental setting, but is an area of interest and an opening for supporting gender equity.
- **Developing communication skills, especially related to sharing emotions.** Also as noted above, this seems to be an area of potential interest for young men. Young men expressed a desire to enjoy more emotional intimacy and yet also express fears and some sense of incompetence in this area.
- **Tolerance education.** Because one of the main causes of violence is seen in differences - from religious or ethnic, to sexual orientation, to seemingly more superficial differences such as the fact that someone has big ears or wears glasses - tolerance education could provide a promising framework for locating the construction of gender equity in a broader framework of social equities and tolerance. Through developing respect for differences and promoting social equity, we might reduce violence.

**Points for intervention: institutions and peers.** Young men identified a range of entry points for interventions, with a number of similarities across sites.

- **Schools, including primary schools.** Young men identified schools as an important entry point. They also emphasized that interventions in schools should be tailored to the age of students and that interventions are needed in primary as well as secondary school because violence among peers is often initiated in primary schools.
- **Importance of peers.** Opportunities to promote change among peers were pointed to as a key source for promoting non-violent behavior, although some of the specifics of how to accomplish this were less detailed. Some pointed to the possibility of peer education. Others pointed to individual conversations with friends. Yet others suggested school or community campaigns. (See next section for further details).

From the perspective of youth serving organizations, one of the key implications of the PLA research is that young men see it very unmanly to change their opinions. Therefore it is important that any kind of intervention is perceived as coming from their peer group, furthermore, their immediate surrounding rather than some social institutions. The intervention should be coming from inside of what they perceive as their peer group. There is a little niche for change through intimate relationships with girls, though this may be limited by fear of women changing and controlling them.

- **More responsive public institutions and punishment for perpetrators.** Especially connected to violence against women, young men called for more effective and responsive public institutions such as jails, police and in one vision for 2012, safe houses for women.



- **Less exposure to violence in families and through the media.** Young men also noted that changes in family's use of violent behavior would be an important intervention point, as well as in the media. These interventions were suggested, though, in much more abstract terms than schools, peers or institutions young men identified to respond to violence against women.

### **Types of Actions: By Young Men and Other Organizations**

Across sites young men expressed considerable motivation to move forward the actions they identified that they as young men, and other institutions, could take to reduce violence in their communities.

*Would it be possible to organize some of these ideas? And when? (Zagreb)*

Some facilitators asked young men, once they had presented their ideas, to prioritize which ones were most realistic. They responded that they felt all were possible. For instance, one explained that he was already the Web master for his school Web site, so he could certainly develop and maintain a web-page on non-violence for his school.

**Young men's actions for themselves included: community campaigns, schools' awareness-raising campaigns, interactions and exchanges with their peers, and their development as leaders (either informally or through replicating programs such as the PLA).** Ideas for community campaigns included public debates, statements against violence by leading figures in the community, music or other big events with celebrities speaking out against violence, and related pamphleting to advertise events. In schools young men envisioned debates and contests to promote awareness-raising, in addition to formal engagement by school personnel to address violence. In several groups, young men also included activities to raise money for "victims of violence," and gave specific examples related to women who had suffered violence. Young men identified a role for fundraising with businesses to sponsor such campaigns, and to provide for violence telephone hotlines.

Young men noted that they could begin to initiate conversations like the ones they had had in the five-day PLA with their peers, and they expressed a desire for their peers to be able to attend similar workshops and to have further opportunities to participate in such workshops themselves. Several groups of young men highlighted the need to involve young men from more rural areas, or to figure out how to engage more violent young men.

Young men also said that they envision a role for themselves as leaders in promoting reduction of violence, and would like further training to this end. Some groups included brainstorming of specific leadership structures that could be developed, including representatives on a school council or the development of student-run monitoring system to address violence in the schools.

**Actions suggested for organizations and institutions highlighted the roles of youth-serving institutions, organized sports, and media,** in addition to the role already identified above for schools and the justice system. Young men noted that they would like to see an expanded role for youth service organizations and NGOs in providing educational opportunities on reducing violence. Some groups proposed instituting an organized training program for sports coaches, so they could in turn promote less violent and more cooperative attitudes among young men. Young men also emphasized the powerful role of media. They suggested that social marketing campaigns could play an important role in shifting attitudes. They also suggested that the media, including the Internet, could be a good source of educational information.





## Recommendations

### Further PLA and Research

During the two-day meeting in Croatia where YSA presented their preliminary findings from the five-day PLA exercise, YSA identified areas for further exploration. These content areas were either touched upon in the PLA but could not be explored fully due to time limitations, or required additional information to be useful in enhancing the design of interventions. Some of the areas identified include: (1) connections between sexuality and violence; sexual pleasure and communication; and one's economic situation and violence; (2) an assessment of primary and secondary curricula on sexuality/violence; and (3) lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights. The international research team also identified the need to further explore sexuality and other differences related to ethnicity, nationality and religion.

The PLA methodology could be used to collect additional data, which will further increase the capacity and comfort levels of the YSA in using this methodology. Other data collection methods may include a cohort study where a select number of young men are interviewed periodically throughout the project or a quantitative survey. The following quote from one YSA volunteer summarizes this recommendation:


*We need more PLA! We need more experience! We need more research!*

### Ongoing Guided Facilitation of Critical Reflection and Learning Related to Masculinity

Young men expressed tremendous energy and engagement with the idea of moving forward to address violence. One of the key findings of the PLA, indeed, is the degree to which young men welcomed the opportunity for critical reflection on topics that are rarely discussed in their own lives. They also explicitly requested further opportunities for the type of space and reflection provided by the PLA, in addition to the range of other activities that they proposed.

Such ongoing reflection, especially to deepen young men's ability to understand masculinity and connect it to (non) uses of violence, may be an important step in changing destructive norms of masculinity. Of note, although they were very interested and engaged, young men had difficulty in explicitly identifying influences on their own development as young men, especially related to expectations of masculinity. Similarly, in examining root causes of gender-based violence, young men did not at first explicitly connect violence with expectations of masculinity (although they could with careful facilitation). This implies the need for approaches that foster safe spaces and guided critical reflection to facilitate young men's ability to recognize these links.



A group of young men are sitting on the floor, looking at a piece of paper with handwritten text. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The text on the paper is partially legible and appears to be a list or a set of instructions. The men are dressed in casual clothing, and the setting appears to be an indoor space, possibly a community center or a classroom.

Based on the energy with which young men responded to the PLA exercise, such continued work should be welcome. Given their shifts in attitude with respect to masculinity in their five days together, chances are good that further opportunities to deepen their understanding of masculinity will yield more new insights and expand the range of “masculinity” options available to young men. Ultimately, this could allow young men to choose non-violent behaviors and position them as leaders in their communities and in the Balkans region promoting greater gender equity and less violence.

## Appendix 1: PLA Guide

**Phase 1 (March 26-April 7):** PLA Research with male youth to explore social constructs of gender and masculinity, their attitudes about gender equity, attitudes and experience using power and invoking agency (i.e., the power to make choices about one's actions), their attitudes and experience around violence, gender-based and otherwise.

**Purpose:** To identify with male youth, peer facilitators and youth service agencies potential entry points for youth-centered interventions to create tolerance for alternative expressions of masculinity, to increase gender-equitable attitudes and behaviors of young men, and to reduce tolerance among youth for gender-based violence (GBV).

**Primary Participants:** Young men, aged 13 -19 years

**Research Sites:**

Bosnia-Herzegovina: Sarajevo, Banja Luka

Croatia: Zagreb

Montenegro: Podgorica

Serbia: Belgrade

**Guiding Research Questions:**

1. What are the current social constructs, attitudes and experiences for young men, especially with regard to hegemonic masculinity?
2. What are the range of young men's attitudes and behaviors toward women and their relationship with women?
3. How do social institutions such as media, school, religion, family and peers influence social constructs of masculinity?
4. How are social constructs of masculinity related to men's violent use of power?
5. For men who don't use violence, what are the influencing factors and consequences?



| Module  | Issues/Questions  | Suggested Exercise (s)  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>DAY 1</b>  |   |   |
| <b>Introduction</b><br><br><b>30 mins</b>                                   | <b>Purpose:</b> Participants and facilitators become familiar with one another and establish common understanding on ground rules and research ethics.<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Ground rules</li> <li>• Research ethics, including referral to relevant services</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjectival names</li> <li>• Group discussion</li> <li>• Listing</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Exploring Youth Culture</b><br><br><b>60 mins</b><br><br><b>120 mins</b> | <b>Purpose:</b> To explore with male youth what it is to be a young man, and then to understand the role of social spaces in shaping male youth attitudes and behavior around masculinity.<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do male youth spend a typical weekday? A typical weekend day?</li> <li>• How does a typical week or weekend day for male youth differ from a typical day for female youth?</li> <li>• Where do male youth go to socialize predominantly with other male youth? What happens in that space? What role does that social space play in influencing local male youth culture? How do you and your friends experience being left out of male circles?</li> <li>• Where do female youth go to socialize predominantly with other female youth? What happens in that space? What role does that social space play in influencing local female youth culture?</li> <li>• Where do male youth and female youth go to socialize together? How do these spaces overlap and interact?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24-hour cycle: Male youth/Female youth</li> <li>• Mapping of local youth social space (base map)</li> <li>• Wrap-up</li> </ul> |

| Module  | Issues/Questions   | Suggested Exercise (s)  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>DAY 2</b>  |  |   |
| <b>Gender Norms</b><br><br><b>120 mins</b>                | <p><b>Purpose:</b> To understand what attitudes and behaviors are expected of men and women in their society, as perceived by the participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do men have certain physical characteristics?</li> <li>• What other characteristic do men have that are not expressed in the models? Why are they not included?</li> <li>• What is expected of typical men? What attitudes and values do typical men have... Towards family? Children? Other men? Women?</li> <li>• How are men expected to show they are powerful?</li> <li>• If you were going to do a model of a woman, would it look very different? How? Why?</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-D image of masculinity</li> </ul>      |
| <b>Socialization of Masculinity</b><br><br><b>90 mins</b> | <p><b>Purpose:</b> To explore with male youth what it is to be a young man, and then to understand the role of social institutions in shaping male youth attitudes and behavior around masculinity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who (e.g., family, peers, teachers) and what institutions (e.g., schools, religion, media) do male youth identify as influential in shaping who they are as young men?</li> <li>• Which attitudes, values and behaviors are rewarded and which are punished?</li> <li>• In their opinion, which expectations for masculinity are beneficial and which are damaging?</li> <li>• When have they been able to make their own choices about how to vary from the expected attitudes and behaviors?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion</li> <li>• Wrap-up</li> </ul> |



| Module  | Issues/Questions   | Suggested Exercise (s)  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>DAY 3</b>  |  |   |
| <b>Power and Influence</b><br><br><b>75 mins</b>      | <p><b>Purpose:</b> To gain an understanding of how power is constructed and exercised; how participants feel and react when they “have” it and when they don’t.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kinds of power do you have over other people? How do you express it?</li> <li>• What kinds of power do other people have over you? How do other people express it? What are the benefits of power for those who use it over others?</li> <li>• What are the costs of power for those who are subjected to it?</li> <li>• What can we do as men to challenge and change the way others use power over us?</li> <li>• What can we do as men to change the way we use our power over others?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power map diagram</li> <li>• Small group discussion</li> <li>• Plenary report back</li> </ul>              |
| <b>Attitudes about Violence</b><br><br><b>45 mins</b> | <p><b>Purpose:</b> To explore young men’s attitudes towards gender equity and violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For each of five questions from the Gender Equitable Men’s Scale, ask for volunteers to answer: “why do you agree” and “why do you disagree”?</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree-disagree continuum (or “voting with your feet”)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Forms of Violence</b><br><br><b>90 mins</b>        | <p><b>Purpose:</b> To identify the range of forms of violence affecting young men and young women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types/expressions/forms of violence (economic, social/political, gender-based, emotional, physical, sexual, other)</li> <li>• Where do different types of violence occur?</li> <li>• When is violence tolerated or not tolerated? Why?</li> <li>• What is the role or value of violence to young men (power, pain, pleasure)?</li> <li>• When is it acceptable to talk about certain types of violence and when is it not? Where are the silences and where are the bragging points?</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listing and categorization</li> <li>• Violence mapping (go back to base map)</li> <li>• Wrap-up</li> </ul> |

| Module  | Issues/Questions  | Suggested Exercise (s)  |
|---|---|---|
| DAY 4   |   |   |
| <b>Root Causes and Consequences of Violence</b><br><br><b>105 mins</b>                              | <p><b>Purpose:</b> To gain participant perceptions of causes and consequences of different forms of violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the root causes of violence? Are there any that are surprising to you? Which one(s)? Why?</li> <li>• Is/are there root cause(s) that seem to be more important than others? Which one(s)? Why?</li> <li>• What are similarities and differences of the impact of violence on male youth and female youth?</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Causal flow analysis</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Exploring transition from boyhood to manhood; experiences of violence</b><br><br><b>105 mins</b> | <p><b>Post-Group Work: Individual Exercises with up to Four Participants</b></p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> To explore key markers of young men's transition from boyhood to manhood; and to elicit specific experiences of gender-based violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the social events or rites that mark a young man's transition from boyhood to adolescence to manhood?</li> <li>• What are the participants' experiences as observers, victims and perpetrators of violence, i.e., violence against self, violence against other men and violence against women?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mountains and valleys</li> <li>• Semi-structured interview</li> <li>• Wrap-up</li> </ul> |

| Module   | Issues/Questions  | Suggested Exercise (s)   |
|--|---|--|
| DAY 5  |   |  |
| <b>Moving toward change</b><br><br><b>210 mins</b> | <p><b>Purpose:</b> To summarize learning and insights into gender, masculinity and gender-based violence in order to engage participants in creating a future vision for youth culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What have you learned about masculinity and violence over the past four days?</li> <li>• Which aspects of society's ideas on masculinity would you like to keep or strengthen? Why? Which aspects would you like to change? Why?</li> <li>• How would you like families, schools and other social institutions to support young men around masculinity and violence in 2012? What enabling factors will promote this change? What barriers will hinder this change?</li> <li>• What are three actions that male youth can take to contribute to this change?</li> <li>• How can YSAs support male youth in achieving and sustaining this change?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listing</li> <li>• Cartooning</li> <li>• Listing</li> <li>• Force field analysis</li> <li>• Action plan</li> <li>• Wrap-up</li> </ul> |





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