

**REPORT ON THE CONDUCTED MEASUREMENT OF THE EFFECT OF THE  
PROJECT "YOUTH AS SOCIAL CHANGEMAKERS" AND THE NEEDS OF  
YOUTH IN TUZLA AND TUZLA CANTON**

Project: „Youth as Social Changemakers”

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The position of young people in B&H society is characterized by a range of challenges and constraints, but there are also certain positive efforts aimed at improving their situation. When discussing the position of young people and advocating for its improvement, it is essential to consider key aspects that influence their lives in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- **Unemployment:** Young people face high unemployment rates in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The lack of employment opportunities and quality jobs poses a significant challenge for young individuals, limiting their opportunities for economic progress and independence.
- **Education:** The education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina faces specific challenges, such as inadequate alignment with the needs of the labor market, lack of teaching quality, and the disregard of life skills as a crucial segment of future education. This can restrict young people's opportunities to acquire relevant knowledge and skills for employment.
- **Youth emigration:** Young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina often face the challenge of emigrating abroad in search of better economic opportunities and career development prospects. Youth emigration can have a negative impact on the society and economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as it results in a loss of workforce and talent necessary for social and economic development.
- **Social participation:** Young people encounter challenges in realizing their participation in political and social life. Their voices and perspectives are often inadequately represented in decision-making processes, and the lack of opportunities for involvement limits their ability to influence societal changes.
- **Social inclusion:** Young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina belonging to marginalized groups, such as youth from rural areas, young Roma, youth with disabilities, or refugees, face additional challenges in realizing their rights, accessing resources, and are at risk of marginalization and discrimination. Enhancing their social inclusion requires additional efforts and support to identify their specific needs.

Faced with these challenges, young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina feel marginalized, without sufficient support and opportunities for their needs and voices to be heard. This leads to growing apathy and disinterest among young individuals in taking an active role and realizing their potential to positively impact societal changes.

Considering these alarming indicators, we can adequately assess the added value and effect that the “**Youth as Social Changemakers**” " project had on the project participants, as well as on the wider community in Tuzla and Tuzla Canton. This project has produced 68 activists, equipped with knowledge and skills to actively and positively influence the improvement of the position and quality of life of young people, with a specific focus on identified pressing needs.

It can be confidently stated that with certain variables across thematic areas, the project activities have achieved a significant positive impact on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the participants, ranging from 35% to 70% of participants who made progress. This percentage varies due to the fact that the participants' prior knowledge levels varied from topic to topic.

The positive impact of the project can also be seen through a detailed presentation of the achieved results in thematic areas as follows:

- **Results achieved in the field of gender equality:**

Considering the achieved results in this thematic area, we can conclude that the project had a positive influence on the participants in terms of their awareness and understanding of gender equality. In the initial questionnaire, a significant percentage of participants were able to identify gender, sex, and gender equality, but they mostly did not recognize prevailing gender stereotypes or gender-sensitive language. However, the final test showed significant

progress in this area, indicating increased sensitivity and understanding among the participants throughout the project duration.

Also, the quantitative results achieved demonstrate the participants' knowledge achievements. In the initial test, the majority of participants (82.6%) stated that they were not informed about the institutional mechanisms for gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, thanks to thematic education within the project, in the final test, as many as 88.57% of participants answered this question correctly. This testifies to a significant increase in knowledge and awareness of institutional mechanisms for achieving gender equality.

Another relevant result pertains to the legal framework for protection against gender-based discrimination. The initial questionnaire showed that only 54% of participants had sufficient knowledge about it, while in the final test, as many as 97% of participants gave the correct answer. This indicates a significant increase in awareness of laws that protect against gender-based discrimination.

Furthermore, the participants showed improvement in understanding the options available to young women and men when facing gender-based discrimination and violence. While in the initial questionnaire, 60% of participants stated that they were not informed about these options, in the final test, 85.71% of participants stated that they were familiar with these possibilities. This points to increased awareness of resources and support available to youth in cases of gender-based discrimination and violence.

Overall, the analysis results clearly demonstrate the positive impact of the project on the participants, with increased awareness, understanding, and knowledge about gender equality, institutional mechanisms, legal framework, and support in cases of gender-based discrimination. These results provide a basis for further efforts and interventions aimed at promoting gender equality and reducing gender-based discrimination.

#### - **Results achieved in the field of nonviolent communication:**

Based on quantitative and qualitative analysis, we can conclude that the project “Youth as Social Changemakers” has achieved positive results in the progress of participants in nonviolent communication, understanding emotional literacy, and recognizing needs and strategies. Here is a summary of the main results:

- **Nonviolent communication:** Through the project, the participants gained awareness of the importance of nonviolent communication. The percentage of participants who believe that avoiding judgment, criticism, and labeling in communication contributes to acceptance of opinions and understanding significantly increased. The percentage of participants who believe that another person is more likely to accept their opinion increased from 68.57% to 91.42%, and the percentage of participants who believe that avoiding judgment increases the chances of being understood more easily increased from 77.14% to 94.28%. This indicates the positive impact of the project on raising awareness of the need for supportive and nonviolent communication.
- **Understanding the difference between feelings and thoughts/impressions:** Participants mostly succeeded in recognizing the difference between feelings and cognitive assessments. There were no significant changes in this understanding during the project, indicating a sustained high level of emotional literacy.
- **Connection between needs and strategies:** Participants improved their understanding of the connection between needs and strategies. More participants recognize that needs are essential characteristics of human beings that drive their actions, while the number of those who are uninformed about this connection significantly decreased.
- **Perception of needs:** Participants changed the prioritization of some needs during the project. The priority increased for social acceptance and the need for learning, growth, and development, while the priority decreased for sensory needs and spending time with loved ones.

The obtained results suggest that the project “Youth as Social Changemakers” has achieved its goals in educating and raising awareness among youth about the importance of nonviolent communication, emotional literacy, and understanding the connection between needs and strategies. Changes in attitudes and perceptions indicate the positive impact of the project on participants, which can contribute to creating a more inclusive and harmonious social environment.

### - Results achieved in the field of mental health:

The results of the analysis of youth mental health education show significant positive outcomes in educating and informing participants about various difficulties and disorders in youth mental health, as well as the needs and ways to care for mental health. Here are the key findings:

- **Difficulties and disorders in mental health:** The percentage of correct answers increased from 88.57% to 94.12%, while the percentage of uninformed individuals decreased from 11.43% to 2.941%. These results suggest that the project improved participants' awareness of difficulties and disorders in youth mental health.
- **Mental health care and support:** The percentage of correct answers increased from 57.14% to 88.24%, while the percentage of uninformed individuals decreased from 40% to 11.76%. This indicates improved awareness and knowledge about the needs and ways to care for youth mental health.
- **Strategies for reducing anxiety:** The percentage of correct answers increased in almost all categories, with emphasis placed on the importance of taking care of physical health and talking to close individuals and professionals.
- **First aid for panic attacks:** The percentage of correct answers increased from 48.57% to 94.12%, while the percentage of uninformed individuals decreased from 48.57% to 2.941%. This indicates the success of the project in informing participants about first aid for panic attacks and grounding techniques.
- **How to help self-harming individuals:** The percentage of correct answers increased in all categories, with a greater emphasis on active listening and supporting connections with professionals.
- **Willingness to seek professional support:** 97.2% of participants agree or strongly agree that they are willing to seek professional support. These results indicate that the project successfully educated participants about youth mental health, increased awareness of the importance of mental health care, and encouraged greater readiness to seek professional support.

### - Results achieved in the field of advocacy:

Summarizing the results of the "Youth as Social Changemakers" project in the field of advocacy education, lobbying, and community mobilization, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- **Understanding of concepts:** Comparative analysis shows significant progress in participants' perception of individual concepts. At the beginning of the project, 42.86% of participants correctly answered that the concepts of advocacy, lobbying, and community mobilization do not have the same meaning, while the majority of participants (51.43%) stated that they were not informed about these concepts. However, in the final questionnaire, 88.57% of participants correctly recognized that these concepts do not have the same meaning, while only 2.86% answered incorrectly. This indicates the success of the project in raising awareness of these important concepts.
- **Preparation and implementation of street campaigns:** Project participants demonstrated a better understanding of important factors for preparing and implementing street campaigns. In the final questionnaire, all participants answered correctly to all four options, indicating increased knowledge of key elements of street campaigns.
- **Use of media in advocacy campaigns:** The project contributed to increased awareness of media use in advocacy campaigns. At the beginning of the project, only 20% of participants correctly answered a question about media use, while in the final questionnaire, that percentage increased to 87.88%.
- **Preparation of public speeches and media appearances:** Participants showed improvement in their responses regarding the preparation of public speeches or media appearances. Significant progress is visible in the item "Making cards/notes with key topics," where the percentage of correct answers increased from 71.43% to 94.12%.
- **Message creation and social change strategies:** The project contributed to increased awareness of message creation, strategies for social change, and the application of nonviolent communication in activism.

### - Improving the Quality of Life of Project Participants

In addition to enhancing knowledge and skills, the project "Youth as Social Changemakers" has positively impacted the quality of life of young project participants. Comparative analysis of responses to four key questions ("With my current self-image, I see myself as a confident person," "With my current self-image, I feel like I have control over

my life," "With the knowledge and skills I currently possess, I am capable of conducting advocacy campaigns," "With the knowledge and skills I currently possess, I am capable of influencing societal changes") allows us to draw the following conclusions:

- **Self-confidence:** In the initial questionnaire, 22.86% of respondents fully agree that they see themselves as confident individuals, while 40% mostly agree. In the final questionnaire, a higher percentage of respondents fully agree (50%) or mostly agree (44.12%) that they see themselves as confident individuals. These results indicate an increase in self-confidence among young people during the project.
- **Control over life:** In the initial questionnaire, 8.57% of respondents fully agree that they have control over their lives, while 51.43% mostly agree. In the final questionnaire, a higher percentage of respondents agree that they have control over their lives. 25.71% of respondents fully agree, while 57.14% mostly agree. These results suggest a positive change in respondents' perception of control over their own lives during the project.
- **Advocacy campaign implementation ability:** In the initial questionnaire, 11.43% of respondents fully agree that they are capable of conducting advocacy campaigns, while 31.43% mostly agree. In the final questionnaire, a higher percentage of respondents agree that they are capable of conducting advocacy campaigns. 22.86% of respondents fully agree, while 60.00% mostly agree. These results suggest that the project has contributed to strengthening the self-confidence of young people and their ability to actively engage in advocacy and campaign implementation.
- **Ability to influence changes:** After participating in the project "Youth as Social Changemakers" a larger number of respondents believe they are capable of influencing societal changes. The initial questionnaire shows that 17.14% of respondents fully agree, and 45.71% mostly agree with the statement that they are capable of influencing changes in society. In the final questionnaire, the number of respondents agreeing with the statement has increased. 25.71% of respondents fully agree, and 60.00% mostly agree. These results indicate an increase in the self-confidence and belief of young change agents in their ability to influence social changes.

The project "Youth as Social Changemakers" has contributed to enhancing the self-confidence and belief of young people in their own abilities to actively engage in social changes. Continued support for young people in further developing their skills through education, mentoring, and practical projects is crucial for further strengthening their abilities and contributing to the positive development of society.

In addition to quantitative and qualitative measurement of the progress achieved by project participants, the perception of relevant stakeholders regarding the impact of the project "Youth as Social Changemakers" was also assessed. Their perceptions are significant for evaluating the project's success and the comprehensive interventions carried out by Amica Educa.

#### - **Analysis of Stakeholders' Views on the Project's Impact**

During the evaluation of the effects of the "Youth as Social Changemakers" project, a consultant conducted 7 semi-structured interviews with representatives of relevant stakeholders to gather data essential for measuring the project's impact and assessing the needs of young people. The feedback from relevant stakeholders regarding the project's impact was substantial.

It is important to highlight that all respondents gave positive feedback on the activities carried out by Amica Educa to improve the quality of life for young people.

Although there has been a noticeable trend of shrinking space for civil society organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina in recent years, which often leads to increased rivalry between civil society organizations and further distancing between the institutional system and civil society organizations, relevant actors state that the work of Amica Educa is recognized, and that this organization is respected as an expert organization whose relevant capacities are utilized by institutions and other civil society organizations, directing their service users to Amica Educa.

As a key quality determinant of Amica Educa's work and project results, respondents see the fact that interventions and activities are designed and implemented based on identified youth needs. The multitude of problems and challenges that young people face further solidify their belief that the activities carried out by Amica Educa are

necessary to enhance the resilience of young people against numerous risks of further marginalization and discrimination.

Relevant actors have also emphasized that they consider Amica Educa as a civil society organization that has the quality of a resource center, and without whose activities the quality of their service users, as well as the entire community, would significantly decline.

In order to achieve better results in future activities, it is necessary to create them based on the expressed needs of young people. The key to further action lies in the needs expressed by the young people themselves, related to creating a supportive environment where they would have access to tailored services for the improvement and protection of mental health, services that would strengthen their resilience to gender inequality with a special focus on protection from peer violence, and continuity in building life skills that will be useful for their proactive participation in all spheres of society.

Although the project “Youth as Social Changemakers” has achieved significant results in empowering young people and promoting active social participation, the continuation of activities aimed at intervening according to expressed needs, through strengthening their capacities, improving mental health, and gender equality, is still necessary for several reasons that have crystallized in the expressed needs of project participants:

- **Young people face ongoing challenges to their mental health:** The mental health of young people is susceptible to various challenges such as stress, anxiety, depression, and other factors that can negatively impact their well-being. Continuing activities aimed at improving mental health enable the provision of support to young people in facing these challenges and strengthening their mental resources.
- **Continuing the fight for gender equality:** Although certain progress has been made in achieving gender equality, there are still inequalities and obstacles that young people encounter. Continuous activities focused on deconstructing patriarchal patterns and gender stereotypes, aiming to promote gender equality, contribute to creating equal opportunities for all young people, eliminating stereotypes, and gender-based discrimination.
- **Sustaining achieved results:** The project “Youth as Social Changemakers” has shown that it is possible to achieve positive changes, but sustaining those results requires continuous efforts. Continuing activities through the improvement and further distribution of good practices ensure that the progress made is sustainable, and that young people continue to have support and opportunities for active participation in society.
- **Systemic approach:** A systemic approach and continuous multisectoral cooperation are necessary to improve the position of young people, particularly regarding their mental health, gender equality, and social participation. This approach involves continuing activities that allow these topics and the specific needs and perceptions of young people regarding these topics to be integrated into policies, programs, and practices at various levels, in order to achieve long-term and sustainable impact.

In order to have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of young people, Amica Educa has informed through this report about the opinions of key stakeholders regarding the pressing needs of youth. Information on the needs of young people in the areas of mental health protection and gender equality was obtained through semi-structured interviews with representatives of institutions and civil society organizations in the City of Tuzla and Tuzla Canton, as follows:

- **Young people's need for mental health protection:** Young people require a safe space and a supportive environment where they can discuss their problems without fear of judgment. They recognize the importance of mental health care but are also aware of the existing societal stigmas and taboos related to this field. Continuous destigmatization and deconstruction of taboos surrounding mental health are also important needs for young people.
- **The need for sensitization and education on gender equality:** Young people need to be aware of the significance of gender equality. When planning and implementing interventions to promote gender equality, it is necessary to consider the dualism of strongly ingrained patriarchal patterns that contain gender stereotypes and the negative influence of popular culture, which vulgarizes women's emancipation by portraying it solely through aggressive sexuality.

- **The need for a safe space and social services:** Young people need a secure space and social services that will help them overcome the challenges they face. The existing support for young people in the field of mental health protection is sufficient, but active efforts are needed to promote and destigmatize it. Additionally, greater support is required for young people who belong to categories that are at a higher risk of marginalization (young people from rural areas, young people from the Roma population, young people of non-heterosexual orientations and/or transgender individuals) in terms of preserving their mental health by recognizing their needs and adjusting services accordingly.
- **The need to promote and enhance activism and volunteerism:** According to relevant stakeholders' assessments, young people are mostly passive and not proactive, but they express a need for activities that will enable them to improve their capacities and fulfill some of their needs. With this in mind, it is necessary to strengthen young people's capacities so that they can recognize their potential for positive changes.
- **Young people's need for a platform to express their needs:** Young people are rarely asked for their opinions and do not have enough space to express their needs. Additional efforts are necessary to ensure that the voice of young people is heard.
- **Needs for improving access to the labor market and economic security:** Young people lack opportunities to earn income that would meet their needs. Often, young individuals have to forego education due to unfavorable economic conditions in order to meet their basic needs.
- **Multi-sector collaboration and trend monitoring:** Collaboration among different sectors and monitoring trends are important for improving existing services for young people and creating new ones.

It is particularly important to emphasize that the results achieved indicate that the "“Youth as Social Changemakers”" project has recognized the key turning points leading to the sustainability of the achieved results. These include reaching out to young people and opening a dialogue platform between young people and professionals, allowing them to express their needs for learning, capacity-building, resilience strengthening against the risks of marginalization, as well as protection and support services, within a supportive and safe environment. Therefore, continuing activities aimed at addressing the identified needs and challenges of young people regarding the improvement of mental health and gender equality is necessary to leverage this positive trend in mobilizing young people to actively participate and advocate for a better society that will be a supportive environment for them to realize their full potential.

The expressed opinions regarding the reputation and trust that Amica Educa enjoys among its beneficiaries and relevant stakeholders also indicate that there is a significant responsibility on this organization to promote the achieved results and identified needs further and place them on the agenda of the local community, the City of Tuzla, as well as Tuzla Canton.

*Supporting youth today to live in a supportive environment that enables full self-actualization directly influences a better world of tomorrow.*



## I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### I.1. INFORMATION ON ASSOCIATION

As stated in the Project Task, the Association "Amica Educa" (hereinafter referred to as Amica Educa) was established in 1996 as the Swiss non-governmental organization "Amica Schweiz," and in 1999, it was registered as a local organization based in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Over the course of 24 years, Amica Educa has developed into a center for empowering individuals and families, providing educational and psychosocial services to the citizens of Tuzla and Bosnia and Herzegovina. By implementing activities at various levels, Amica Educa promotes mental and social health for all members of society through prevention, education, treatment, and actively works towards improving the position of women. Through non-formal education, it contributes to overcoming the shortcomings of formal education, social inclusion of marginalized groups, and social equality. The work of Amica Educa is reflected in the implementation of the Psychoeducational Program, Family/Psychological Counseling, and Gender Equality Program.

### I.2. INFORMATION ON PROJECT

Within the project „Youth as Social Changemakers“, Amica Educa (project implementer) has set the goal of increasing youth involvement in social change by focusing on destigmatizing youth mental health, promoting gender equality, and building a non-violent society. This project is funded by cfd (Feminist Peace Organization) from Switzerland.

The project started in January 2021, and the first activity of the project was the preparation of the ***Analysis on Gender Equality and Mental Health of Youth and the development of an initial/final questionnaire for project participants.***

The direct beneficiaries of the project are youth, approximately 40 of them, who were empowered and educated in the areas of youth mental health, gender equality, peacebuilding, activism, and advocacy through their participation in project activities. They also carried out certain volunteer activities in line with these topics.

The objectives of the project are:

- By improving mental health, social skills, and increasing knowledge about gender equality, youth are empowered to exercise their rights in private and social life.
- The importance of mental health and gender equality among youth is addressed in public discourse.
- Together with authorities, relevant institutions, and non-governmental organizations, youth actively participate in initiating changes and decisions that affect their needs and rights to mental health and gender equality.

According to the project implementation plan, the following activities have been conducted so far, with the following activities planned:

- 2021: Psychoeducational workshops on Youth Mental Health; Gender Equality, Nonviolent Communication; Volunteer engagement: Social media campaign on youth mental health (ongoing) - Instagram: facebook.com
- 2022: Training on the Application of Nonviolent Communication in Activism and Advocacy; Organizing street and online campaigns; Collaboration with media, media appearances, and video publications; Volunteer engagement: Street campaign on youth mental health (2022) - video; Volunteer engagement: Social media campaign on youth mental health (ongoing) - Instagram: facebook.com
- 2023: Training on Public Speaking and Business Communication; Preparation and implementation of workshops and roundtable discussions; How to Become a Decision-Maker. Volunteer engagement: Social media campaign on youth mental health (ongoing) - Instagram: facebook.com
- Planned volunteer engagements: Preparation and implementation of a roundtable discussion on youth mental health (October 2023); Preparation and implementation of 4 workshops for youth in high schools and youth associations (September - December 2023)

The project will conclude on December 31, 2023

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ANALYSIS

The aim of measuring the project's impact and assessing the needs of youth is to objectively assess the project's influence on youth, identify current needs of youth in the areas of gender equality, mental health, and activism, and propose activities that would meet those needs.

Measuring the project's impact enables the assessment of specific outcomes and changes that have occurred as a result of project implementation. Through this process, an analysis is conducted on how youth have benefited and how their attitudes, knowledge, or behavior have changed as a result of their participation in the project.

Furthermore, it is important to identify the current needs of youth in the areas of gender equality, mental health, and activism. This is achieved by actively involving youth in the process and collecting their opinions, attitudes, and suggestions. In this way, it ensures that future activities and interventions are responsive to the actual needs of youth.

Finally, based on the measurement results and identified needs, proposals for activities that will meet these needs of youth can be formulated. These activities can include various strategies and interventions that support gender equality, promote the mental health of youth, and encourage their activism in society.

Overall, measuring the impact of the project and assessing the needs of youth are crucial steps in ensuring that interventions and activities are targeted towards the real needs of youth and achieve positive changes in their lives.

### 2.2. METODOLOGIJA I ALATI ZA ANALIZU

Considering the project, its objectives, and past activities, as well as the aim of the analysis "measurement of the project's effect and the needs of youth, which involves objectively assessing the impact of the implemented project on youth, defining current needs of youth (in the areas of gender equality, mental health, and activism), and proposing activities to meet those needs," a series of activities were undertaken for the successful measurement of effects and assessment of needs.

For a successful analysis, measurement, and assessment of needs, the crucial aspect was the selection of tools/instruments that would ensure reliable data collection and enable the participation of all stakeholders in the areas of mental health protection and gender equality. Since a baseline study has already been conducted as part of the project, it provided the initial state and parameters for measuring the project's effects on service/activity beneficiaries.

- **Desk research:** A review of the legal regulations related to gender equality and mental health in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tuzla Canton, and the city of Tuzla, as well as relevant documentation related to services and service providers in these areas.
- **Interviews with individuals (stakeholders):** To gather relevant information about the state of gender equality and mental health of youth, as well as the project's impact on improving the protection of youth's mental health and adhering to gender equality standards.
- **Analysis of youth needs:** Based on the expressed opinions of youth who were actively involved in the project implementation, an analysis of their needs was conducted, and based on the identified needs, activities necessary to meet those needs were proposed.
- **Analysis of project effects:** Through comparative, quantitative, and qualitative analysis of data collected through questionnaires, the effects of the project on the direct beneficiaries of the project services will be determined.

To measure the effects, quantitative, qualitative, and comparative analysis of baseline and post-testing were applied, along with assessing the attitudes of relevant stakeholders to determine changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of youth regarding gender equality and mental health. The combination of methods included document analysis, interviews, focus groups, surveys/questionnaires, case studies, and others.

In line with the analysis needs, the consultant utilized the analysis of relevant documents, comprehensive questionnaire analysis, semi-structured interviews with representatives of institutions in Tuzla Canton, and communication with the project team. The analyses encompassed both direct and indirect data collection, data analysis, needs assessment, drawing conclusions, and making recommendations.

### 3. SUMMARY OF THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND RELEVANT POLICIES<sup>1</sup>

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, significant activities have been carried out over the past twenty years to improve the protection of mental health and gender equality which include the adoption of laws, bylaws, and strategies, as well as the implementation of various initiatives and projects by institutions and civil society organizations.

These activities are the result of the efforts of system institutions and civil society organizations that have worked towards improving the protection of mental health and gender equality. However, despite significant efforts, it is important to note that challenges in accessing rights, especially for representatives of marginalized groups, including youth, are still being identified. U Bosni i Hercegovini, tokom posljednjih dvadeset godina, provedene su značajne aktivnosti usmjerene na unapređenje zaštite mentalnog zdravlja i rodne ravnopravnosti.

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#### 3.1. PRESERVATION OF MENTAL HEALTH

In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the following laws, bylaws, and strategies are in force to regulate the field of mental health protection:

- **Law on Mental Health of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina:** This law regulates the rights and protection of persons with mental disorders in the FBiH. It prescribes procedures for assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of persons with mental disorders, as well as the establishment of mental health institutions.
- **Strategy for Mental Health of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina:** The FBiH has had and may still have strategies aimed at improving mental health in the region. This strategy defines priorities, objectives, and action plans for improving the mental health system.
- **Regulation on Minimum Conditions for the Organization and Operation of Mental Health Institutions:** This regulation sets minimum standards for the organization and operation of mental health institutions in the FBiH. It includes guidelines on facilities, personnel, equipment, therapeutic programs, and other aspects of mental health service provision.
- **Regulation on the Protection of Patients' Rights in Healthcare of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina:** Although not directly related to mental health, this regulation regulates the rights of patients in general, including the rights of persons with mental disorders. It prescribes the right to information, consent to treatment, confidentiality of data, and other aspects that are important for ensuring the dignity and rights of patients.

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<sup>1</sup> Considering that a previous analysis on gender equality and mental health of young people was conducted within the „Youth as Social Changemakers” project and an instrument for measuring the project’s impact on young beneficiaries was developed ([https://www.amicaeduca.com/pdf/Baseline%20Analysis%20Report%20on%20Gender%20Equality%20and%20Mental%20Health%20of%20Young%20people\\_public.pdf](https://www.amicaeduca.com/pdf/Baseline%20Analysis%20Report%20on%20Gender%20Equality%20and%20Mental%20Health%20of%20Young%20people_public.pdf) ), and there have been no significant changes in the relevant legal and strategic framework since that analysis, this document provides only a summary of the framework related to mental health protection and gender equality enhancement

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### 3.2. GENDER EQUALITY

The framework for promoting gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) includes a range of laws, strategies, and international commitments aimed at achieving gender equality in society. Here are some key elements of the gender equality framework in BiH:

- **Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina:** The Constitution of BiH ensures equality for all citizens regardless of gender. Based on the constitution, there is a legal basis for combating discrimination and promoting gender equality.
- **Law on Gender Equality:** This law establishes the fundamental principles of gender equality and prohibits discrimination based on gender. The law also prescribes measures to promote gender equality and achieve gender balance in society.
- **Law on Prohibition of Discrimination in Bosnia and Herzegovina:** Enacted in 2009, this law aims to protect all citizens from discrimination based on various personal characteristics, including gender. The law defines discrimination, prescribes procedures and penalties for law violations, and establishes institutions for protection against discrimination.
- **Gender Action Plan of BiH for the period 2018-2022:** Over the past 20 years, Bosnia and Herzegovina has adopted various strategic documents focused on improving gender equality, setting goals and measures for promoting gender equality at the national level.
- **International Obligations:** BiH is a signatory to numerous international conventions and agreements related to gender equality, including the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action.
- **Institutional Framework:** BiH has bodies responsible for monitoring the implementation of gender equality policies and laws, including the Gender Equality Agency and entity-level gender centers.

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*An important piece of information regarding the conceptualization and localization of gender equality issues is that despite being a regional and cantonal center, the City of Tuzla currently does not have a valid Gender Action Plan. The previous document was valid until 2016, and the initiative to adopt a new plan was launched in 2021. However, even after two years, consultations on the new action plan are still ongoing. This highlights the need for further efforts and an accelerated process to ensure the adoption of a new and comprehensive plan to enhance gender equality in the City of Tuzla. This consultation process provides an opportunity for wide participation and involvement of all relevant stakeholders in developing an action plan that adequately addresses the specific needs and challenges related to gender equality in the local context.*

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### 4. MEASURING THE EFFECT OF THE „YOUTH AS SOCIAL CHANGEMAKERS" PROJECT

The measurement of the effects of the "Youth as Social Changemakers" project includes both quantitative and qualitative analysis of pre-project and post-project questionnaires that respondents filled out before the start of the project and after the completion of project activities in June 2023. These analyses provide insights into the changes in knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of youth after participating in the project.

The quantitative analysis involves quantifying the responses to questionnaire questions and comparing the results from the pre-test and post-test. Percentages of correct, incorrect, and uninformed responses were analyzed to determine whether there was an improvement in knowledge during the project. Trends in the responses were also identified to determine specific aspects that had the most impact on the changes.

Qualitative analysis involves a deeper exploration of responses to open-ended questions in the questionnaires. These responses provide a more detailed insight into the attitudes, experiences, and perceptions of youth regarding gender-based discrimination and violence. Through the analysis of these responses, key moments in project activities that influenced changes in the attitudes and behaviors of youth were identified.

The measurement of the project "Youth as Social Changemakers" aims to determine the extent to which the project has contributed to building the capacity of youth in terms of awareness about addressing gender-based discrimination and violence. Based on the results of the analysis, an assessment of the effectiveness of the project activities was conducted, and areas that were most successful in achieving the project objectives were identified. Moreover, these results served as guidelines for further improvement and development of similar projects in the future.

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#### 4.1. ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES ON THE PARTICIPANTS

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##### GENDER EQUALITY AND GENDER STEREOTYPES:

###### - Gender and sex

The participants demonstrated a high level of understanding of the difference between sex and gender and the basic principles of gender equality in both the initial and final tests. The initial results were very good, with 71.5% correct answers. However, the final test showed a significant increase in the number of participants who fully understood that sex and gender are not two terms that have the same meaning, with an achievement of 91.5%.

###### - Gender equality

Additionally, there has been a 3% increase in the number of respondents who understand that gender equality entails providing equal conditions for men, women, and individuals with different gender identities to enjoy their human rights. These results demonstrate a higher level of awareness regarding equal opportunities for men and women to contribute to cultural, political, economic, social, and national progress. Furthermore, an increasing number of respondents understand that all members of a community should have identical opportunities to benefit from the progress of the community. According to the final test, 88.5% of the respondents answer this question correctly. These results indicate a positive trend in the understanding of gender concepts and gender equality among the respondents. It suggests that their awareness and knowledge of these issues have improved through testing and education. Such increased awareness can have a positive impact on promoting gender equality and creating a society that recognizes and supports the equality of all gender identities.

###### - Stereotypes about men

When it comes to perceptions of gender stereotypes about men based on these results, we can conclude that the majority of respondents (a total of 54.28%) agree (completely or mostly) with the statement that men in society are often described as strong, silent, active, aggressive, rational, dominant, independent, and less concerned about their physical appearance. However, a significant percentage of respondents (25.72%) express uncertainty (indecisiveness) or mostly/disagree with this description of men in society (a total of 25.72% mostly disagree and 11.43% completely disagree).

Based on the results, we can conclude that the majority of respondents in the final test (a total of 65.72%) agree (completely or mostly) with the statement that men in society are often described as strong, silent, active, aggressive, rational, dominant, independent, and less concerned about their physical appearance. However, there is a smaller percentage of respondents (22.86%) who express uncertainty (indecisiveness) or mostly/strongly disagree with this description of men in society (a total of 22.86% mostly disagree + 8.57% completely disagree).

The results suggest that there is some variation in opinions and perceptions about how men should be described in society. They also indicate similar trends to the initial test, where the majority of respondents agree that there are

traditional stereotypes about men in society, while a smaller number disagree with such descriptions. There is still some variation in opinions and perceptions about men in society, but in the final test, a higher percentage of respondents expressed agreement with the described stereotypes.

This diversity of opinions may indicate changes in social norms and the need to promote a broader and more inclusive understanding of gender roles and identities, as well as raising awareness of the existence of ingrained stereotypes about men that need to be changed.

### - **Stereotypes about women**

Based on the obtained results, we can conclude that the majority of respondents in the initial test (60% in total) agree (completely or mostly) with the statement that women in society are often described as weak, talkative, reactive, emotional, sensitive, caring, dependent, concerned about their physical appearance, and bad drivers.

However, there is a significant percentage of respondents (20%) who do not agree at all with this description of women in society, while a smaller number express indecisiveness (11.43%) or mostly/mostly disagree (8.57%).

These results indicate widespread stereotypes about women in society that are recognized among the respondents. The majority of respondents agree that traditional stereotypes about women are prevalent and ingrained, but there is also a significant percentage of those who express disagreement with such descriptions or are undecided.

In the final test, we observe that no respondents answered that they completely agree with the statement. The majority of respondents (62.86%) mostly agree with the statement that women are often described as weak, talkative, reactive, emotional, sensitive, caring, dependent, concerned about their physical appearance, and bad drivers.

A smaller number of respondents express indecision (8.57%) or mostly disagree (8.57%) with this statement. Additionally, 20% of respondents do not agree at all with this description of women in society.

Comparing the results between the pre-test and the final test indicates a shift in the attitudes of the respondents. In the final test, there are no respondents who completely agree with the description of women based on stereotypes. This may indicate an increased awareness of gender equality and the importance of avoiding stereotypical descriptions of women in society. However, there is still a certain percentage of respondents who mostly agree with these descriptions or express indecision, indicating the need for further work in promoting gender equality and breaking down stereotypes.

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*Gender stereotypes impose societal expectations on how men and women should behave, look, and what they should desire. This can lead to pressure and limitations for individuals who do not fit into those expectations. Raising awareness about stereotypes empowers individuals to embrace qualities and interests that are authentic to them and freely express their personality and identity.*

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It is also extremely important that individuals, especially youth who do not inherit these stereotypes, are aware of the presence of gender stereotypes in our society. Their awareness of this issue needs to be continuously raised, as these stereotypes must be constantly deconstructed.

Raising awareness about the existence of gender stereotypes helps individuals recognize their harmfulness and the limitations they can bring. This can provide motivation to confront these stereotypes, challenge their validity, and create change.

Youth, in particular, need to be empowered to challenge gender stereotypes in order to freely develop their personalities, talents, and interests. Encouraging them to critically reflect on gender roles, question established expectations, and fearlessly express their identities contributes to creating a society that embraces diversity and equality.

To achieve full awareness of gender equality and the factors influencing it, it is necessary to provide youth with education, dialogue, and a shift in consciousness. It is important that civil society organizations are not alone in this endeavor but have partners such as the educational system, media, institutions, and the community. This includes providing information about gender stereotypes, promoting gender equality, fostering critical thinking, and empowering individuals to resist stereotypes and build an inclusive society.

Through this process of deconstruction, youth can develop self-awareness, understanding, and empathy towards different gender identities and roles. This can create space for acceptance, support, and solidarity among all members of society and stimulate positive changes at the individual, social, and institutional levels.

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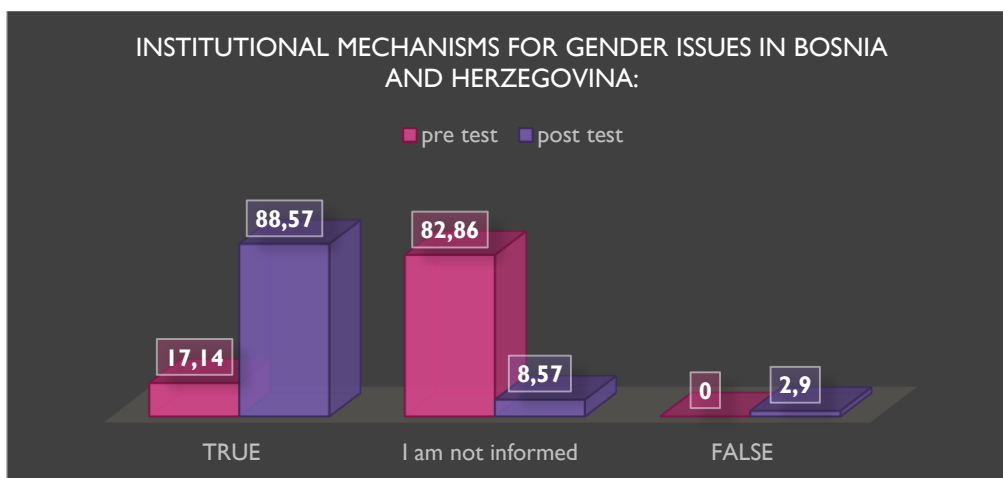
#### INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR GENDER ISSUES IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:

Through a comparative analysis of the results of the pre-test and post-test on the question "The network of institutional mechanisms for gender issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina encompasses all levels of legislative and executive authorities. The established mechanisms include the Gender Equality Agency at the national level, Gender Centers at the entity level, and Gender Equality Commissions at the local level," we observed a significant improvement in the participants' knowledge regarding the existing institutional mechanisms for gender issues. In the pre-test, 82.6% of participants stated that they were not informed about this issue, while in the post-test, 88.57% of participants correctly answered the question regarding institutional mechanisms for gender equality.

These results demonstrate that education and awareness of institutional mechanisms for gender equality have improved during the project. The increase in the number of participants who answered correctly indicates the success of the education process and awareness of the importance of gender equality and the supporting institutional mechanisms.

Raising awareness about the existence and role of these institutional mechanisms is crucial for promoting gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Gender Equality Agency at the national level, Gender Centers at the entity level, and Gender Equality Commissions at the local level play an important role in protecting and promoting women's rights, as well as combating gender stereotypes and discrimination. Informed participants are able to recognize these institutional mechanisms as key actors in achieving gender equality and promoting equal opportunities for all.

These results also highlight the need to continue educating and informing about institutional mechanisms for gender equality in order to further enhance awareness and engagement of youth in the fight for gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



**Chart 1** comparative presentation of the results of the initial and completed test on the question about institutional mechanisms for gender issues in BiH

### GENDER SENSITIVE LANGUAGE:

To determine the extent of participants' awareness of gender-sensitive language, the following question was posed: "When a woman holds a certain position, it is correct to use:

- deputy chairwomen for chairman (if a man is presiding)
- deputy chairman for chairman (if a man is presiding)
- deputy chairman for chairwoman (if a woman is presiding and being replaced by a man)
- deputy chairman for chairman (if a woman is presiding and being replaced by a man)
- deputy chairwomen for chairwoman (if both are women) and so on."

The highest percentage of participants who answered correctly is found in the option "deputy chairwomen for chairman /zamjenica predsjedavajućeg (if chaired by a man)", where 77.14% of participants correctly recognized that "deputy chairwomen /zamjenica" is used in such a situation.

The option "deputy chairman / zamjenik predsjedavajućeg (if chaired by a man)" received a significantly lower percentage of correct answers, with only 25.71% of participants, indicating less awareness of the correct usage of this form.

For the option "deputy chairman /zamjenik predsjedavajuće (if chaired by a woman, and a man replaces her)", 42.86% of participants correctly identified this form, while 2.86% of participants chose "deputy chairman /zamjenik predsjedavajućeg," which is incorrect.

The option "deputy chairwomen for chairwoman / zamjenica predsjedavajuće (if both are women), etc." received 74.29% of correct answers, indicating a good understanding of the usage of this form in situations where both individuals are female.

There appears to be a certain level of unawareness or lack of information regarding the proper use of gender-sensitive language, indicating the need for additional education and raising awareness about the importance of using language that promotes gender equality and equity in society. These results also suggest the need to enhance awareness about the proper use of pronouns according to gender identity and the role of individuals in specific positions, in order to avoid gender-biased assumptions and stereotypes.



The percentage of participants who answered correctly for the question " deputy chairwomen for chairman /zamjeniCA predsjedavajućEG (if chaired by a man)" decreased from 77.14% in the pre-test to 37.14% in the post-test.

The option " deputy chairman /zamjeniK predsjedavajućEG (if chaired by a man)" obtained a higher percentage of correct answers in the post-test, increasing from 25.71% to 68.57%.

For the option " deputy chairman /zamjeniK predsjedavajuĆE (if chaired by a woman, and a man replaces her)", the percentage of correct answers also increased from 42.86% to 74.29%.

The option " deputy chairman /zamjeniK predsjedavajućEG (if chaired by a woman, and a man replaces her)" received a very low percentage of correct answers, starting at 2.86% in the pre-test and increasing to 8.57% in the post-test.

The highest percentage of correct answers was recorded for the option " deputy chairwomen for chairwoman /zamjeniCA predsjedavajuĆE (if both are women), etc.", which increased from 74.29% to 85.71% in the post-test.

Compared to the initial test, the results of the final test indicate an improvement in awareness regarding the use of pronouns in accordance with gender identity and roles in specific positions. However, there is still room for improvement, particularly in understanding the substitution of pronouns when a woman holds a particular position. These results highlight the importance of ongoing education and awareness regarding gender equality and proper language usage in society.

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*Gender-sensitive language is an important tool in promoting gender equality and creating an inclusive society. By using such language, we contribute to breaking stereotypes, promoting equality, and respecting different genders and identities.*

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#### DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF GENDER:

##### - **A woman's right to maternity leave:**

One of the most common forms of gender-based discrimination in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the discriminatory practices that affect women of childbearing age. Employers often condition their employment by insisting that they commit to not getting pregnant for a certain period or fail to renew their employment contracts after maternity leave. Keeping this in mind, the participants of the project were presented with the following example in the initial and final questionnaires:

*"In a company, the employer requires a female employee to promise and sign in advance that she will not take maternity leave for the next 3 years, stating that he needs employees who can fully dedicate themselves to their work."*

Based on what they were asked to respond to the following questions:

##### **How do you perceive the described situation?**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) I believe that this requirement violates the rights of individuals of female sex.	100%	100%
b) The employer has the right to make such demands if they are for the benefit of the company.	0	0

In both the initial and final tests, 100% of participants believe that this requirement violates the rights of a female person, with no answers supporting the employer's request.

Comparing these two tests, we can observe that during the project, the perception of the situation did not change, and a high awareness of potential discrimination and violation of women's rights was maintained.

**How would you feel about this situation?**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) I deeply empathize with the person of female sex.	68.57 %	77.14%
b) I moderately empathize with the person of female sex.	28.57%	22.85%
c) I mostly do not empathize with the person of female sex.	5.7%	0%
d) I am indifferent to this situation.	0%	0%

In the final test, 77.14% of participants express deep empathy towards individuals of female gender, while 22.86% express moderate empathy.

Comparing it with the initial test, there is a decrease in the proportion of moderate empathy, indicating a greater emotional connection to the issue and a better understanding of the situation.

**If you were working in the same company, what would you do in this situation?**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) I would not do anything; it's not my problem.	5.71%	0%
b) I would try to help the female person but not confront the director.	62.85%	37.14%
c) I would try to help, even if it means jeopardizing my own interests	34.28%	62.85%

In the final test, 62.86% of participants would attempt to help a person of female gender, even at the cost of compromising their own interests. 37.14% would try to help but not at the expense of their own interests, while no response supports the stance of not taking any action.

Comparing it to the initial test, there is a lower percentage of those who would try to help a person of female gender even at the cost of compromising their own interests, while the percentage has increased for those who would try to help but not at the expense of their own interests. This may indicate a shift in attitudes towards actively advocating for women's rights while considering one's own interests.

**Which law regulates this issue?**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) Law on Gender Equality	42.85%	85.71%
b) Law on Prohibition of Discrimination	57.14%	85.71%
c) Labour law	62.85%	97.14%

In the final test, 85.71% of participants indicate that the Law on Gender Equality and the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination regulate this issue, while 97.14% mention the Labor Law.

Comparing it to the initial test, a similar percentage of participants mention the Law on Gender Equality and the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, while a higher percentage mention the Labor Law. This indicates that the project

activities have resulted in increased awareness and knowledge about the relevant laws that protect women's rights in the workplace.

Based on the results of the final test, we can observe continuity in attitudes towards potential discrimination and violation of women's rights. There is a high awareness of the issue, deep empathy towards individuals of female gender, and a willingness to take action in support. Additionally, there is increased awareness of the laws that regulate this area. These trends indicate a positive shift towards greater gender sensitivity and support for the protection of women's rights.

**- Discrimination based on sexual orientation:**

Discrimination based on sexual orientation is a serious problem that occurs when a person is treated unfairly or worse because of their sexual orientation. This type of discrimination can take various forms, including verbal, physical, or emotional abuse, restricting access to certain rights and privileges, hindering employment or career advancement, denial of services or access to public places, as well as stigmatization and exclusion from society.

This problem has serious consequences for the lives and well-being of individuals who experience discrimination based on their sexual orientation. It can lead to emotional and mental suffering, decreased self-confidence, feelings of isolation, loss of opportunities, and limitations in achieving their goals. Additionally, this type of discrimination violates fundamental human rights, including the right to equality, freedom of expression, privacy, and non-discrimination.

In this regard, an assessment of the participants' attitudes was conducted, expressed through their responses to questions about a specific example of discrimination based on sexual orientation, as follows:

*"In one company, an employer heard that a person employed in the company is of homosexual orientation, and the same person was supposed to be promoted to a better position within the company. In the end, the employer decided not to promote that person, stating that: 'The position requires contact with people, and it would not be desirable for a homosexual person to work with people.'"*

**How do you perceive the described situation?**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) I believe that with this decision, the rights of the employee are compromised.	91.43%	94.29%
b) I support the decision of the employer if it is for the good of the company.	8.571%	2.857%

In both tests, the majority of participants believe that the employee's right is compromised by the employer's decision. However, in the final test, this percentage increased from 91.43% to 94.29%, indicating a heightened awareness of the importance of protecting employees' rights.

**How would you feel about this situation?**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) I deeply empathize with the employee.	45.71	62.86
b) I moderately empathize with the employee.	37.14	25.71
c) I generally do not empathize with the employee.	8.571	0
d) I am indifferent to this situation.	11.43	5.714

In both tests, the majority of participants express empathy towards the employee. In the final test, there is a lower percentage of participants expressing moderate empathy, while the percentage of participants who are indifferent towards the situation has decreased from 11.43% to 5.71%.

**If you were working in the same company, what would you do in this situation?**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) I would not do anything, it's not my problem.	20	11.43
b) I would try to help the employee, but I wouldn't antagonize the director.	51.43	31.43
c) I would try to help the employee, even at the cost of compromising my own interests.	28.57	54.29

In the final test, there is a higher percentage of participants who would try to help the employee, even at the cost of compromising their own interests, and this stance was expressed by as much as 54.29% of participants. The percentage of participants who would not take any action decreased from 20% to 11.43%.

These results indicate that a larger number of participants feel responsible and willing to help the employee in the final test compared to the results of the initial test, confirming the positive impact of the projects on the participants. Comparing the obtained results, it shows a strong awareness of the discriminatory nature of the employer's decision and the violation of the rights of an employee with a homosexual orientation. However, what can be noticed is that before the start of the project, empathy towards that person was not strongly expressed, and a significant portion of participants were indifferent or would not take any action in such a situation. The results of the final test indicate an increased awareness of the importance of protecting the rights of employees in situations of discrimination. Participants expressed greater support for the employee and a greater willingness to help, even at the cost of compromising their own interests. These results suggest that the activities and interventions of the project have positively influenced attitudes and awareness of discrimination, further indicating the need for greater awareness and support for the LGBTQ+ community in the workplace to ensure equality and respect for the rights of all employees, regardless of sexual orientation.

**AWARENESS OF GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE:**

Awareness of the options available to young women and men when facing gender-based discrimination and violence has a significant impact on their ability to protect themselves, fight against injustice, and find support in such situations. Recognizing the importance of awareness and knowledge through the responses in the initial and final questionnaires, an assessment was conducted to determine the extent to which project participants are informed about the options available to young women and men when facing gender-based discrimination and violence (as victims or when confronted with pressure to engage in discriminatory and violent behavior).

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
True	40	85.71
I am not informed	54.29	11.43
False	5.71	2.85

Comparing the results between the initial and final tests on the awareness of options available to young women and men when facing gender-based discrimination and violence, the following trends can be observed:

- There is a significant increase in the number of participants who answered correctly. In the initial test, only 40% of participants answered correctly, while in the final test, that number rose to 85.71%. This indicates an increase in awareness and knowledge about the options available to young women and men in cases of gender-based discrimination and violence, which is a result of the project activities.

- At the same time, there is a significant decrease in the number of participants who were not informed about these options. In the initial test, 54.29% of participants answered that they were not informed, while in the final test, that number decreased to 11.43%. This indicates an increased awareness and information among the participants on this topic.
- There is also a significant decrease in the number of participants who answered incorrectly. In the initial test, 5.71% of participants answered incorrectly, while in the final test, that number decreased to 2.86%. This shows a reduction in misinformation or insufficient knowledge about these options.

The results between the initial and final tests indicate a positive trend of increased awareness and knowledge about the options available to young women and men when facing gender-based discrimination and violence, which has resulted from the „Youth as Social Changemakers" project. The increase in the number of correct answers, decrease in the number of uninformed respondents, and decrease in the number of incorrect answers indicate the success of educational efforts and raising awareness on this topic. However, there is still room for further information and education to achieve complete awareness and understanding of the rights and options for protecting young women and men in this context.

These results demonstrate that educating and raising awareness about the options and rights of young women and men regarding gender-based discrimination and violence has had a positive impact on the respondents' knowledge. It is important to continue educational efforts to raise awareness about the importance of gender equality, recognizing discrimination and violence, and providing support to victims. Awareness of options and rights can help young women and men combat discrimination and violence and find support and protection in such situations.

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#### NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION:

Nonviolent communication plays a crucial role in advocating for gender equality and promoting and achieving equal rights, opportunities, and possibilities for all, regardless of gender. Nonviolent communication involves empowering individuals to express their views, opinions, and ideas about gender equality. Through supportive communication, people are encouraged to actively engage in promoting equality and recognize their role in bringing about positive changes.

By analyzing the responses to questions in the initial and final questionnaires regarding knowledge and attitudes of youth about nonviolent communication, we gain insight into the effects and changes that have occurred during the project.

- **- Avoiding judgments, labels, criticisms, interpretations, analysis, etc. in communication contributes to (multiple answers possible):**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) We get the opportunity to speak more.	37.14%	34.28%
b) The other person gets the impression of being attacked.	8.57%	0
c) The other person is more likely to accept our opinion.	68.57%	91.42%
d) We increase the chances of the other person understanding us better.	77.14%	94.28%

Based on these results from the initial questionnaire, we can conclude that the majority of respondents believe that avoiding judgments, labels, criticisms, interpretations, and similar approaches in communication contributes to making it easier for the other person to accept our opinions (68.57%) and increases the chances of being understood by the other person (77.14%). Additionally, a number of respondents believe that such an approach allows them to

have more time to express their views (37.14%), while a smaller percentage of respondents are aware that this approach can give the impression that the other person feels attacked (8.57%).

Comparing the results of the pre and post test indicates the following trends:

- There is a slight decrease in responses indicating that avoiding judgment allows us to speak more. The percentage of participants who believe they have a greater opportunity to express their opinion decreased from 37.14% to 34.29%.
- A significant trend is observed in responses related to giving the impression of attacking the other person. In the final test, no participant chose this response, indicating improvement in understanding and approaching communication.
- There is an increase in responses indicating that the other person is more likely to accept our opinion. The percentage of participants who believe in this statement increased from 68.57% to 91.43%, indicating a positive impact of avoiding judgment in communication.

Similarly, the percentage of participants who believe that avoiding judgment increases the chances of being understood by the other person also increased from 77.14% to 94.29%.

These results suggest that the „Youth as Social Changemakers" project has had a positive impact on the awareness and understanding of the participants regarding the importance of avoiding judgments, labels, criticisms, interpretations, and similar approaches in communication. The trends indicate an improvement in accepting diverse opinions and understanding others, which can contribute to creating a more inclusive and harmonious social environment.

- **In the sentences listed, please evaluate whether the underlined words are actually words that describe real feelings or words that describe our impressions, thoughts. In relation to your attitude, circle the answer that you think is correct:**

Analyzing the results and trends between the initial and final test regarding the understanding of the difference between feelings and thoughts/impressions, the following can be observed:

*"I feel unfairly treated."*

- a) Feeling: Initial test: 5.71%, Final test: 5.71%
- b) Thought/Impression about the situation: Initial test: 94.29%, Final test: 94.29%

In both tests, the majority of participants recognize that the statement describes a thought, impression, or perception about the situation rather than an actual feeling.

*"I feel safe."*

- a) Feeling: Initial test: 94.29%, Final test: 94.29%
- b) Thought/Impression about the situation: Initial test: 5.71%, Final test: 5.71%

In both tests, the majority of participants recognize that the statement describes an actual feeling of safety.

*"I feel abandoned."*

- a) Feeling: Initial test: 11.43%, Final test: 11.43%

b) Thought/Impression about the situation: Initial test: 88.57%, Final test: 88.57%

In both tests, the majority of participants recognize that the statement describes an actual feeling of being abandoned.

*"I feel uncomfortable."*

a) Feeling: Initial test: 94.29%, Final test: 94.29%

b) Thought/Impression about the situation: Initial test: 5.71%, Final test: 5.71%

In both tests, the majority of participants recognize that the statement describes an actual feeling of discomfort.

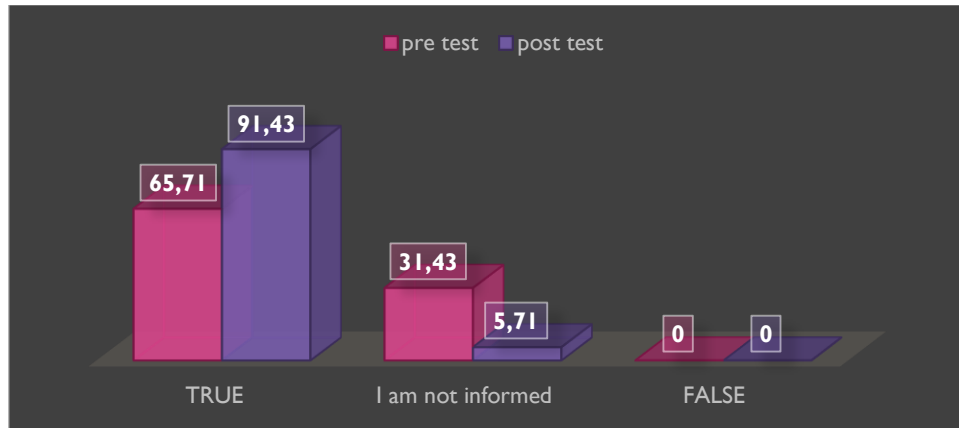
Overall, there haven't been significant changes in the understanding of the difference between feelings and thoughts/impressions between the initial and final test. Participants continue to mostly succeed in recognizing genuine feelings versus cognitive assessments. This indicates a sustained level of emotional literacy understanding throughout the „Youth as Social Changemakers" project.

**- Needs are essential traits/qualities that all human beings possess and they are what drives all our actions. Strategies are specifically related to different people, circumstances and situations.**

Based on a comparative analysis of responses from the initial and final questionnaires regarding the statement "Needs are essential qualities that all human beings possess, and they are what drives all our actions. Strategies are specifically related to different people, circumstances, and situations," the following trends can be observed:

- True: There is a significant increase in the number of respondents who consider the statement to be true. In the initial questionnaire, 65.71% of participants answered this question correctly, while in the final questionnaire, that percentage increased to 91.43%. This indicates that the majority of participants gained a better understanding of the relationship between needs and strategies throughout the project.
- Not informed: There is a decrease in the number of responses expressing lack of information about the connection between needs and strategies. In the initial questionnaire, 31.43% of participants answered that they were not informed, while in the final questionnaire, that percentage decreased to 5.71%. This suggests that the project contributed to increased awareness and knowledge among the participants.
- False: None of the participants in the final questionnaire provided an incorrect answer to this question. This suggests that the project was successful in improving the understanding of the relationship between needs and strategies among the participants.

Overall, the results of the comparative analysis demonstrate a positive trend in improving knowledge and understanding of the relationship between needs and strategies throughout the project. A higher number of participants answered the question correctly, while the number of those who stated they were not informed decreased. These results indicate the success of the project in achieving its educational and informational goal of educating youth about the connection between needs and strategies.



**Chart 2 Comparative view of the results of answers to question no. 19**

**- Needs are (multiple possible answers):**

Based on a comparative analysis of responses from the initial and final questionnaires regarding their perception of the listed options as needs, the following trends can be observed:

a) Eating something sweet: There is a decrease in the percentage of participants who highlighted this need, from 60% in the initial questionnaire to 14.29% in the final questionnaire. This indicates a potential decrease in prioritizing the sensory aspect of this need throughout the project.

b) Being accepted: We observe a significant increase in the percentage of participants who consider this need important, from 77.14% in the initial questionnaire to a high 97.14% in the final questionnaire. This suggests that awareness of the importance of social acceptance has increased during the project.

c) Spending the day with a loved one: The percentage of participants who emphasized this need has decreased from 62.86% to 25.71%. This may indicate a potential decrease in the priority of spending time with loved ones compared to other needs.

d) Learning, growing, and developing: This need has a high percentage in both questionnaires, but we note a slight increase in the percentage of participants who recognized it as important, from 85.71% in the initial questionnaire to 88.57% in the final questionnaire. This indicates the continued importance of learning, growth, and personal development throughout the project.

Overall, the results of the comparative analysis show shifts in the perception of youth's needs. While the importance of satisfying the sensory need (eating something sweet) has decreased, the importance of social acceptance and continuous learning, growth, and development has increased. These trends may indicate a positive impact of the project on the awareness and priorities of youth regarding their needs.

**- A plea in nonviolent communication is a clear and specific request expressed in a positive form:**

Based on a comparative analysis of responses from the initial and final questionnaires regarding the concept of a request in nonviolent communication, the following trends can be observed:



- In the initial questionnaire, 71.43% of participants correctly recognized that a request in nonviolent communication is a clear and specific demand expressed in a positive form, while 28.57% of participants were not informed about this concept.
- In the final questionnaire, 97.14% of participants answered correctly that a request in nonviolent communication is a clear and specific demand expressed in a positive form, while 2.86% of participants were not informed about this concept.

Overall, a significant increase in the correct understanding of a request in nonviolent communication is observed among the participants throughout the duration of the project. The initial results showed that about one-third of the participants were not informed about this concept, while the final results showed that the majority of participants correctly recognized this type of request. This indicates the success of the project activities in increasing awareness and understanding of nonviolent communication, particularly in terms of clear expression of requests in a positive form.

- **The steps in expressing anger are: 1. Stop, breathe, 2. Identify the thoughts you judge, 3. Connect with your own needs and 4. Express your feelings and unmet needs**

Based on a comparative analysis of responses from the initial and final questionnaires regarding the steps in expressing anger, the following trends can be observed:

- In the initial questionnaire, 62.86% of participants correctly recognized the steps in expressing anger, which include: pausing and breathing, identifying judgmental thoughts, connecting with one's own needs, and expressing feelings and unmet needs. However, 37.14% of participants were not informed about these steps.
- In the final questionnaire, 88.57% of participants answered correctly regarding the steps in expressing anger, while 8.57% of participants were not informed about these steps.

We observe an increase in the correct understanding of the steps in expressing anger among the participants throughout the duration of the project. The initial results showed that about one-third of the participants were not informed about these steps, while the final results showed that the majority of participants correctly recognized these steps. This indicates the success of the project activities in raising awareness and understanding of constructive anger expression, which can contribute to improved communication and reduced violence.

- **Empathy is when I listen to another person who has a problem, advise him and compare his/her feelings with my feelings when I found myself in a similar situation:**

Based on a comparative analysis of responses from the initial and final questionnaires regarding empathy, the following trends can be observed:

- In the initial questionnaire, 41.18% of participants correctly recognized that empathy involves listening to another person who has a problem, providing advice, and connecting feelings with their own experiences in a similar situation. 17.65% of participants were not informed about empathy, and 41.18% of participants answered the question about empathy incorrectly.
- In the final questionnaire, only 14.71% of participants answered the question about empathy correctly, 5.88% of participants were not informed about empathy. A large majority, 79.41% of participants, answered the question about empathy incorrectly.

Overall, there is a decrease in the correct understanding of empathy among participants throughout the duration of the project. The initial results showed that less than half of the participants correctly recognized empathy, while the final results showed that only a minority of participants accurately understood this concept. This indicates the need for additional education and raising awareness about the importance of empathy in communication and relationships

with others. The project can continue to work on educating youth about empathy to enhance their ability to understand and support others.

**- In which of these sentences is nonviolent communication used:**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) I will not use my free time to help you.	5.71%	8.82%
b) I don't have time for you and your tasks, I already have too many obligations of my own.	0	0
c) I am burdened and tired from the responsibilities I have, and it's important for me to have enough time for rest. That's why this time I will focus more on myself.	94.29%	91.18%

The majority of respondents correctly identified the sentence that exemplifies nonviolent communication. There is a slight decrease in the percentage of correct answers from 94.29% to 91.18%.

Despite these good results, there is still room for further education and raising awareness about nonviolent communication to help youth become more familiar with its concept and application in everyday situations. The project can continue to work on educating youth about nonviolent communication to improve their ability to recognize and apply it.

**EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH PROTECTION OF YOUTH:**

**- The most common mental health difficulties or disorders in youth include stress reactions, anxiety, depression, panic attacks, eating disorders, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, and risky behaviors (such as substance use - alcohol and drugs, risky sexual behavior, and violent behavior). I am familiar with the meaning of each of these terms.**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
True	88.57	94.12
I am not informed	11.43	2.94
False	0	2.94

The comparative analysis of responses to the question "The most common difficulties (or disorders) in the mental health of youth are: stress reactions, anxiety, depression, panic attacks, eating disorders, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, and risky behaviors (such as substance use - alcohol and drugs, risky sexual behavior, and violent behavior). I am familiar with the meaning of each of these terms." indicates that in the final questionnaire, the percentage of correct answers increased from 88.57% to 94.12%, indicating an improvement in participants' awareness of the difficulties and disorders in the mental health of youth. Additionally, the percentage of participants who were not informed about these terms decreased from 11.43% to 2.94%. These results suggest that education and awareness about the mental health of youth have progressed during the project, and participants are more familiar with the mentioned difficulties and disorders.

**- I am informed about the need and methods of care for mental health, who I can turn to and what types of services exist for the protection of the mental health of youth in my community.**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
True	57.14	88.24
I am not informed	40	11.76
False	2.857	0

There has been significant progress in the participants' awareness of mental health needs and ways to care for mental health, as well as awareness of available mental health services and resources. The percentage of correct answers has increased from 57.14% to 88.24%, while the percentage of participants who were uninformed has decreased from 40% to 11.76%. Additionally, there were no incorrect answers in the final questionnaire.

These results indicate that the participants have gained greater awareness and knowledge about the importance of mental health care and available support resources as a result of educational and other project activities that took place between the initial and final questionnaires.

**- What affects the reduction of anxiety (multiple answers possible)?**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) Taking care of physical health: regular sleep, regular and healthy diet, physical activity	94.29	97.06
b) Not talking about it until the symptoms of anxiety have passed	2.857	5.882
c) Talk about it with close people and experts	91.43	94.12
d) Notice patterns in thinking	71.43	88.24
e) Avoid situations that make us anxious	31.43	8.824

The observed trends show significant improvement in the responses to the question regarding anxiety reduction between the initial and final questionnaires. The percentage of correct answers has increased in almost all categories, while the percentage of incorrect answers has decreased. Additionally, there is a noticeable increase in the percentage of responses emphasizing the importance of taking care of physical health and engaging in conversations with loved ones and professionals as ways to reduce anxiety.

These results indicate that education and awareness about anxiety reduction strategies have had a positive impact on the participants throughout the project. Improved knowledge about these strategies can have a significant influence on their mental health and ability to cope with anxiety.

**- The first aid in a panic attack is the so-called "grounding".**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
True	48.57	94.12
I am not informed	48.57	2.941
False	2.857	2.941

From these results, we can conclude that the project has contributed to an increase in participants' awareness of first aid for panic attacks, particularly the concept of "grounding."

The percentage of correct answers has significantly increased from 48.57% to 94.12%, while the percentage of those uninformed about this topic has significantly decreased from 48.57% to 2.94%. These results indicate that the participants were successfully educated about first aid for panic attacks and raised awareness about the importance of "grounding" as a technique for coping with panic attacks.

The project has undoubtedly contributed to improving knowledge and awareness among the participants about first aid for panic attacks, which can have a positive impact on their mental health. Education on these topics can help youth recognize symptoms and respond appropriately in panic attack situations, providing them with a sense of control and safety. Additionally, the project has encouraged youth to educate themselves on these topics and increased awareness about the importance of mental health, which can contribute to the creation of a supportive and informed community.

- **How can I, as a young person, help another young person who self-harms? (Possible multiple answers)**

A comparative analysis of the responses to the question "How can I, as a young person, help another young person who self-harms (multiple answers possible)?" between the initial and final questionnaires, along with the conclusions regarding the project's contribution, yields the following results:

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) Listen to them with understanding.	91.43	100
b) Provide advice and guidance on how to stop self-harming.	37.14	26.47
c) Encourage them and provide information on how to connect with professionals.	82.86	91.18
d) Engage and entertain them to divert their thoughts from self-harming and their feelings.	17.14	8.824

Based on these results, we can conclude that the project has significantly contributed to improving the participants' knowledge of how to help another young person who self-harms. In the final questionnaire, a higher percentage of participants provided correct answers to all the questions, indicating that they have been successfully educated within the project on ways to support individuals struggling with self-harm.

It is particularly noteworthy that the percentage of participants who believe that providing advice and instructions on how to stop self-harming has decreased in the final questionnaire. This suggests that the project has successfully highlighted the importance of listening with understanding and providing support in terms of connecting with professionals. These results indicate that the project has empowered youth to support individuals who self-harm in a sensitive and informative manner.

- **If I face any of the difficulties (or disorders) in the mental health of youth, I am ready to seek professional support and help.**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) I completely agree	71.43	72.22
b) I mostly agree	8.57	25
c) Undecided	20	2.78
d) I mostly disagree	0	0
e) I do not agree at all	0	0

Based on these results, we can conclude that the project has contributed to increasing awareness and readiness among youth to seek professional support and help when facing difficulties or mental health disorders. In both questionnaires, the majority of participants agree or strongly agree that they are willing to seek professional support. These results suggest that the project has successfully informed youth about the importance and benefits of seeking professional help for mental health.

The following results were observed:

- Strongly agree: Increase of 0.79 percentage points (72.22% - 71.43%)
- Mostly agree: Increase of 16.43 percentage points (25% - 8.57%)
- Undecided: Decrease of 17.22 percentage points (20% - 2.8%)

It is important to note that the percentage of undecided participants decreased in the final questionnaire, indicating that the project activities successfully raised awareness and provided information about the need for professional support. The absence of participants who strongly disagree suggests that the project was successful in emphasizing the importance of seeking professional help for mental health difficulties among youth.

- **Family/society/community/media support and encourage young women and men to seek support and help if they face certain mental health problems.**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
a) I completely agree	8.571	2.857
b) I mostly agree	17.14	20
c) Undecided	34.29	11.43
d) I mostly disagree	28.57	60
e) I do not agree at all	11.43	5.714

After conducting a comparative analysis, the following trends can be observed:

- Strongly agree: Decrease of 5.71 percentage points.
- Mostly agree: Increase of 2.86 percentage points.
- Undecided: Decrease of 22.86 percentage points.
- Mostly disagree: Increase of 31.43 percentage points.
- Strongly disagree: Decrease of 5.71 percentage points.

Based on this data, it can be concluded that there is a shift in the attitudes of the participants between the initial and final questionnaires. The attitudes of "Strongly agree" and "Undecided" have decreased, while the attitudes of "Mostly agree" and "Mostly disagree" have increased. This indicates a potential shift in awareness and support that young women and men receive from family, society, community, and the media when facing mental health issues. However, there is still a significant number of participants who disagree with this statement, highlighting the need for further work in raising awareness and support in society.

The expressed attitudes of the participants in the previous question may indicate a lack of support for young women and men in seeking support and help when facing certain mental health issues. Attitudes such as "Mostly disagree" and "Strongly disagree" suggest skepticism or a lack of faith in the support they should receive from family, society, community, and the media. This may signal a lack of awareness, information, or understanding about the importance of seeking help and support in such situations.

Additionally, the high percentage of participants expressing an "Undecided" attitude may indicate a lack of clear opinion or insufficient information about the support they can receive. This may highlight the need for providing additional information and education about the importance of seeking help for mental health, as well as available resources and support services.

In addition to the above, the obtained results suggest a need for strengthening support and raising awareness about the importance of seeking help for mental health among young women and men. Additional efforts should be made to ensure the availability of information, resources, and support that will facilitate youth in seeking and receiving the necessary help in such situations.

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*In Bosnia and Herzegovina, stigma and taboo related to mental health still pose barriers to proper access and quality care for individuals facing mental health challenges. Although it can be observed that popular culture is increasingly paying attention to mental health issues, there is a divided opinion about the actual impact of this trend on young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

*It is important to note that the majority of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina still live in patriarchal families. These families may be influenced by traditional values and norms that create additional barriers to openly addressing mental health challenges. Stigma and taboo associated with mental health are often perpetuated within such families, which can make it difficult for young people to seek help and support.*

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- **The impact of alcohol abuse (and other psychoactive substances) on mental health is related to changes in: mood, energy level, sleep patterns, concentration and attention, memory, etc.**

	PRE TEST	POST TEST
True	77.14	88.57
I am not informed	14.29	11.43
False	8.57	0

In the responses to the question "The impact of alcohol (and other psychoactive substances) abuse on mental health is related to changes in: mood, energy level, sleep patterns, concentration and attention, memory, etc.," we can observe the following trends:

- In the initial questionnaire: 77.14% of respondents correctly recognized that alcohol and other psychoactive substance abuse can affect changes in mood, energy level, sleep patterns, concentration, attention, memory, and other factors; 14.29% of respondents were not informed about the impact of alcohol abuse on mental health; 8.57% of respondents provided incorrect answers to the question.
- In the final questionnaire: 88.57% of respondents correctly recognized the impact of alcohol abuse on changes in mental health; 11.43% of respondents were not informed about the impact of alcohol abuse on mental health; 0% of respondents provided incorrect answers to the question.

Analyzing these results, we can observe that in the final questionnaire, there is a higher percentage of respondents who correctly recognized the impact of alcohol abuse on mental health compared to the initial questionnaire. Additionally, the percentage of respondents who were uninformed about this impact has decreased.

This may indicate that the project „Youth as Social Changemakers" has contributed to increased awareness and knowledge about the impact of alcohol abuse on mental health among the respondents. It can also be concluded that the educational activities and information provided during the project have helped the respondents gain a better understanding of this topic.

However, there is still a smaller percentage of respondents who are uninformed about the impact of alcohol abuse on mental health. This highlights the need to continue informing and educating about this topic to further increase awareness among youth.

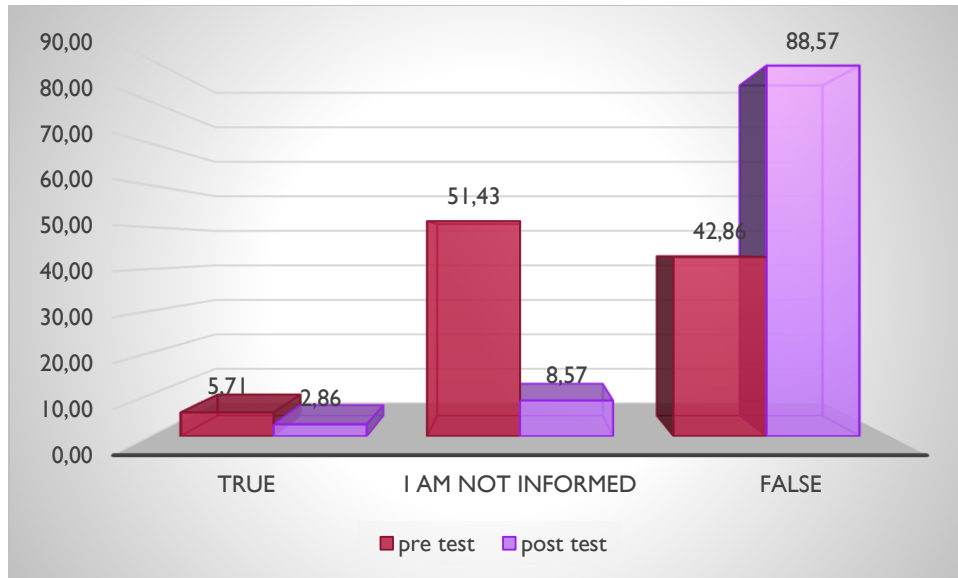
Overall, the results indicate that the project has had a positive impact on the awareness of the impact of alcohol abuse on mental health among the respondents, but there is still room for additional efforts to raise awareness on this topic.

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#### PUBLIC ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM:

- **Public advocacy, lobbying and community mobilization are terms that have the same meaning.**

Comparative analysis of the responses to the question "Public advocacy, lobbying, and community mobilization are terms that have the same meaning" indicates a significant shift in the perception of these concepts among the respondents, as depicted in Chart 3.



**Chart 3 The attitudes of the respondents towards statement that public advocacy, lobbying, and community mobilization being terms that have the same meaning.**

In the initial questionnaire, 42.86% of the respondents answered correctly that these terms do not have the same meaning, while the majority of respondents (51.43%) stated that they were not informed about these terms, and 5.17% of respondents incorrectly stated that these terms have the same meaning.

However, in the final questionnaire, only 2.86% of the respondents incorrectly answered that these terms have the same meaning. Additionally, 8.57% of respondents stated that they were not informed about these terms, while the majority of respondents (88.57%) accurately recognized that these terms do not have the same meaning.

These results indicate that the project „Youth as Social Changemakers“ has contributed to increased knowledge and understanding of the concepts of public advocacy, lobbying, and community mobilization among the respondents. There is clear progress in understanding these concepts, indicating the success of the project in raising awareness about these important concepts.

**- For the preparation and implementation of a street campaign, it is important to**

In the comparative analysis of responses to the question "For the preparation and implementation of a street campaign, it is important to," we can conclude that the respondents in the final questionnaire provided a higher percentage of correct answers compared to the initial questionnaire.

In the initial questionnaire, the highest percentage of correct answers was for the option "Design informative and promotional materials in line with the defined advocacy message" (94.29%), while the other options also had high percentages of correct answers: "Choose the optimal location and time" (82.86%), "Secure the necessary permits" (91.43%), and "Provide refreshments for participants" (37.14%).

In the final questionnaire, all respondents answered correctly to all four options: "Design informative and promotional materials in line with the defined advocacy message," "Choose the optimal location and time," "Secure the necessary permits," and "Provide refreshments for participants." This indicates that the project has successfully contributed to increasing knowledge and understanding of important factors for the preparation and implementation of a street campaign among the respondents.

These results demonstrate that the project „Youth as Social Changemakers" has successfully informed the respondents about the key elements of a street campaign and encouraged their understanding. Moreover, the increase in the percentage of correct answers in the final questionnaire indicates progress in knowledge and awareness of the importance of these factors for the successful implementation of a campaign.

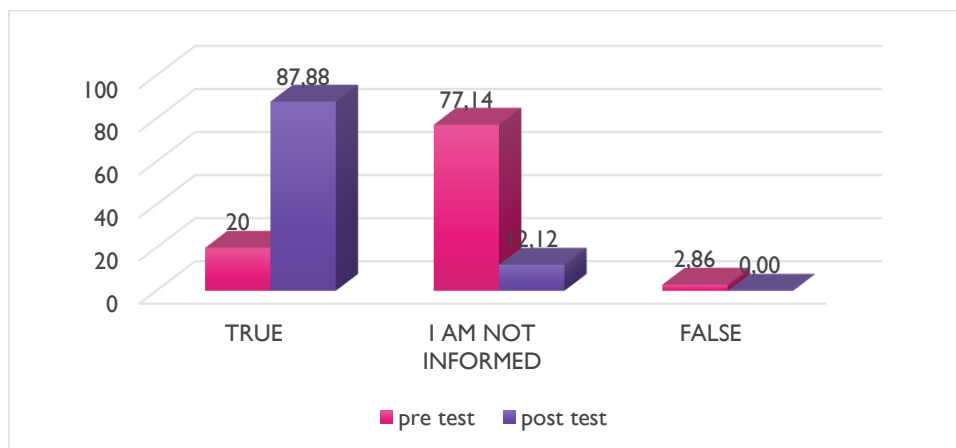
**- I am informed about how to use the media in public advocacy campaigns.**

In the comparative analysis of responses to the question "I am informed about how to use media in advocacy campaigns," we can observe the following:

- In the initial questionnaire, only 20% of respondents answered the question correctly, while 77.14% of respondents stated that they were not informed, and 2.86% gave an incorrect answer.
- In the final questionnaire, the percentage of correct answers significantly increased to 87.88%, indicating that the “Youth as Social Changemakers“ project successfully informed the respondents about how to use media in advocacy campaigns. Only 12.12% of respondents stated that they were not informed, and no respondent gave an incorrect answer.

These results indicate that the project has contributed to increasing the awareness and knowledge of the respondents regarding the use of media in advocacy campaigns. The increase in the percentage of correct answers between the initial and final questionnaires suggests that the project has successfully educated and supported youth in understanding and applying media strategies in their campaigns.

The graphical representation of the results presented in Graph 4 clearly indicates positive trends and significant positive outcomes.



**Chart 4 to what extent the participants are informed about how to use the media in public advocacy**

**- In order to give a public speech (or an appearance on the media) it is necessary**

From the comparative analysis of responses to the question "In order to give a public speech (or an appearance on the media) it is necessary," we can observe the following:

- In the initial questionnaire, the highest percentage of responses was for the item "Having knowledge about the topic I am speaking about" with 97.14%. The other percentages were: 71.43% for "Making cards/notes with key topics," 57.14% for "Taking pauses during the speech," 28.57% for "Speaking as loud as possible," and only 2.86% for "Memorizing the entire speech."
- In the final questionnaire, the highest percentage of responses was for the item "Having knowledge about the topic I am speaking about" with 100%. The other percentages were: 94.12% for "Making cards/notes with key topics," 79.41% for "Taking pauses during the speech," 14.71% for "Speaking as loud as possible," and 14.71% for "Memorizing the entire speech."



From this analysis, we can conclude that the project has contributed to improving the responses regarding the preparation and delivery of a public speech or media appearance. Significant progress is evident in the item "Making cards/notes with key topics," where the percentage of correct answers increased from 71.43% to 94.12%. There is also an increase in the item "Taking pauses during the speech," where the percentage of correct answers increased from 57.14% to 79.41%.

These results indicate the success of the project, „Youth as Social Changemakers" in educating participants about important aspects of public speaking and media appearances. The youth have become aware of the importance of preparation and the use of cards/notes, as well as the need for pauses during the speech. Additionally, a large number of respondents emphasized the importance of having knowledge about the topic they are speaking about, highlighting their understanding of responsibility and engagement in promoting relevant information.

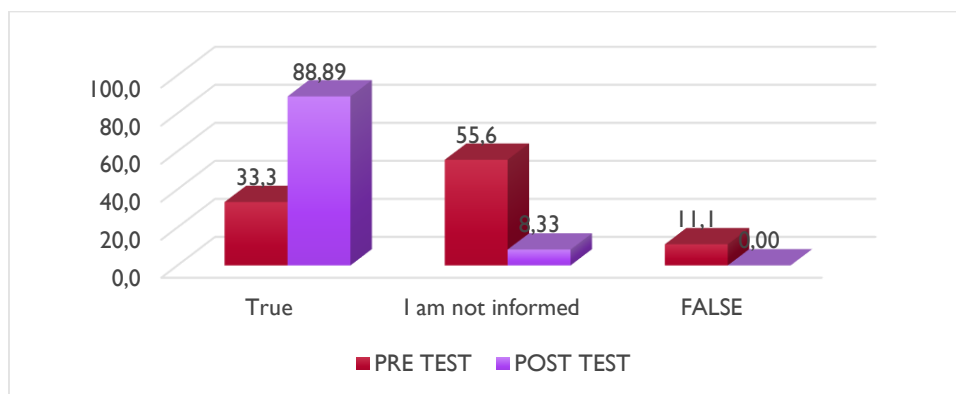
The results underline the project's success in raising awareness and providing skills to youth for successful public speaking and media expression.

- **I am informed about how to create a message and strategy for social change and apply non-violent communication in activism**

Based on the comparative analysis of responses to the question "I am informed about how to use media in advocacy campaigns," we can observe the following:

- In the initial questionnaire, only 20% of respondents answered this question correctly, while the majority, specifically 77.14%, indicated that they were not informed about how to use media in advocacy campaigns. Only 2.86% of respondents provided an incorrect answer to this question.
- In the final questionnaire, a higher percentage of respondents, specifically 88.89%, answered this question correctly. Only 8.33% of respondents indicated that they were not informed about it, and no participant provided an incorrect answer.

These results indicate that the project „Youth as Social Changemakers" has had a positive impact on the knowledge and awareness of youth regarding how to use media in advocacy campaigns. The increase in the percentage of correct answers from 20% to 88.89% indicates that participants have gained a better understanding and knowledge of using media in advocacy. They have acquired knowledge on how to leverage media for spreading their messages, capturing public attention, and making an impact. This will enable them to communicate their views and goals more effectively within advocacy campaigns.



**Chart 5 presentation of the results of the project on improving the capacity of participants to create messages and strategies for social change, and the application of nonviolent communication in activism**

- **The most important steps in the preparation of the panel discussion (as part of the advocacy campaign) are: defining the topics of introductory presentations, selecting expert presenters, correspondence with relevant institutions and organizations, informing the public about the event, creating materials, securing and preparing space and logistics.**

To assess the participants' prior knowledge in organizing panel discussions as part of the project, they were asked whether defining the topics for introductory presentations, selecting expert speakers, corresponding with relevant institutions and organizations, informing the public about the event, creating materials, securing and preparing the venue and logistics were the most important steps in preparing panel discussions. The following results were obtained:

- In the initial questionnaire, 57.14% of respondents answered this question correctly, while 42.86% of respondents indicated that they were not informed about these steps.
- In the final questionnaire, a higher percentage of respondents, specifically 88.57%, answered this question correctly. Only 11.43% of respondents stated that they were not informed about these steps.

These results indicate that the project „Youth as Social Changemakers" has successfully contributed to increasing the participants' awareness of the key steps in preparing panel discussions as part of advocacy campaigns. The increase in the percentage of correct answers from 57.14% to 88.57% suggests that the youth have gained a better understanding and knowledge of the process of organizing panel discussions and their significance in advocating for specific topics.

The analysis clearly demonstrates the project's success in providing knowledge and skills to youth in organizing panel discussions as a means of advocacy. The youth have acquired an understanding and ability to plan and implement these steps, which will enable them to successfully carry out panel discussions within advocacy campaigns.

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#### CONFIDENCE AND SKILLS FOR CHANGE:

##### - **With the current image of myself, I see myself as a self-confident person**

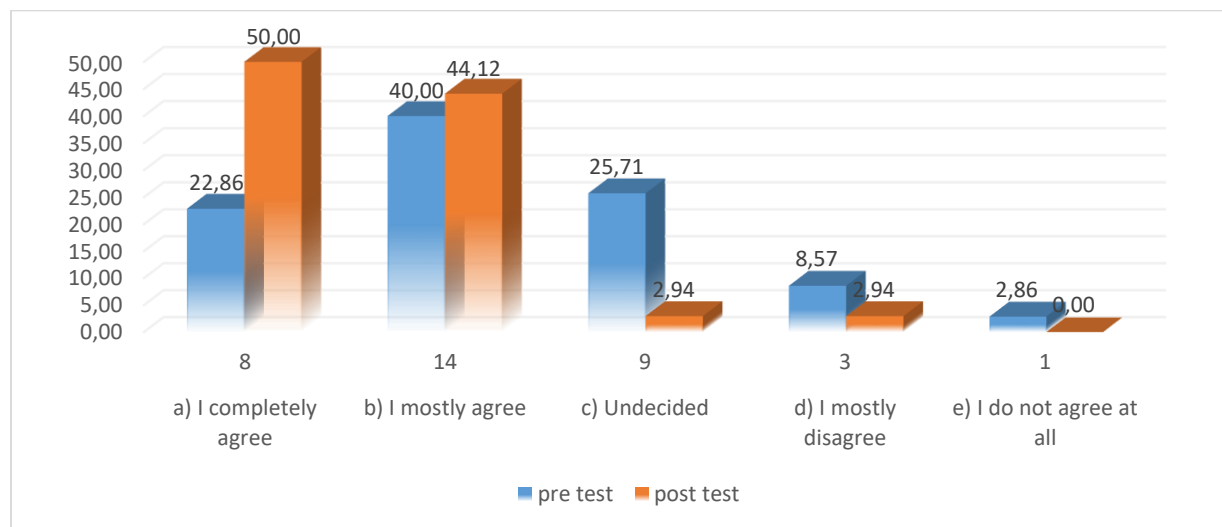
Based on the comparative analysis of responses to the question "With the current image of myself, I perceive myself as a confident person," we can draw the following conclusions:

- In the initial questionnaire, 22.86% of respondents strongly agree that they perceive themselves as confident individuals, while 40% mostly agree. 25.71% of respondents are undecided about this question, 8.57% mostly disagree, and 2.86% completely disagree.
- In the final questionnaire, a higher percentage of respondents strongly agree (50%) or mostly agree (44.12%) that they perceive themselves as confident individuals. Only 2.94% of respondents are undecided, while the same percentage (2.94%) mostly disagrees. None of the respondents indicated that they completely disagree with this statement.

These results indicate that the project has had a positive impact on the self-confidence of youth. The increase in the percentage of respondents who agree that they are confident individuals from 22.86% to 50% and 44.12% suggests an improvement in the self-confidence of youth throughout the project.

These findings suggest that the project has successfully contributed to strengthening the self-confidence of participants. The youth have gained more belief in themselves and their abilities, which is an important aspect of mental health and personal development. This positive change can help them face challenges, achieve their goals, and actively participate in society.

However, it is important to continue providing support to youth in maintaining and further enhancing their self-confidence. Ongoing activities and personal development work can further improve the self-confidence of youth and help them realize their full potential.



**Chart 6 shows the positive results that the activities had on improving self-confidence**

- **With the current image of myself, I have the impression that I have control over my life**  
**trenutnom slikom o sebi, imam dojam da posjedujem kontrolu nad svojim životom**

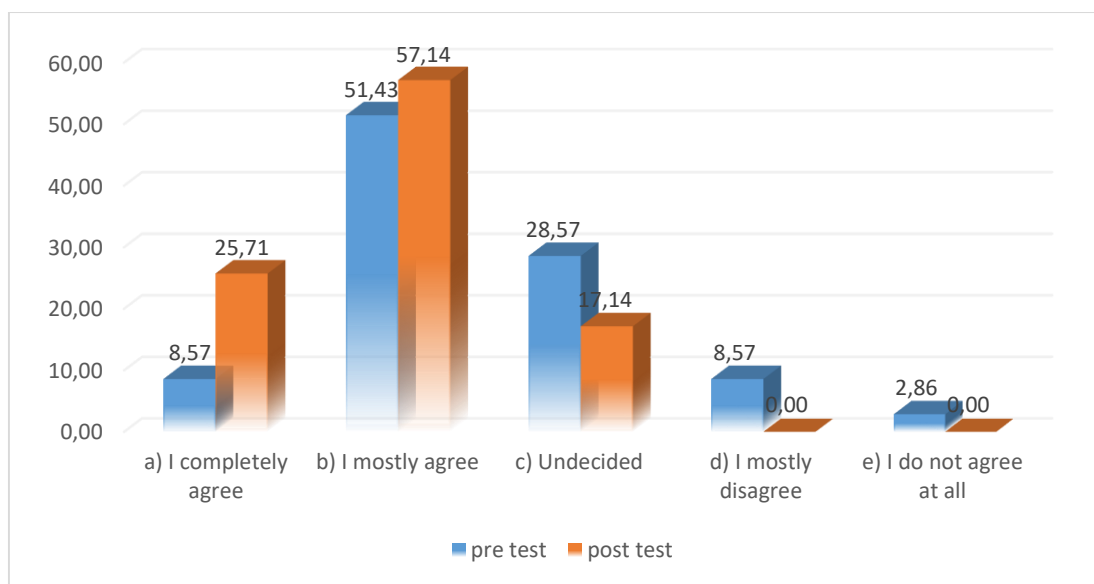
Based on a comparative analysis of responses to the question "With the current image of myself, I feel that I have control over my life," we can draw the following conclusions:

- In the initial questionnaire, 8.57% of respondents strongly agree that they have control over their lives, while 51.43% mostly agree. 28.57% of respondents are undecided about this question, 8.57% mostly disagree, and 2.86% completely disagree.
- In the final questionnaire, a higher percentage of respondents agree that they have control over their lives. 25.71% of respondents strongly agree, while 57.14% mostly agree. 17.14% of respondents are undecided, and none of the respondents indicated mostly or completely disagreeing with this statement.

Comparing the results of the initial and final questionnaires indicates a positive change in participants' perception of control over their lives. The increase in the percentage of respondents who agree that they have control over their lives from 8.57% to 25.71% and 51.43% to 57.14% suggests a strengthening sense of control and autonomy among participants throughout the project.

These results suggest that the project has had a positive impact on youth's perception of control over their lives. Empowering young individuals and supporting the development of their personal autonomy are important factors for mental health and self-confidence. Increasing the sense of control over their own lives can help youth face challenges, make decisions, and achieve their goals.

It is important to continue providing support to youth in developing a sense of control over their lives. Ongoing activities and education can further strengthen young individuals' sense of control and autonomy, enabling them to take responsibility for their actions and grow as confident and independent individuals.



**Chart 7 shows the positive results that the activities had on improving the participants' sense of control over their lives**

**- With the knowledge and skills I currently possess, I am able to implement an advocacy campaign**

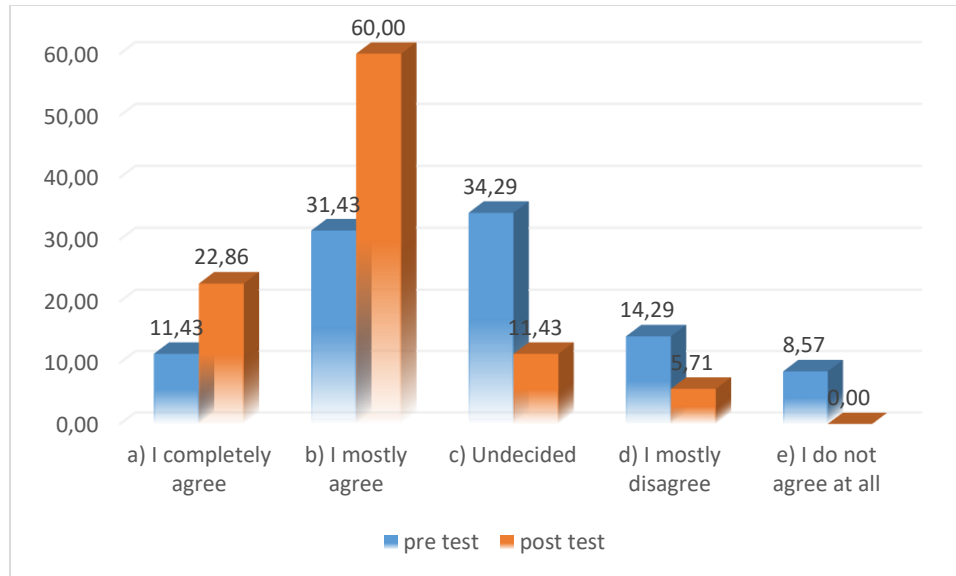
Based on a comparative analysis of responses to the question "With the knowledge and skills I currently possess, I am capable of conducting an advocacy campaign," we can draw the following conclusions:

- In the initial questionnaire, 11.43% of respondents strongly agree that they are capable of conducting an advocacy campaign, while 31.43% mostly agree. 34.29% of respondents are undecided about this question, 14.29% mostly disagree, and 8.57% completely disagree.
- In the final questionnaire, a higher percentage of respondents agree that they are capable of conducting an advocacy campaign. 22.86% of respondents strongly agree, while 60.00% mostly agree. Only 11.43% of respondents are undecided, and 5.71% of respondents mostly disagree. None of the respondents in the final questionnaire indicated that they completely disagree with this statement.

Comparing the results of the initial and final questionnaires indicates positive progress in the self-assessment of capabilities among participants in conducting advocacy campaigns. The increase in the percentage of respondents who agree that they are capable of conducting an advocacy campaign from 11.43% to 22.86% and 31.43% to 60.00% suggests an increase in self-confidence and belief in their own skills and knowledge throughout the project.

These results suggest that the project has contributed to strengthening the self-confidence of youth and their belief in their abilities to engage in advocacy and conduct campaigns. This is an important aspect of youth development as active members of society who can influence positive changes in their communities.

It is important to continue providing support and further developing the skills and knowledge of youth in the field of advocacy. Ongoing education and opportunities for practical experience can further enhance the abilities of participants, enabling them to be effective advocates and achieve their goals in the advocacy campaigns they lead.



**Chart 8 shows the positive results that the activities had on improving the capacity and skills of the participants to control their lives**

**- With the knowledge and skills I currently possess, I am able to influence changes in society**

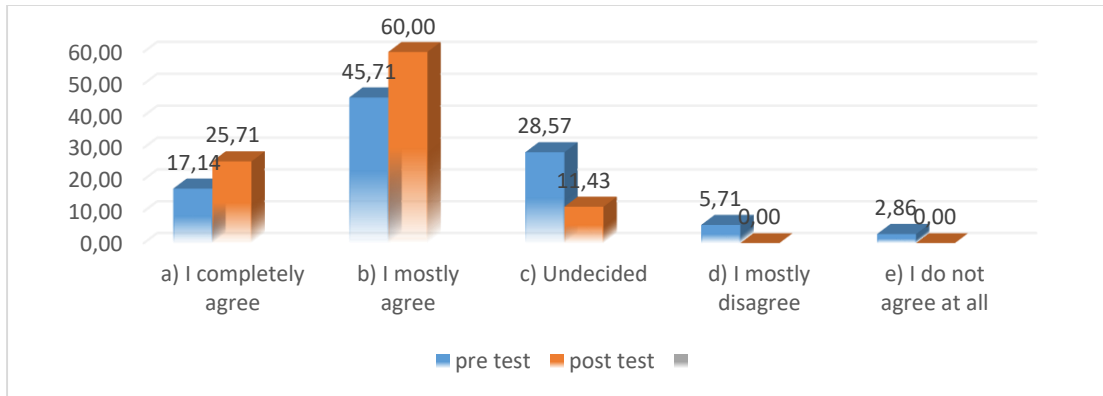
Based on a comparative analysis of responses to the question "With the knowledge and skills I currently possess, I am capable of influencing societal changes," we can draw the following conclusions:

- In the initial questionnaire, 17.14% of respondents strongly agree that they are capable of influencing societal changes, while 45.71% mostly agree. 28.57% of respondents are undecided about this question, 5.71% mostly disagree, and 2.86% completely disagree.
- In the final questionnaire, a higher percentage of respondents agree that they are capable of influencing societal changes. 25.71% of respondents strongly agree, while 60.00% mostly agree. Only 11.43% of respondents are undecided, and 0.00% of respondents mostly or completely disagree.

Comparing the results of the initial and final questionnaires indicates progress in the self-assessment of participants regarding their ability to influence societal changes. The increase in the percentage of respondents who agree that they are capable of influencing changes from 17.14% to 25.71% and 45.71% to 60.00% suggests an increase in self-confidence and belief in their own ability to make an impact throughout the project.

These results suggest that the project has contributed to strengthening the self-confidence of youth and their belief in their abilities to actively engage in societal changes. This is important for the development of participants who are capable and motivated to make positive changes in their community and society.

It is important to continue providing support to youth in further developing their skills and knowledge and enabling them to utilize their potentials to bring about societal changes. Education, mentorship, and engagement in practical projects can further enhance the abilities of participants, allowing them to achieve their goals and contribute to the positive development of society.



**Chart 9 shows the positive results that the activities had on improving the participants' awareness of their potential to influence changes in society**

#### 4.2. ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDES OF RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS ON THE EFFECT OF THE PROJECT

During the evaluation of the project "Youth as Social Changemakers", a consultant conducted 7 semi-structured interviews with representatives of relevant stakeholders to gather data that is crucial for measuring the project's impact and assessing the needs of youth. There was a significant level of feedback regarding how the relevant stakeholders perceive the project's effects.

It is worth noting that all interviewees provided positive feedback on the activities carried out by Amica Educa in order to improve the quality of life for youth. Despite the pronounced trend of shrinking space for civil society organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina in recent years, which often leads to growing rivalry between civil society organizations and further distancing between institutional systems and civil society organizations, the relevant stakeholders stated that the work of Amica Educa is recognized. They consider Amica Educa as a respected expert organization whose relevant capacities are utilized by institutions and other civil society organizations, and they refer their service users to Amica Educa.

As a crucial quality indicator of Amica Educa's work and project outcomes, the interviewees see the fact that interventions and activities are designed and implemented based on the identified needs of youth. The numerous problems and challenges that youth face further solidify their belief that the activities carried out by Amica Educa are necessary to enhance the resilience of youth against various risks of further marginalization and discrimination.

The relevant stakeholders also highlighted that they consider Amica Educa as a civil society organization that has the quality of a resource center, and without its activities, the quality of their beneficiaries and the entire community would significantly deteriorate.

#### 4.3. CONCLUSION OF THE MEASUREMENT OF PROJECT EFFECTS

Based on the overall analysis of the initial and final questionnaires, we can confidently say that the "Youth as Social Changemakers" project has achieved remarkable success in raising awareness, knowledge, and understanding of mental health, gender equality, and youth inclusion among the participants.

Significant progress has been made in most of the questions, as the final tests showed a higher percentage of correct answers and a significantly lower percentage of participants who were uninformed or provided incorrect answers

compared to the initial tests. These results clearly indicate that the project has successfully contributed to increasing knowledge and understanding of mental health among the participants.

Furthermore, there is a noticeable positive trend of decreasing percentages of uninformed answers and, at the same time, increasing percentages of correct answers throughout the duration of the project. This is an important indicator of continuous progress and the adoption of new information among youth.

The results strongly suggest that the “Youth as Social Changemakers“ project has had an exceptionally positive impact on the target group in terms of awareness, knowledge, and understanding of mental health, gender equality, and youth inclusion. However, it is important to note that the work should not stop here.

Continued educational activities and support are crucial in order to maintain and further enhance the achieved levels of awareness about the needs and challenges faced by youth. Additionally, the identified issues of youth need to be carefully considered, and appropriate interventions should be designed to adequately address their needs and challenges.

The overall assessment of the success of the “Youth as Social Changemakers“ project is highly positive, considering the significant progress in awareness, knowledge, and understanding among the participants. This project has provided valuable support to youth, helping them to better understand themselves and cope with the challenges of mental health and gender equality. Its results undoubtedly contribute significantly to society and should serve as a foundation for further efforts and activities in this field.

## 5. REZULTATI ISPITIVANJA POTREBA MLADIH

Analyzing the effects of the "Youth as Social Changemakers" project and the communication with youth who were direct beneficiaries of its services/activities, it is clear that the interventions carried out by Amica Educa are of essential importance for the youth in the city of Tuzla and beyond, in the entire Tuzla Canton area.

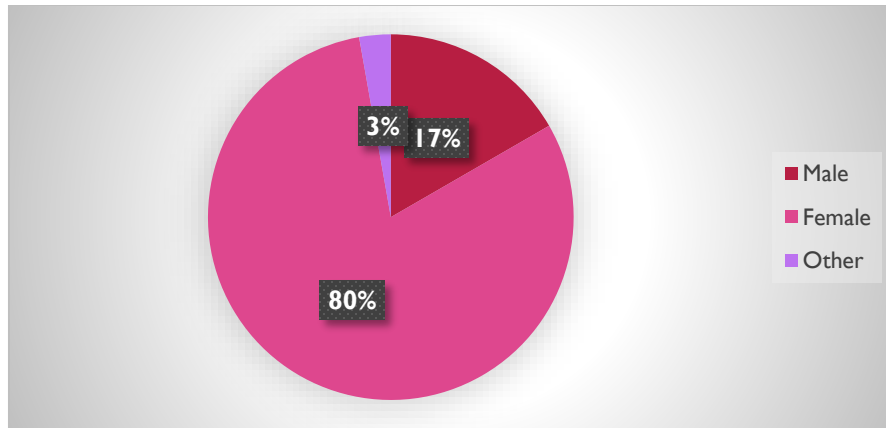
Amica Educa relies on its experience in working with youth and the principles of active participation. In June 2023, they conducted a needs assessment among youth from the Tuzla Canton area. During the assessment, 36 youth aged 18 to 28, who had previously participated in the activities of the "Youth as Social Changemakers" project, expressed their views on the needs related to mental health protection and the improvement of gender equality, both for themselves and their peers.

The goal of the needs assessment is precisely to respect one of the key values advocated by Amica Educa, which is to have services, activities, and interventions based on rich professional experience and the expressed needs of the direct beneficiaries/target group. Active participation of the target group is what ensures the quality of implemented activities and long-lasting results.

In Chart 10, the gender structure of the participants in the needs assessment is presented, and it can be seen that 80% of the participants were female, 17% were male, and 3% identified as other<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> One participant identified as other



**Chart 10** presentation of the analysis of participants in the assessment of needs by sex

## 5.1. ANALYSIS OF THE ATTITUDES OF YOUTH ON THE NEEDS IN THE FIELD OF MENTAL HEALTH PROTECTION

The needs of youth in the field of mental health are very important and require attention in order to provide them with appropriate support. Here are several key needs of youth in this area that have been recognized in the practice of providing support:

- **Access to information:** Youth need access to accurate and reliable information about mental health, including different disorders, symptoms, prevention, and treatment methods. The information should be age-appropriate and understandable to help them understand and recognize mental health issues.
- **Early recognition and intervention:** Youth need a system that enables early recognition of mental health problems. Schools, parents, teachers, and healthcare professionals should be trained to recognize signs and symptoms of mental health issues in youth and provide appropriate support and intervention.
- **Peer support:** Peers play an important role in supporting the mental health of youth. Programs that encourage mutual support and friendships among youth can be very beneficial. Additionally, youth should have the opportunity to connect with others who are going through similar challenges to exchange experiences and support each other.
- **Availability of mental health services:** Youth need access to quality mental health services that are tailored to their needs. This includes accessible therapies, counseling, medications, and other forms of support. The financial accessibility of these services can also be crucial, as many youth cannot afford high treatment costs.
- **Prevention and education:** Prevention of mental health problems is an important aspect of caring for the mental health of youth. Prevention education programs, combating stigma, and promoting well-being can help youth develop coping skills, build resilience, and maintain good mental health.

It is crucial for society, including educational institutions, parents, healthcare organizations, and non-governmental organizations, to recognize these needs of youth and mobilize resources to provide support and improve their mental health.

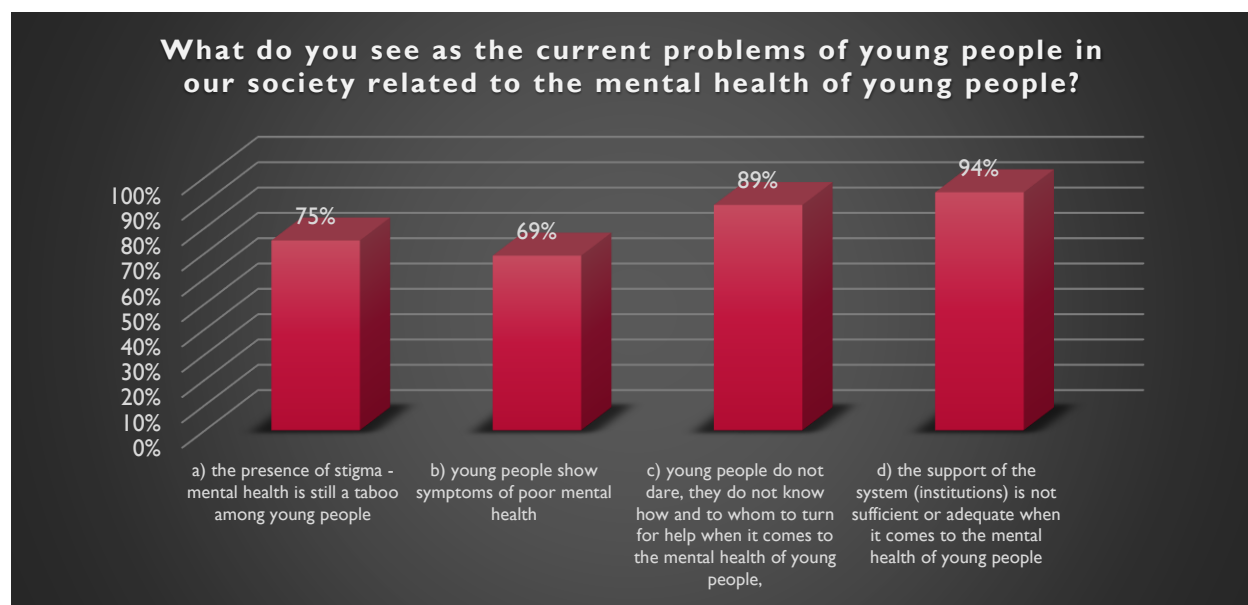
Youth from the Tuzla Canton area have identified their needs in mental health protection, as well as the obstacles they encounter in their efforts to improve and protect their mental health. The expressed needs create an opportunity to enhance existing services and create new services that aim to meet the growing needs of the young population in terms of mental health protection and improvement.



## PROBLEMS FACED BY YOUTH IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA SOCIETY IN RELATION TO MENTAL HEALTH

Although the healthcare system in Bosnia and Herzegovina has started to systematically address the issue of mental health protection through the establishment of Mental Health Centers, accreditation processes, and continuous capacity building, there is a perception that the interventions undertaken have not provided enough space for certain target groups, including youth, to adequately take care of their mental health.

When asked about the current problems youth face in our society related to mental health, **94% of the respondents answered that they believe the existing support provided through various institutions is not sufficient to meet the existing needs of youth when it comes to mental health.** Additionally, 89% of the respondents mentioned that a problem lies in the fact that youth either do not dare to seek help or lack sufficient information about how and to whom they can turn to for assistance regarding their mental health. The presence of stigma and the fact that mental health is still a taboo topic for youth was identified as a key problem by 75% of the respondents. Furthermore, 69% of the 36 participants believe that one of the problems youth face is the presence of symptoms associated with poor mental health.



**Chart 11 Problems faced by youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina society in relation to mental health**

The attitudes expressed by the respondents clearly indicate the problems that youth perceive as key when it comes to the protection and promotion of mental health. Youth consider the existing systemic support to be insufficient, and this view is directly related to other challenges they face, such as inadequate awareness of the support services available through the healthcare system and/or services provided by non-governmental organizations. Additionally, there is still a significant fear of stigma, as mental health issues remain taboo in BIH society, including among younger generations. The problems highlighted by youth can have a negative impact on their own well-being and that of their peers, especially considering that a large number of respondents believe that youth exhibit various symptoms associated with poor mental health.

In addition to selecting the provided answers, the respondents were also given the opportunity to provide their own opinions on the problems that youth face regarding mental health, and they highlighted the following:

- "Inaccessibility of psychological support in financial terms (psychotherapeutic treatments are too expensive, yet necessary for youth)."
- "There is a problem when youth are not sufficiently educated and informed about the concept of 'mental health.' Many of them are unaware that they have a problem, let alone how to solve it."
- "Youth need to take care of their psychological and social well-being. They also need to be aware of their knowledge about mental health."
- "Youth are often aware of the mental problems they face, but their environment neglects and diminishes the significance of mental health issues."
- "Education does not cover mental health, and teachers are not educated on this topic."

These results indicate that youth recognize the importance of adequate support and information regarding mental health, and they face obstacles such as insufficient systemic support, lack of information, stigma, and the presence of symptoms associated with poor mental health. These problems can have a negative impact on the well-being of youth and emphasize the need for improved accessibility, support, and awareness of mental health among younger generations.

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*The stigma surrounding mental health issues is directly correlated with the fundamentally patriarchal society that exists in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In such a context, both men and women experience stigma when it comes to expressing emotions, seeking support, or asking for help regarding their mental health.*

*In patriarchal societies, men are pressured to be strong, independent, and in control, while women are expected to be nurturing, gentle, and emotionally accessible. Expressing vulnerability or seeking help for mental health is viewed as a sign of weakness or unacceptable behavior.*

*Stigmatization has a negative impact on individuals struggling with mental health. Those facing mental challenges may feel judged or isolated due to the stigma imposed by society. This can make it harder for them to openly express their problems, seek support, and access adequate mental health care.*

*This is why destigmatizing mental health issues requires comprehensive interventions that not only raise awareness but also challenge patriarchal concepts of mental health and create a supportive environment for the protection and promotion of mental health. This environment should, among other things, respect the specific needs of groups such as young people.*

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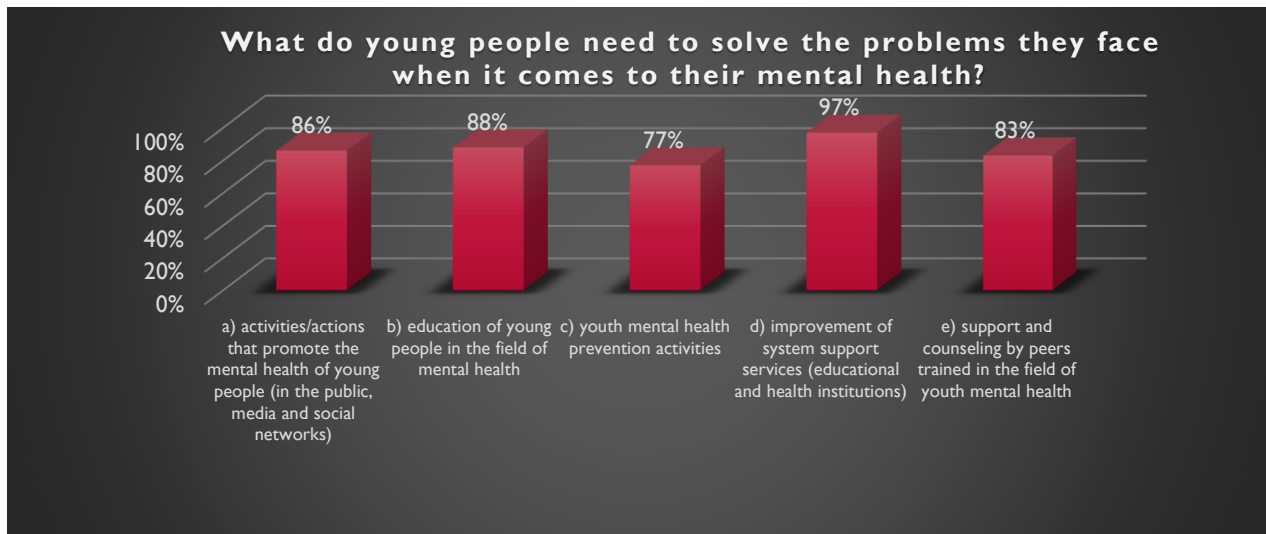
## NECESSARY INTERVENTIONS TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FACED BY YOUTH WHEN THEIR MENTAL HEALTH IS IN QUESTION

The identified problems and challenges that youth face require action from various relevant stakeholders. The respondents had the opportunity to express their opinions through the provided answers to the question "What do youth need to solve the problems they face regarding their mental health?" As potential interventions that could contribute to addressing these issues, the following were mentioned: activities/actions promoting youth mental health (in public, media, and social networks); education of youth in the field of mental health; activities for the prevention of youth mental health issues; improvement of support services within the system (educational and healthcare institutions); and support and counseling from peers trained in the field of youth mental health.

As shown in Chart 12, the research results indicate that a high percentage of respondents recognize certain key interventions that would improve the overcoming of issues in the field of youth mental health. A staggering 97% of respondents emphasize the improvement of support services within the system, available through educational

institutions and healthcare facilities, as a crucial intervention. Additionally, 88% of respondents believe that enhancing education for youth in the field of mental health would contribute to addressing issues in this area.

Other interventions also received significant support. According to the results, 86% of respondents believe that continuous activities promoting youth mental health, conducted in public, media, and social networks, would be beneficial. Furthermore, 83% of respondents agreed that peer support, where young individuals trained to provide counseling in the field of mental health offer support to their peers, would contribute to enhancing youth mental health. Support for activities aimed at preventing youth mental health problems was also endorsed, with 77% of respondents supporting such initiatives.



**Chart 12 Necessary interventions to overcome the problems and challenges that youth face when it comes to their mental health**

These results clearly indicate the priorities that youth set regarding interventions that would improve their mental health. Enhancing support services within the system, improving education, promoting mental health through public channels, peer support, and prevention are key aspects that youth recognize as important in achieving better mental health and well-being.

In addition to the provided answers, respondents also highlighted the need to educate parents about the issues that youth face in the field of mental health, as well as the establishment of psychological counseling centers for youth.

### SPECIFIC NEEDS OF GIRLS FOR IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH

Analyzing the expressed specific needs of girls for improving mental health, the following key segments of their needs for enhancing mental health can be identified:

- **Support and supportive environment:** This includes support from family, friends, professionals, and the local community. The respondents emphasize the importance of feeling understood, accepted, and free from judgment in their environment.
- **Access to professional help:** The respondents mention the need for accessibility of psychologists within the education system, universities, and other institutions. They also emphasize the importance of professional guidance and support in maintaining mental health.
- **Education and awareness:** The respondents highlight the importance of education, information, and campaigns that promote the significance of mental health. There is an emphasis on raising public awareness and creating an open dialogue about mental health.

- **Self-help and personal development:** The respondents recognize the importance of self-care, focusing on hobbies and activities that help maintain mental health. They also emphasize the importance of self-awareness, introspection, personal growth, and developing their own awareness of mental health.
- **Stigma prevention:** The respondents express the need to reduce stigma and judgment associated with mental health. There is an emphasis on open conversation, support, and understanding in society.
- **Progression and opportunities:** The respondents mention the need for opportunities for learning, growth, and development in order to maintain their mental health. Factors such as advancement opportunities, personal development, and organizational support are emphasized.

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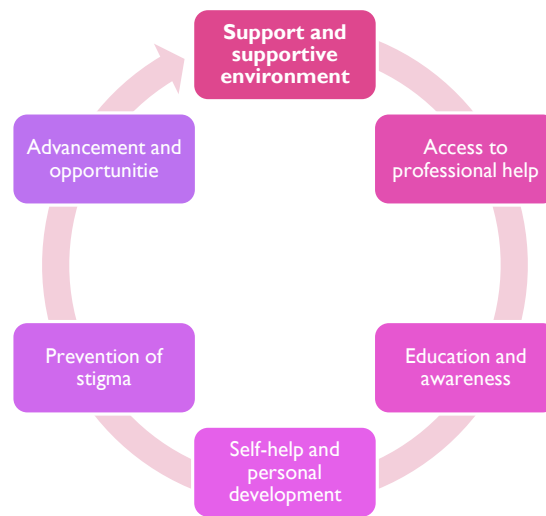
*"To improve and/or maintain my mental health, I need a better and safer system that allows me to grow and meet my needs for growth, learning, and work."*

*"I need someone who understands and doesn't judge me, and a professional who can help me in the right way."*

*"A supportive environment and peace."*

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Key segments of creating a supportive environment for improving the mental health of girls



**Chart 13 Key segments of creating a supportive environment for improving the mental health of girls**

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### SPECIFIC NEEDS OF YOUNG MEN FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MENTAL

When it comes to young men, based on their expressed needs, the following key segments of their mental health improvement needs can be identified:

- **Communication with close individuals:** Respondents emphasize the importance of open communication with close individuals to express emotions and problems and to feel support and understanding.
- **Healthy lifestyles:** Quality nutrition, regular physical activity, adequate sleep, and establishing routines are recognized as factors that contribute to mental health.

- **Destigmatizing mental health:** The need for changing social attitudes and understanding towards youth who express their emotions, as well as reducing the stigma associated with seeking help from psychologists or therapists.
- **Reliability and support:** Respondents emphasize the importance of having a reliable person they can count on at any time.
- **Workshops and socializing:** Respondents express the need for more workshops and socializing opportunities with peers to create a space for exchanging experiences and peer support.
- **Self-confidence and mental clarity:** Respondents recognize the importance of developing self-confidence, self-assurance, engaging in physical activity, and improving mood to maintain mental health. Kada su u pitanju mladići ispitanici na osnovu njihovih izraženih potreba mogu se identifikovati sljedeći ključni segmenti njihovih potreba za unapređenje mentalnog zdravlja:

The expressed needs highlight the importance of social support, healthy lifestyles, destigmatizing mental health, and personal resource development for maintaining and improving the mental health of youth.

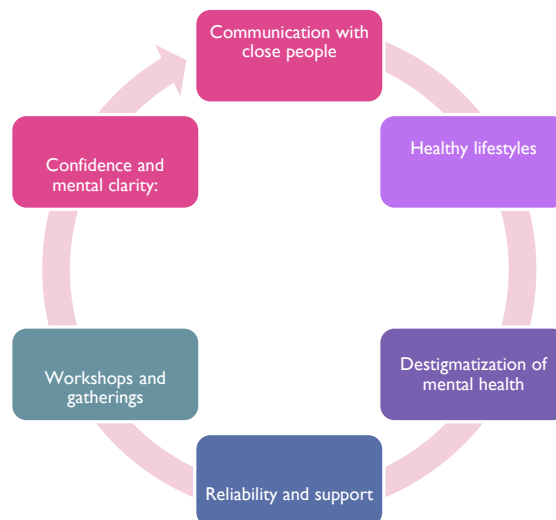
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*"Creating space in our society primarily in terms of understanding for me as a young man who shows his emotions, destigmatizing the act of seeking help from psychologists and therapists."*

*"First and foremost, I need self-assurance, self-confidence, physical activity, improved mood, and clearer thinking."*

*"More workshops and socializing with young people."*

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**Chart 14 Key segments of creating a supportive environment for improving the mental health of young men**

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## 5.2. ANALYSIS OF THE NEEDS OF YOUTH IN THE FIELD OF GENDER EQUALITY

The key needs of youth in the field of gender equality can vary depending on the context and individual experiences, but some common aspects include:

- **Education on gender equality:** Youth express the need for timely and comprehensive education on the concept of gender equality, stereotypes, gender roles, and social inequalities to understand and recognize gender discrimination.
- **Prevention and combating gender-based violence:** Youth recognize the importance of implementing measures and programs that address the prevention and combating of gender-based violence, including intimate partner violence, sexual abuse, and harassment.
- **Active involvement of youth in decision-making:** Youth want to have the opportunity to participate in decision-making and shaping policies related to gender equality. This includes providing space for their participation, understanding their perspectives, and empowering youth to actively advocate for their rights.
- **Support for challenging gender stereotypes:** Youth want support in confronting gender stereotypes and pressures associated with traditional gender roles. It is necessary to provide programs and initiatives that promote diversity, tolerance, and equality and support youth in expressing their individuality without fear of judgment.
- **Access to information and resources:** Youth express the need for access to relevant information, resources, and support related to gender equality. This may include providing access to educational materials, mentoring, counseling, and training opportunities.
- **Creating safe spaces:** Youth express the need for safe spaces where they can openly express themselves, share their experiences, and initiate dialogue on gender equality issues. These spaces can be physical or virtual, such as schools, universities, organizations, or online platforms.

It is important to emphasize that these needs are just some of the key aspects, and individuals may have other specific needs and interests related to gender equality depending on their context and individual experiences. That is why the assessment of the needs of the direct beneficiaries of the project is crucial for creating future interventions that Amica Educa will implement to promote respect for the principles of gender equality among youth.

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## PROBLEMS FACED BY YOUTH IN BIH SOCIETY RELATED TO GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is an important issue for achieving equal rights and opportunities for all citizens, regardless of their gender. In BiH, as in many other countries, there are challenges in achieving full gender equality. Despite active efforts to promote gender equality in BiH for the past 20 years since the adoption of the first Law on Gender Equality in 2003, there are still numerous challenges that hinder the progress towards significant gender equality. Taking into account these facts, the views expressed by young people identifying the most prominent problems they face in terms of gender equality provide valuable insights into their perception and experience of gender equality.

Chart 15 presents the responses of project participants to the question "What do you see as the current problem young people face in our society regarding gender equality?" The results highlight important insights into how young people perceive gender equality issues and how they impact their daily lives.

According to the responses, a staggering 94% of participants believe that the key problem young people face in our society regarding gender equality is the lack of recognition of gender-based violence in peer relationships. This is a concerning finding as it indicates insufficient understanding and awareness among young people about gender-based violence and violence in peer relationships, especially considering the significant data showing that 80% of participants believe that young people face gender-based violence in peer relationships. Considering that according to the Gender Equality Agency's estimates, as many as 52.8% of surveyed women<sup>3</sup> in BiH have experienced some form of gender-based violence after the age of 15, the situation regarding gender-based violence in BiH is alarming and requires continuous work and attention. The views expressed by the participants indicate a potentially concerning frequency of violence in peer relationships. When designing interventions related to gender-based violence, it is important to

<sup>3</sup> <https://arsbih.gov.ba/nasilje-nad-zenama-i-nasilje-u-porodici/>

consider that the phenomenology and dynamics of violence in peer relationships are specific, and interventions must be adapted accordingly.

Furthermore, 91% of respondents emphasize that young people do not recognize how gender (in)equality affects them. This result highlights the importance of educating and informing young people about how gender stereotypes and inequalities impact their lives and choices, and how such awareness can contribute to a better future for all. Efforts in this direction should be implemented by all relevant stakeholders and continuously, especially considering that two decades of activities aimed at promoting gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina stand against a deeply patriarchal culture that is still very much present in the country. In addition to the ongoing struggle against patriarchy and patriarchal concepts, a significant obstacle to raising awareness about gender equality and accepting gender equality standards, particularly among young people, is popular culture, which often promotes inequalities and even glorifies gender-based violence.

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*It is important to emphasize that any form of violence in peer relationships has serious consequences for the victim, including physical, emotional, and psychological problems. Preventing peer violence requires proactive measures to create a safe and supportive environment for all young people. Special attention should be given to cyberbullying, which has become increasingly prevalent with the advancement of digital technology, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic when online violence and harassment saw a notable rise. Cyberbullying can be particularly invasive and challenging for victims as it extends to a wide virtual space.*

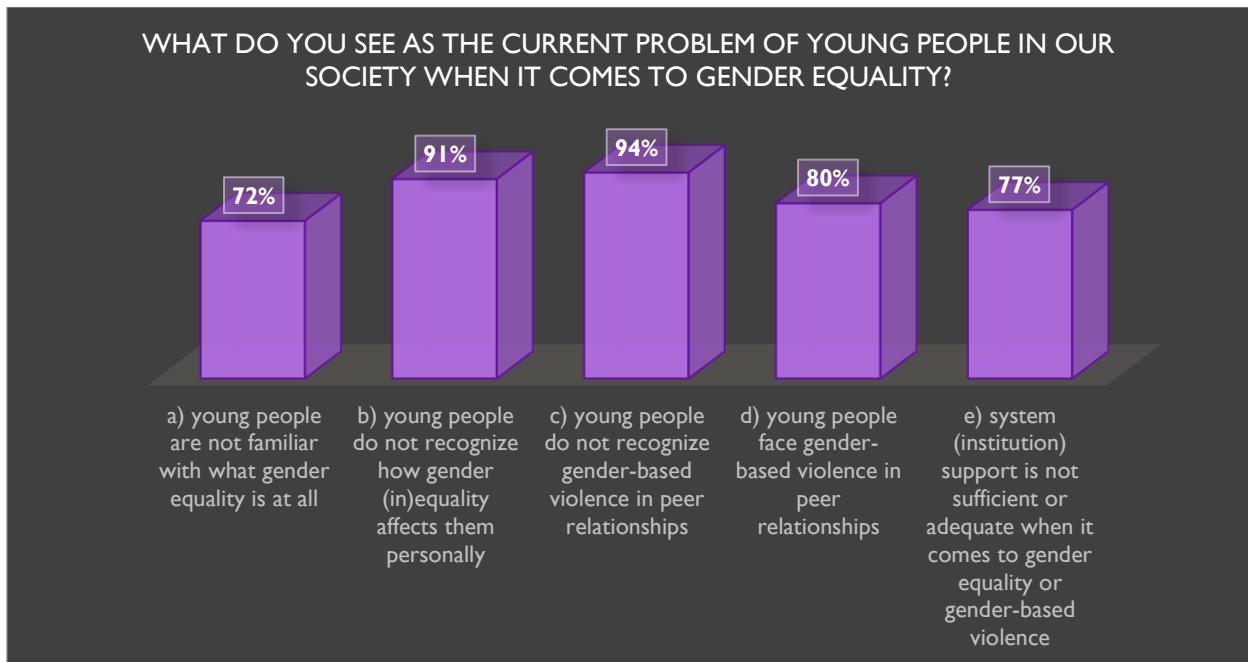
*There is a significant need for intervention in the criminal justice and institutional protection systems when addressing this form of violence.*

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Moreover, 77% of respondents believe that the support from systems and relevant institutions is insufficient and inadequate when it comes to gender equality or gender-based violence. This points to the need for strengthening institutional mechanisms and policies that focus on supporting young people in achieving gender equality and protecting them from violence.

A high percentage of respondents, 72%, also feel that young people are not adequately familiar with the concept of gender equality, highlighting the crucial importance of educating and raising awareness among young people about gender equality issues. This education aims to make them aware of the importance of equal rights and opportunities for all.

Overall, the results of this survey indicate the need for stronger efforts to raise awareness and educate young people about gender equality, recognize gender-based violence, and provide adequate support and resources to achieve complete gender equality in society.



**Chart 15 Problems faced by youth in BiH society related to gender equality**

### NECESSARY INTERVENTIONS TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FACED BY YOUTH WHEN GENDER EQUALITY IS IN QUESTION

The data collected through the questionnaire regarding the interventions that young people consider necessary to overcome the problems and challenges related to gender equality clearly indicate the importance of education, support, and promotion of gender equality, as well as the prevention of gender-based violence in peer relationships.

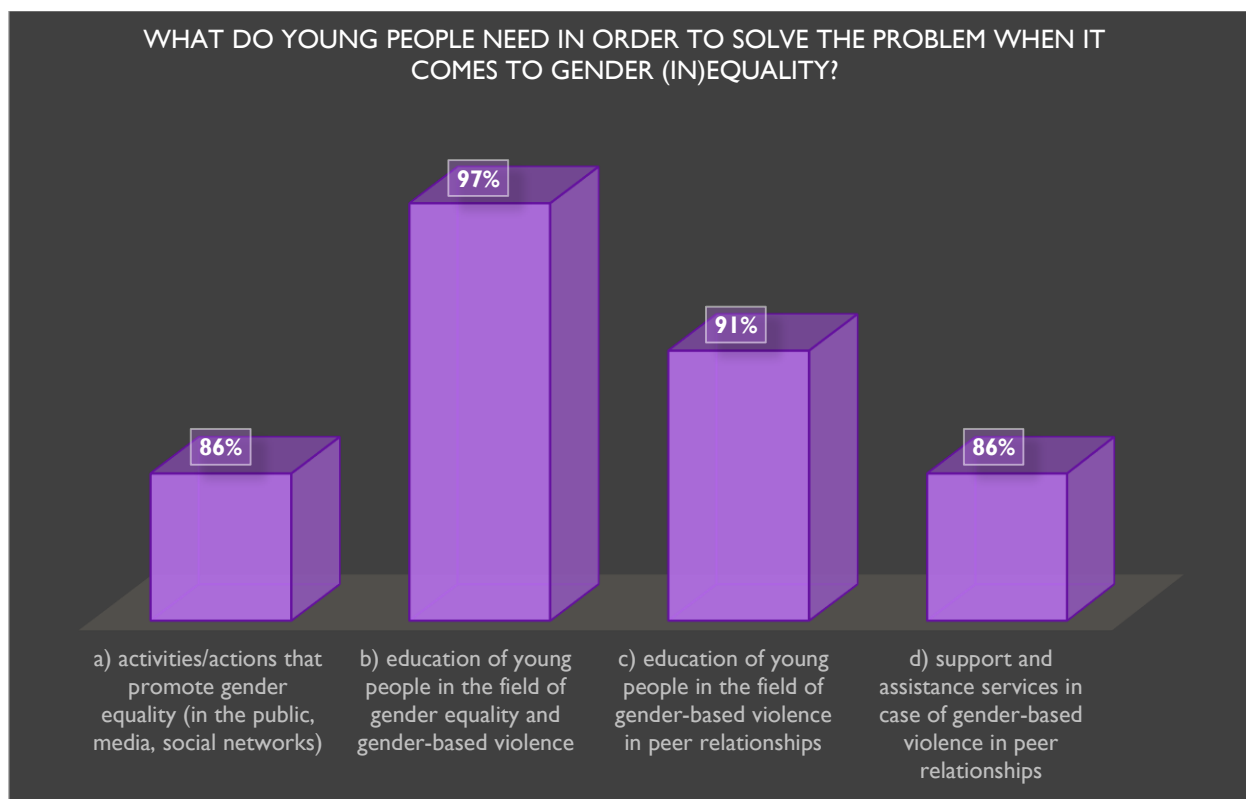
A staggering 97% of respondents believe that it is important to educate young people about gender equality and gender-based violence. This highlights the recognition among young people of the importance of acquiring knowledge and awareness about these issues in order to contribute to the construction of an equal and safe society. Additionally, the fact that 91% of young people support the need for education on gender-based violence in peer relationships further emphasizes the importance of empowering young people to have the capacity to recognize gender-based violence in peer relationships and to work on its prevention and elimination.

The data also reveal that 86% of young people express the need for support services in cases of gender-based violence in peer relationships. This underscores the importance of providing safe and accessible resources and institutions that can support and protect young people facing violence, especially those experiencing gender-based violence in peer relationships.

Furthermore, 86% of young people support activities and actions that promote gender equality in public spaces, media, and social networks. This result indicates young people's desire to actively engage in promoting gender equality and combating gender-based violence through various initiatives and campaigns.

All of this data clearly demonstrates that young people recognize the importance of gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence, and they demand more education, support, and activities that will contribute to creating a society of equal opportunities and a safer environment for all young people. These indicators should be taken into account not only by Amica Educe but also by other relevant stakeholders and decision-makers in the Tuzla Canton area in order to collectively create policies and interventions in the field of gender equality that are focused on creating a supportive and safe environment for young people.





**Chart 16 Necessary interventions to overcome the problems and challenges faced by young people when it comes to gender equality**

### 5.3. ANALYSIS OF THE NEEDS OF THE YOUTH WHEN THEIR DAILY FUNCTIONING, RELATIONSHIPS AND POSITION IN THE SOCIETY ARE IN QUESTION

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is a society characterized by a wide range of cultural, ethnic, and religious differences. These differences, along with numerous factors of political and economic instability, reflect on the position of young people who face numerous challenges and problems in their daily functioning, interpersonal relationships, and social standing.

Young people, due to their potential to be drivers of positive change and progress, should be recognized as a key factor and potential. However, there are certain factors that influence their position and prospects.

One of the key issues that young people in BiH face is a high unemployment rate. Young individuals often struggle to find employment that matches their qualifications and interests, which can lead to feelings of frustration and insecurity about the future. Moreover, access to higher education and professional development is uneven across different parts of the country, limiting the opportunities for young people to acquire relevant skills needed in the labor market.

The issue of political participation of young people is also significant in BiH. Young individuals face challenges related to their involvement in political processes and influence on decision-making. This is precisely an area where young people encounter negative stereotypes and prejudices based on their age, which often leads to the marginalization of their ideas and needs. Due to a sense of being undervalued and excluded, young people in BiH are increasingly choosing the option of non-participation, which further puts them at risk of marginalization.

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## PROBLEMS FACED BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN BIH SOCIETY RELATED TO THEIR DAILY FUNCTIONING, RELATIONSHIPS AND POSITION IN SOCIETY

Taking into account the challenges mentioned, Amica Educa has devoted special attention to the topic of young people's daily functioning, interpersonal relationships, and participation in society as part of the needs assessment of young people.

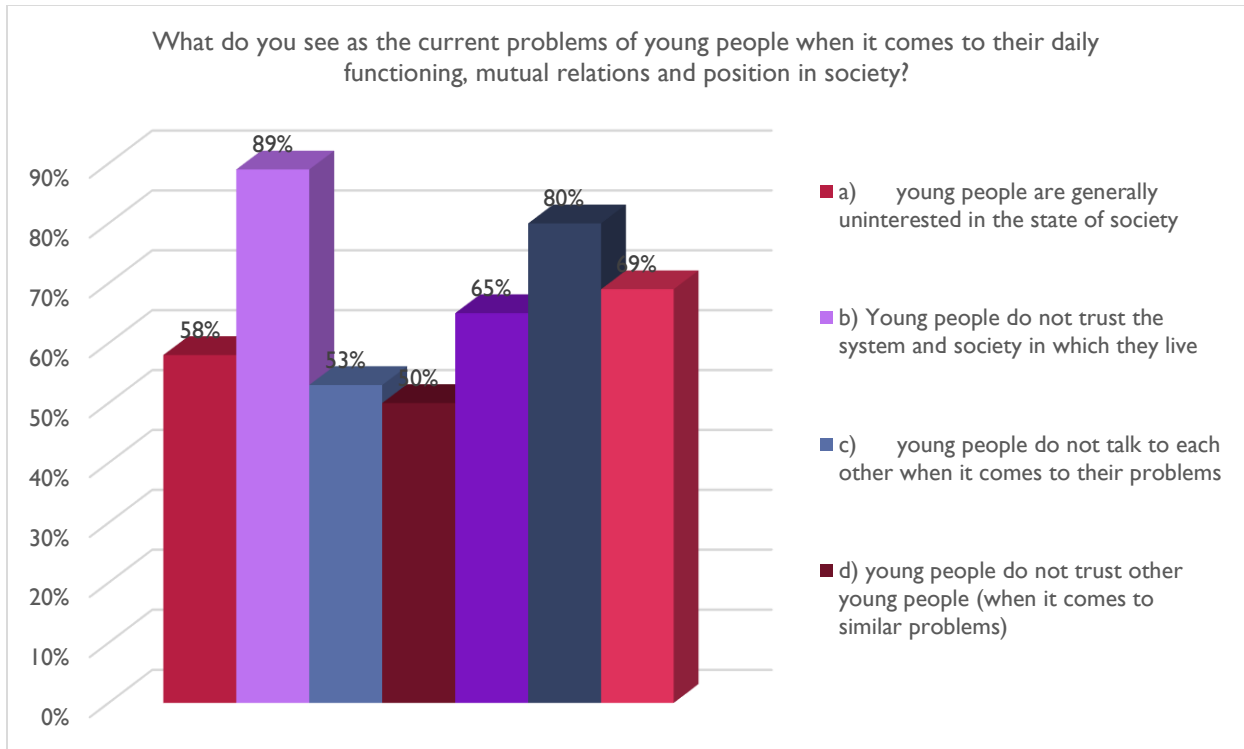
An alarming, but not unexpected, fact is that 89% of respondents highlight the lack of trust in the system and society in which they live when asked, "What do you see as the current problems for young people regarding their daily functioning, interpersonal relationships, and position in society?" This indicates a deeply rooted sense of distrust and insecurity among young people towards institutions and society as a whole. It directly correlates with the problems and challenges that young people face, as described in the introductory text of this chapter.

Furthermore, Graph 17 shows that 80% of respondents believe that young people are not sufficiently informed about the opportunities available to them in their surroundings that could be helpful. Insufficient knowledge about these opportunities can be a serious barrier to their further development and progress. Considering that a concerning 69% of respondents believe that young people do not have enough opportunities in their environment that match their actual needs, the question arises as to what real opportunities exist for young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina to participate in various spheres, and whether the existing opportunities are aligned with the needs and desires of young people.

Additionally, 65% of respondents believe that young people are not active enough in influencing societal changes. Respondents also express concern about the general lack of interest among young people in the state of society. Even 58% believe that young people are not sufficiently engaged and interested in the problems and challenges that society faces. The passivity of young people is an additional risk as it reduces the space for them to contribute to positive changes and fulfill their full potential.

Furthermore, 53% of respondents point out the problem of communication among young people when it comes to their issues, and 50% of respondents highlight that young people do not trust other young people when they face similar problems. The lack of open and honest conversation can hinder problem-solving and finding support among peers. This indicates the risk of a lack of solidarity and mutual support among young people, which can further hinder their ability to cope with challenges.

All these factors highlight the urgent need to empower young people, provide relevant information, encourage their activity and participation, and strengthen mutual trust and support within the young population. There is a need to establish a dialogue platform that, through open and inclusive communication between young people and society, improves the identification of needs and issues young people face and ensures that their voices are heard in the direction of adequate problem-solving.



**Chart 17 Problems faced by young people in BiH society related to their daily functioning, mutual relations and position in society**

### NECESSARY INTERVENTIONS TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FACED BY YOUNG PEOPLE WHEN IT IS A QUESTION OF THEIR DAILY FUNCTIONING, RELATIONSHIPS AND POSITION IN SOCIETY

For the planning and implementation of interventions that would help address the problems and challenges young people face in their daily lives, interpersonal relationships, and social standing, it is essential to provide space for young people to actively participate and contribute their suggestions. Participants in the project “Youth as Social Changemakers” have expressed their views by answering the question, “What do young people need to improve their daily functioning, interpersonal relationships, and social standing?”

Graph 18 clearly shows the respondents' attitudes regarding the necessary activities to overcome youth-related issues. All respondents, totaling 100%, agree that it is crucial for young people to be informed and motivated to engage in decision-making bodies and shape social trends. This underscores the importance of empowering young people and providing an opportunity for their voices to be heard and considered in decision-making processes.

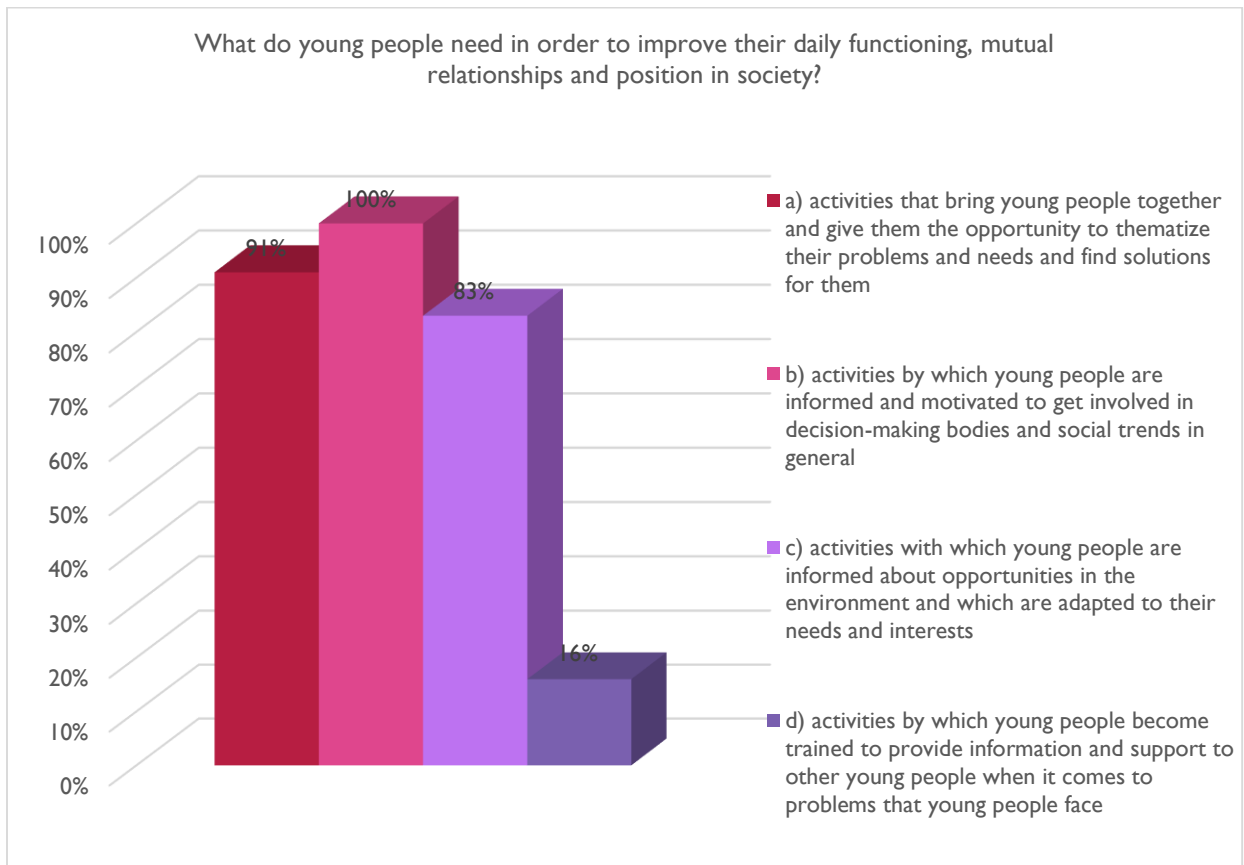
Amica Educa, with these results in mind, can focus its activities in the future on building the capacities of young people to take a more active role in society. This may involve organizing activities that inform and motivate young people to better understand the opportunities available to them in their environment and to recognize ways in which they can actively participate in society.

Furthermore, 91% of respondents highlight the importance of activities that bring young people together and allow them to address their problems and needs and collectively seek solutions. This points to the need for creating a safe space where young people can freely express their thoughts, problems, and needs, and work together to address them.

It is also important to emphasize that 83% of respondents believe that organizing activities that inform young people about opportunities in their environment, tailored to their needs and interests, is of vital importance. This suggests that the approach to information is crucial but should also be customized to the specific needs and interests of young people to be more effective.

It is noteworthy that only 16% of respondents see peer support through activities where young people are trained to provide information and support to their peers facing problems. Although this percentage is not high, it still points to the potential value of peer support as an additional resource for young people struggling with issues

Based on these perspectives, Amica Educa can shape programs and activities that meet the needs of young people, provide them with adequate information, encourage their active participation in society, and simultaneously empower peer support among young individuals.



**Chart 18 Necessary interventions to overcome the problems and challenges that young people face when it comes to their daily functioning, mutual relations and position in society.**

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#### 5.4. ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDES OF RELEVANT ACTORS ON THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE FIELD OF MENTAL HEALTH PROTECTION AND GENDER EQUALITY

As part of the needs assessment for mental health protection and gender equality among young people, in addition to the information collected from direct beneficiaries of the " Youth as Social Changemakers " project, the consultant, following an accepted methodology, organized and conducted semi-structured interviews with 7 representatives of relevant stakeholders in the City of Tuzla and Tuzla Canton.<sup>4</sup>

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##### MINISTRY OF LABOR, SOCIAL POLICY AND RETURN OF TUZLA CANTON

The Ministry of Labor, Social Policy, and Return of Tuzla Canton, as the ministry responsible for creating and implementing social policies, also has the authority to develop policies aimed at promoting gender equality. The Gender Action Plan 2021-2024 is currently in effect in the Canton.

Regarding the needs of young people in the field of gender equality, the ministry does not directly assess these needs. Instead, it gathers information about young people's needs through information exchange, collaboration with other relevant stakeholders, and support for projects and activities of civil society organizations

The ministry pays special attention to the needs of children/youth in the protection system and provides direct services and support to this group of young people. Although significant progress has been made in promoting gender equality, there is still an ongoing need to raise awareness and educate young people about gender equality, as well as to destigmatize and deconstruct taboos around mental health. It is essential to provide a safe space and social services that would enable young people to overcome the challenges they face.

Multisectoral collaboration and continuous monitoring of trends should serve as the basis for improving existing services for young people and creating new ones that contribute to their overall well-being and quality of life.

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##### CITY COUNCIL OF TUZLA

According to the information provided by the interviewee, the and the City of Tuzla respect and promote gender equality standards within their local governance. However, a negative aspect concerning gender equality protection is the fact that the Gender Action Plan of the City of Tuzla has not yet been adopted. The previous Gender Action Plan was valid until 2016. The initiative to adopt a new Gender Action Plan was launched in 2021, but consultations for the development of this document are still ongoing. In addition to the fact that Tuzla, despite being a regional/cantonal center, does not have this important strategic document for promoting gender equality, the potential for improving gender equality is also indicated by the fact that out of a total of 31 councilors, only 8 are female.

The interviewee states that the City Council of Tuzla does not directly implement activities aimed at promoting gender equality among young people but as an activist in a civil society organization, she is aware of programs implemented by civil society organizations. She also mentions that although the activities of civil society organizations are very useful and yield good results, they have a limited scope of action. She is familiar with the initiative of the Tuzla Canton Government to include the topic of healthy lifestyles, which includes gender equality, in the official curriculum. In her opinion, additional promotion of peer education and peer support, which are not recognized by the current education system, is necessary.

A positive step taken by the local community in the field of youth mental health protection is the opening of a free counseling service for young people in Tuzla in May 2023. The counseling center is located outside the premises of the Tuzla Mental Health Center, and young people have access to this service once a week from 12 to 2 pm. The

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<sup>4</sup> A detailed list of participants in the collection of data for the analysis of the needs of young people in the field of mental health protection and gender equality can be found in section 7.2

key need identified by young people in the domain of mental health protection and improvement is the need to talk about their problems without judgment. Young people are increasingly aware that mental health care is very important, but they are also aware that there is a high level of stigma in Bosnian society when it comes to mental health, and it is even considered a taboo subject.

The City Council does not have direct communication with young people to gather information about their needs; instead, they obtain this information from civil society organizations. Considering that the City of Tuzla has adopted a decision to support social housing for young people, as well as other activities aimed at improving the position of young people, it can be considered that the general trend in supporting young people is positive. However, it should be noted that a large portion of activities targeting young people are initiated and implemented by civil society organizations. The interviewee highlights the promotion and enhancement of activism and volunteering as services that would be beneficial for young people, as they would enable them to develop their personal capacities and fulfill some of their needs.

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### CENTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH, TUZLA

The interviewee highlights the significant contribution to advancing gender equality made by the Center Mental Health Tuzla (CZM), which is certified to provide support to victims of gender-based violence and conduct programs for perpetrators. The CZM is involved in data collection on gender-based violence, actively collaborates with civil society organizations working on gender equality, and advocates for equal access to services without discrimination. All CZM employees have received training on gender equality.

As for the key needs of young people in the mental health sphere, the interviewee mentions the need for continuity in destigmatizing mental health care. In response to this need, the establishment of the Youth Counseling Center was initiated in May 2023. It is essential to work on improving intergenerational communication.

The CZM Tuzla has already taken outreach activities, reaching out to young people and the entire community through organizing awareness-raising activities about the importance of mental health care. They intend to continue with this positive practice. When working to improve the mental health of young people, it is crucial to consider the impact of their parents' mental health as well as the mental health of teachers who are at risk of mental health issues.

The CZM obtains information about the needs of young people through direct contact with them, as well as through exchanges with other relevant stakeholders. They emphasize the necessity of multisectoral collaboration in improving mental health protection. The CZM believes that the existing services available through their center are sufficient for young people and other groups. However, active efforts must be made to promote mental health care, destigmatize it, and reach out to smaller communities.

They are satisfied with their work and the results achieved so far but stress the importance of continuity in improving their work and the significance of intersectoral collaboration as a crucial factor in creating a safe and supportive environment for young people.

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### UNIVERSITY OF TUZLA

University of Tuzla and the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation have a long-standing and fruitful collaboration with Amica Educa, particularly in the promotion of gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence. Amica Educa provides support to the university through a wide range of activities aimed at enhancing the professional capacities and life skills of students. The university has an active Gender Equality Council and a Gender Equality Action Plan.

The perception and prevalence of gender stereotypes in Bosnia and Herzegovina also affect the work of this faculty, as there is a very small number of men interested in pursuing careers in helping professions. One observation from working with students is that many of them, coming from positions of conformity and privilege, lack understanding and awareness of the extent of gender stereotypes and gender (in)equality in BiH. A key aspect in promoting gender equality, as seen by the faculty, is empowering young women by providing them with opportunities that fully respect the standards of gender equality. However, young women, without a clear understanding of all aspects of gender equality, often misidentify the directions for empowerment and emancipation, which hinders the achievement of gender equality goals.

University recognizes the need to support young people in terms of preserving their mental health. However, within the university itself, there are no services available specifically aimed at improving and maintaining mental health. In this regard, the university identifies the needs of students and directs them to available services and resources, primarily within civil society organizations.

A general risk for young people is the lack of willingness and passivity when it comes to engagement and activism. Establishing a platform where they can continuously voice their problems and present their needs would be beneficial. It seems that there is a lack of concrete involvement and participation of young people.

Additionally, the age for intervention should be considered, as the issues directly related to gender equality and mental health often arise at a much younger age, even before puberty.

To achieve sustainable results, vertical and intersectoral coordination among all relevant actors in education, social welfare, healthcare, and civil society is necessary to improve the response to these issues.

*"We often find ourselves solving the problems of one person through different systems that are either completely disconnected or not sufficiently interconnected." - Prof. V.B.*

Young people lack opportunities for employment and volunteer engagement that are tailored to their potentials and needs.

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## CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

**CSO Tuzla Open Center/ Tuzlanski otvoreni Centar** is an organization specialized in supporting the LGBTQIA+ community and promoting the rights of this population. Through their work, they actively promote gender equality and fight against discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation. Given the challenges faced by their target group, they emphasize the support they receive from Amica Educa as extremely significant and beneficial for improving the quality of life and realizing the rights of young people, especially those from marginalized groups. The organization actively participates in multisectoral collaboration and is currently involved in the development of the Gender Action Plan for the City of Tuzla, in which they have successfully advocated for the inclusion of the needs of their target group. They believe that the position of LGBTQIA+ individuals in the City of Tuzla has significantly improved, but there is still room for work in terms of breaking stereotypes and prejudices and preventing discrimination.

The organization is in direct contact with young people as service users, and through this interaction, they receive feedback on their needs. If some of the identified needs of the users exceed the capacities of their organization, they refer them to other civil society organizations that can provide the required services.

A key issue for young people in terms of protecting and promoting mental health is the lack of understanding, primarily from parents and the environment. It is necessary to empower and educate parents to accept the benefits of mental health services. Young people do not have enough opportunities within the educational system to develop skills and acquire knowledge necessary to address their key problems. Therefore, it is crucial to improve services

within civil society and ensure that they are recognized and supported to ensure sustainability and continuity. There is a need to further work on recognizing the value of peer support.

**CSO Fondacija Tuzlanske Zajednice** has been in existence for 25 years with a main focus on philanthropy. The organization respects and promotes gender equality standards and recognizes the need for continuous work on promoting gender equality. FTZ does not have direct contact with young people nor directly receives feedback from them about their needs. However, they have established communication with civil society organizations that work directly with young people. Based on identified needs, FTZ allocates funds to civil society organizations that work on promoting gender equality and improving mental health.

They see the continuous capacity building of young people as crucial and emphasize the need for mentoring and support to actively engage young people in activities aimed at positive social change and help them recognize and utilize their full potential. They acknowledge the importance and positive outcomes of the activities conducted by Amica Educa in this regard.

**CSO Horizonti**, established in November 1999, is a local non-governmental organization recognized for its work in empowering women who are victims of domestic and societal violence, as well as providing support to women in public and political life. The organization is active in various aspects of promoting gender equality through advocacy, raising awareness, and empowering women.

Horizonti recognizes the need for activities focused on promoting gender equality and protecting the mental health of young people, and they support activities carried out in that direction. If they identify a need among their beneficiaries, they refer them to the services of other civil society organizations. They believe that the mental health support system in the city of Tuzla is well developed, but services are mainly provided through specialized services offered by civil society organizations such as Amica Educa. There is a risk of excluding already marginalized groups, such as rural youth or youth from the Roma population. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen collaboration and exchange between civil society organizations and institutions to ensure that existing services are recognized, promoted, and accessible to a larger number of individuals in need.

A key problem identified for young people is the lack of a supportive environment for self-actualization.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1. CONCLUSIONS

#### CONCLUSIONS ON THE IDENTIFIED NEEDS OF YOUTH WHEN IT IS A QUESTION OF MENTAL HEALTH

- **Insufficient support:** There is a widespread belief that the existing support system through various institutions is insufficient to meet the needs of young people regarding mental health. Efforts need to be made to improve the accessibility and quality of support services.
- **Education and information:** Young people often lack sufficient information on how and where to seek help for their mental health. Therefore, it is important to provide educational programs and campaigns that will equip young people with the necessary knowledge about mental health and available resources.
- **Destigmatization:** Stigma surrounding mental health still poses a barrier for young people to seek help. Efforts should be made to break down prejudices and destigmatize mental health issues, allowing young people to openly discuss their challenges and seek support without fear of judgment.



- **Peer support:** Young people recognize the value of peer support from individuals trained to provide counseling for mental health. Initiatives that enable peers to support each other in these matters should be promoted and supported.
- **Prevention:** Investing in activities aimed at preventing mental health problems among young people is crucial. This may include education on strategies for maintaining mental health, promoting a healthy lifestyle, stress coping skills, and early detection of symptoms of poor mental health.
- **Holistic approach:** Young people acknowledge the importance of a holistic approach to mental health, including physical health, quality nutrition, sleep, routine, and meeting self-actualization needs. Supporting young people in these aspects is recommended to promote overall well-being and mental health.
- **Accessibility:** Young people express the need for better access to support resources, including counseling services and psychological assistance. Ensuring the accessibility of these services, such as the presence of psychologists in the education system and healthcare facilities, is necessary.

In summary, it is crucial to invest in improving the support system, education, destigmatization, peer support, prevention, and accessibility to meet the mental health needs of young people. A holistic approach, which includes other aspects of well-being, is also important for maintaining the mental well-being of young people and creating a supportive environment.

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## CONCLUSIONS ON THE IDENTIFIED NEEDS OF THE YOUTH WHEN GENDER EQUALITY IS IN QUESTION ZAKLJUČCI O UTVRĐENIM POTREBAMA MLADIH KADA JE U PITANJU RODNA RAVNOPRAVNOST

Based on the identified issues related to gender equality and the proposed activities, we can draw the following conclusions:

- **Need for youth education:** A high percentage of young people emphasizing the need for education in the field of gender equality and gender-based violence indicates a lack of knowledge and awareness about these issues. Therefore, it is crucial to provide tailored educational programs and sensitize young people to become aware of the importance of gender equality and recognize gender-based violence.
- **Importance of preventing peer violence in relationships:** Data indicates a high rate of unrecognized gender-based violence in peer relationships. Activities focused on preventing violence, such as education on healthy relationships and violence, promoting equality, and supporting victims, are key to creating a safe and supportive environment for young people.
- **Need for support and services:** Young people highlight the need for support and services in cases of gender-based violence in peer relationships. This underscores the importance of providing accessible and effective support services, such as education, empowerment, counseling, and psychological assistance, to enable young people to address violence and find the support they need.
- **Promoting gender equality:** A high percentage of young people supporting activities and actions that promote gender equality highlights the need for public engagement in this area. This can involve promoting gender equality in media, social networks, and public campaigns to challenge stereotypes and raise awareness about the importance of equality.

The conclusion is that there is a need for continuous investment in education, violence prevention, support, and promotion of gender equality among young people. Young people should have access to education programs, empowerment initiatives, and capacity-building opportunities that cater to their needs. Only by doing so can we create a society where everyone, regardless of gender, has equal opportunities and rights.

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*One of the key issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a low level of awareness about the prevalence of violence peer relationships, as well as the specific consequences of this form of gender-based violence. In addition, the lack of coordination and collaboration among relevant institutions, schools, healthcare facilities, and civil society organizations can hinder efforts to address peer violence. Improved collaboration and a systematic approach are needed to ensure support for victims and appropriate sanctions for perpetrators.*

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## CONCLUSIONS ON THE IDENTIFIED NEEDS OF YOUTH WHEN THEIR DAILY FUNCTIONING, RELATIONSHIPS AND POSITION IN SOCIETY ARE IN QUESTION

Based on the identified problems and proposed activities, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- **The key issues for young people include a lack of trust in the system and society**, insufficient awareness of opportunities, a lack of opportunities tailored to their needs, limited engagement in driving change, disinterest in societal issues, a lack of communication among themselves, and a lack of trust among young people.
- **Young people recognize the importance of activities that inform and motivate** them to become involved in decision-making bodies and societal processes. This highlights the need to promote youth participation through information, motivation, and empowerment activities.
- **Young people also emphasize the need for activities** that provide them with spaces to gather, address their problems, and find solutions. Creating safe spaces and opportunities for exchanging ideas and providing support among young people is crucial for their engagement and empowerment.
- **The lack of information** among young people about opportunities in their surroundings requires organizing activities that provide them with relevant information tailored to their interests and needs.
- **There is limited support for the idea of peer support** as a means of overcoming problems. It is important to highlight the potential of peer support and provide training to young people to equip them with the skills to provide information and support to one another.

In summary, it is concluded that efforts should focus on building trust among young people in the system and society, providing them with relevant information, creating opportunities for active participation and support, and promoting communication among young people. The implementation of recommended activities should be tailored to the needs and interests of young people to have a positive impact on their daily functioning, relationships, and societal position.

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## 6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

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### RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON CONCLUSIONS ON THE IDENTIFIED NEEDS OF YOUTH WHEN MENTAL HEALTH IS IN QUESTION

- **Improve the support system for young people:** Efforts should be made to enhance the existing support system for youth mental health to make it accessible, high-quality, and tailored to their needs.
- **Education and awareness are key:** Young people need access to mental health education and information about available support resources. Programs should be developed to provide them with knowledge and skills to better recognize and address mental health challenges.

- Eradicate stigma around mental health: It is important to work towards destigmatizing mental health issues to enable young people to openly discuss their challenges and seek support without fear of judgment or discrimination.
- Peer support is crucial: Initiatives that enable peers to support each other in matters of mental health should be encouraged and promoted, along with appropriate training and resources.
- Focus on prevention: Invest in activities aimed at preventing mental health problems among young people, including education on healthy habits, stress management strategies, and early detection of symptoms of poor mental health.
- Ensure accessibility of support resources: Efforts should be made to ensure that counseling services and psychological support are accessible and available to young people within the education system and healthcare facilities.
- Promote a holistic approach: Emphasize the importance of overall well-being for young people, including physical health, nutrition, sleep, routine, and self-fulfillment, as part of mental health care.

Combining these recommendations can help raise awareness about youth mental health, improve the support provided, and create an environment where young people feel supported and understood in regards to their mental health.

Considering that a supportive environment for the improvement and preservation of youth mental health cannot be built without the active involvement of parents, here are several recommendations for further action to encourage parents' active involvement in supporting youth mental health:

- **Parent education:** Organize educational programs or workshops for parents on youth mental health to enhance their understanding of the importance and challenges faced by young people. Provide them with information about signs and symptoms of mental health issues and ways to provide support.
- **Communication and open conversations:** Encourage open communication between parents and children about mental health. Create a safe space where young people feel they can express their emotions and concerns without judgment. Parents should be active listeners and be available for conversations whenever needed.
- **Early identification and intervention:** Encourage parents to be attentive to changes in their children's behavior, mood, or performance that may indicate mental health issues. Encourage them to seek professional help and support their children in obtaining appropriate diagnosis and therapy.
- **Partnership with educational institutions:** Promote collaboration between parents and schools to ensure that mental health support is provided comprehensively. Organize parent meetings, workshops, or lectures on mental health to inform and involve parents in providing support.
- **Self-care support for parents:** Recognize that parents may also face their own mental health challenges. Provide them with resources and support to take care of their well-being, enabling them to be better support for their children.
- **Community engagement:** Encourage parents to get involved in local initiatives and organizations that promote youth mental health. This can involve participating in parent groups, volunteering, or supporting campaigns that raise awareness of mental health.
- **Ongoing support:** Ensure continuous support for parents through counseling or support groups. Provide them with information about available resources and services so they can seek help whenever needed.

By implementing these recommendations, we can foster an environment where parents actively contribute to supporting youth mental health, resulting in improved well-being for young people. It is important to emphasize the

significance of parental support in maintaining and enhancing the mental health of young people and encourage parents to be active participants in this process.

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*Traumatic experiences caused by armed conflict can have diverse consequences on mental health and lead to various disorders and conditions. In addition to post-traumatic stress disorder, individuals who have gone through war-related experiences may face issues such as addiction, violent tendencies, depression, anxiety, and other difficulties. These consequences not only affect the individuals themselves but also have an impact on their families, particularly their children. Children who are exposed to the suffering and compromised mental health of their parents have a higher risk of developing similar problems.*

*The parents of young people directly involved in this project belong to the age group that has been most severely affected by the armed conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the traumas they have experienced and the consequences of those traumas on their mental health have never been the subject of systematic support. This ultimately contributed to the deterioration of their children's mental health.*

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## RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE CONCLUSIONS ON THE IDENTIFIED NEEDS OF YOUTH WHEN IT COMES TO GENDER EQUALITY

Based on the identified problems related to gender equality and the proposed activities, the following recommendations can be made:

- **Education and awareness-raising for young people:** Provide educational programs on gender equality and violence against young people to increase awareness and knowledge among young people about these issues. This can include workshops, seminars, campaigns, and educational materials tailored to young people. It is crucial to emphasize that these programs need to be youth-centered and address their specific needs.
- **Prevention of violence peer relationships:** Organize violence prevention programs that focus on developing healthy relationships, communication skills, and non-violent conflict resolution strategies. This can include workshops, mentoring, group discussions, and promotion of equality and respect.
- **Support and services for victims:** Ensure safe spaces and resources for victims of peer violence, such as helplines, safe houses, counseling, and psychological support. Ensure that these services are accessible, confidential, and tailored to the needs of young people.
- **Promotion of equality and inclusivity:** Promote gender equality and inclusivity through public campaigns, media projects, and social networks. Support projects that emphasize the importance of equal rights and opportunities for all young people, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or other characteristics.
- **Strengthening collaboration and coordination:** Improve collaboration among institutions, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, and other relevant stakeholders to effectively address gender inequality and violence. Exchange information, resources, and best practices to ensure coordinated and comprehensive interventions. Raise awareness about the identified problems of young people and the proposed activities for overcoming them in relevant local and regional bodies, as well as existing bodies for multi-sectoral cooperation.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating implemented activities and programs. Regularly analyze results and adapt interventions based on the needs and challenges identified during the process. Na osnovu identifikovanih problema u vezi sa rodnom ravnopravnošću i predloženih aktivnosti, možemo dati sljedeće preporuke:

These recommendations can help improve gender equality and reduce peer violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, it is important for these recommendations to be implemented with the support of relevant institutions, civil society, and the wider community in order to achieve sustainable and significant progress.

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*Taking into account that patriarchal patterns carry the legacy of gender inequality and the normalization of gender-based violence, we can consider intergenerational exchange of experiences as a useful tool for change. These activities can be of great assistance to women who are more prone to supporting patriarchal models, as they will help them become aware of the negative consequences experienced by them and women in their surroundings due to the lack of gender equality. Additionally, such programs also contribute to raising awareness among young people about the archaic nature of patriarchal behavioral models and their mismatch with the contemporary times we live in. Young people will be encouraged to think critically about these traditional patterns and to challenge the stereotypes and prejudices stemming from these patriarchal norms.*

*Intergenerational exchange of experiences can enable a better understanding of the issues women face across different generations and contribute to strengthening solidarity among different groups of women. These efforts can help create a society that values and respects gender equality, while reducing the presence of gender-based violence and discrimination.*

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## RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE CONCLUSIONS ON THE DETERMINED NEEDS OF THE YOUTH WHEN THEIR DAILY FUNCTIONING, RELATIONSHIPS AND POSITION IN THE SOCIETY ARE IN QUESTION

Based on the identified problems and conclusions, the following recommendations can be made:

- **Establish open communication:** Civil society organizations and institutions should establish open and transparent communication with young people. This includes creating platforms for dialogue, listening to their opinions and ideas, and providing feedback on decisions made.
- **Inform young people about opportunities:** Organize activities and events that inform young people about opportunities, resources, and support available in their environment. These activities should be tailored to their needs and interests and promoted in an accessible manner.
- **Create new opportunities for young people:** Identify gaps and deficiencies in the opportunities available to young people and develop programs and projects that adequately address their needs. These initiatives should be inclusive and ensure equal access for all young people regardless of their background or status.
- **Encourage active youth participation:** Organize workshops, education programs, and mentoring that enable young people to develop skills for active participation and influence in bringing about social change. Encourage them to get involved in decision-making bodies and express their opinions on issues that affect them.
- **Create safe spaces for expression:** Organize roundtable discussions, debates, and other activities that allow young people to express their opinions, engage in discussions on social issues, and raise awareness about topics that interest them. Provide support and a conducive environment for expressing their views.
- **Promote peer support:** Conduct training and workshops to empower young people to provide information and support to one another. Develop programs that promote peer support and help young people build trust among themselves.

- **Collaboration with relevant stakeholders:** Establish collaboration with organizations, governments, non-governmental sectors, and other relevant stakeholders to work together in addressing youth issues. Utilize their resources and expertise to ensure a comprehensive approach and effective outcomes.

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*In order to effectively support young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is crucial to understand that they are constantly at risk of marginalization, making them one of the traditionally identified groups with limited rights (LNOB group).*

*This fact has a significant impact on young people's ability to recognize and express their issues, as well as their ability to actively engage and mobilize in society. It is particularly important to consider this situation when working with young people who face multiple risks of marginalization.*

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## 7. ANNEXES

### 7.1. LIST OF DOCUMENTS USED IN THE ANALYSIS OF THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHEN IT IS A QUESTION OF PROTECTION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND GENDER EQUALITY AND MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUTH IN THE CANTON OF TUZLA

NO	DOCUMENT
1.	ANALYSIS ON GENDER EQUALITY AND MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IMPACT MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT FOR THE PROJECT "“YOUTH AS SOCIAL CHANGEMAKERS” "
2.	LAW ON GENDER EQUALITY IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
3.	LAW ON PROHIBITION OF DISCRIMINATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
4.	GENDER ACTION PLAN FOR BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (2018-2022)
5.	GENDER ACTION PLAN FOR TUZLA CANTON (2021-2024)
6.	GENDER ACTION PLAN FOR THE CITY OF TUZLA (2013-2016)
7.	LAW ON PROTECTION FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
8.	LAW ON YOUTH OF THE FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
9.	LAW ON HEALTH PROTECTION IN THE FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
10.	STRATEGIC PLAN FOR HEALTH PROTECTION IN THE FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA 2008-2018 (LAST VALID DOCUMENT IN THIS AREA)
11.	POLICY AND STRATEGY FOR THE PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH IN THE FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
12.	PROTOCOL FOR INTERVENTIONS IN CASES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FOR TUZLA CANTON WITH AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE PREVENTION AND COMBATING OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FOR TUZLA CANTON 2019-2020
13.	STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR YOUTH OF THE CITY OF TUZLA 2017-2026
14.	INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE CITY OF TUZLA 2012-2026 (REVISED FOR THE PERIOD 2019-2021)
15.	INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR TUZLA CANTON 2021-2027 (DRAFT)
16.	STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR YOUTH OF TUZLA CANTON 2021-2027 (DRAFT)

7.2. RELEVANT STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPANTS LIST FOR THE ANALYSIS ON THE NEEDS OF YOUTH REGARDING MENTAL HEALTH PROTECTION AND GENDER EQUALITY, AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH IN TUZLA CANTON

	<b>Name and Surname</b>	<b>Institution/Organization/Position</b>	<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>1.</b>	Prim dr. Zlatko Kalabić	Center for Mental Health Tuzla /Director and Member of the Gender Equality Commission of the City of Tuzla	Interview via the ZOOM online application	21.06.2023.
<b>2.</b>	Suada Selimović	The Ministry of Labor, Social Policy, and Return of Tuzla Canton/ Expert Advisor	Interview via the ZOOM online application	21.06.2023.
<b>3.</b>	prof.dr.sc. Vesna Bratovčić	University of Tuzla/ Vice-Rector for Interuniversity Cooperation at the University of Tuzla	Interview via the ZOOM online application	22.03.2023.
<b>4.</b>	Selma Čatibušić	Tuzla City Council/ Council Member of Tuzla City Council Member of CSO Zemlja djece	Interview via the ZOOM online application	21.06.2023.
<b>5.</b>	Dina Bajraktarević	CSO Tuzlanski otvoreni centar / Coordinator at CSO and Member of the Youth Council of Tuzla	Interview via the ZOOM online application	22.06.2023.
<b>6.</b>	Sabina Sinanović Čatibušić	CSO Fondacija Tuzlanske Zajednice/ Programm Director	Interview via the ZOOM online application	27.06.2023.
<b>7.</b>	Ena Džambić, psihologinja	CSO Horizonti/ Expert and Advisor for the Protection of Women's Human Rights	Interview via the ZOOM online application	23.06.2023.