CHILD PROTECTION HUB
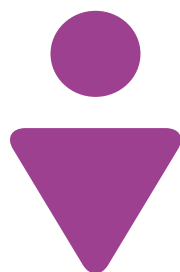**FOR SOTH EAST EUROPE**

IICRD

Regional Research

ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

Country Report: Serbia

In partnership with: International Institute for Child Rights and Development & Child Hub

Date: March 2021

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Partner Institutions:
Centre for Youth Integration-Belgrade

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Executive Summary

Key findings

- Children in Serbia recognize psychological violence as the most common type of violence, and also as the violence that has the greatest, most long-term, negative impact on their lives. However, institutions, especially schools, are less responsive to cases of psychological violence.

- Local communities have social norms which do not encourage children to report violence, and the community is prone to tolerate psychological violence.

- For children in both rural and urban areas, the closest circle of support is their family (parents), then school professionals, and then peers. Children are ambivalent in regard to peers: they do talk amongst themselves, but do not see each other as a strong protective factor. They seek protection from adults.

- There are not enough preventive and educational programs, and those that exist in schools and in the community are not seen as efficient and effective by children.

- Children do not see themselves as agents of change and they agree that the level of children's participation is generally low.

- There are negative attitudes towards the increasing number of refugees who are, in some communities, seen as dangerous, or perpetrators of violence from whom they need protection.

Key recommendations

- The government should push for the development of local child protection policies and find resources for their implementation. The implementation of violence protection measures will gradually increase the effectiveness of protection from violence and trust in institutions.

- There is a strong need for a wider awareness campaign to address psychological violence and its impact on children's well-being.

- The social norms that influence attitudes toward violence against and among children need to be changed to eliminate a common tolerance to some forms of violence.

- Comprehensive education programs are necessary for families, and to involve parents of very young children in education for preventing violence.

- Children's agency needs bolstering, especially in rural areas, through programs that would empower children. In order to develop and implement effective programs, children should be involved in creating them.

- Increase the awareness of professionals concerning the importance of child participation, and moreover, work with school professionals on how to support children in increasing their participation in school life and in the community.

- All programs should be inclusive of minority and marginalized groups, especially in communities with a higher number of refugees.

- Children and adults recognize that violence is an issue for the whole community. It is extremely important to underline that changing social norms is a process which needs time, and the community must be united to fight violence against and among children.

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1 Introduction

It is no longer possible to ignore the significant and widespread impact violence has on children. It influences children in the short and long term, and even across generations. Despite the three decades that have passed since the international community came together to launch the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Hollis, Marcy, Amboy and Kress (2016) found that over 1 billion, half of all children between the ages of 2 and 17, had experienced violence, abuse or neglect within the previous year. Violence against children happens in schools, homes, communities and across systems. In South East Europe, violence against children is pervasive.

Understanding that direct and indirect experiences of violence in childhood undermines our investments in children in health, education, and development, this research focuses on further understanding the social and gender norms impacting school-related (gender-based) violence (SRGBV), and the role of children in challenging these social norms.

For this research, Child Hub Europe partnered with Terre des hommes and the Institute for International Child Rights and Development to address this critical issue.
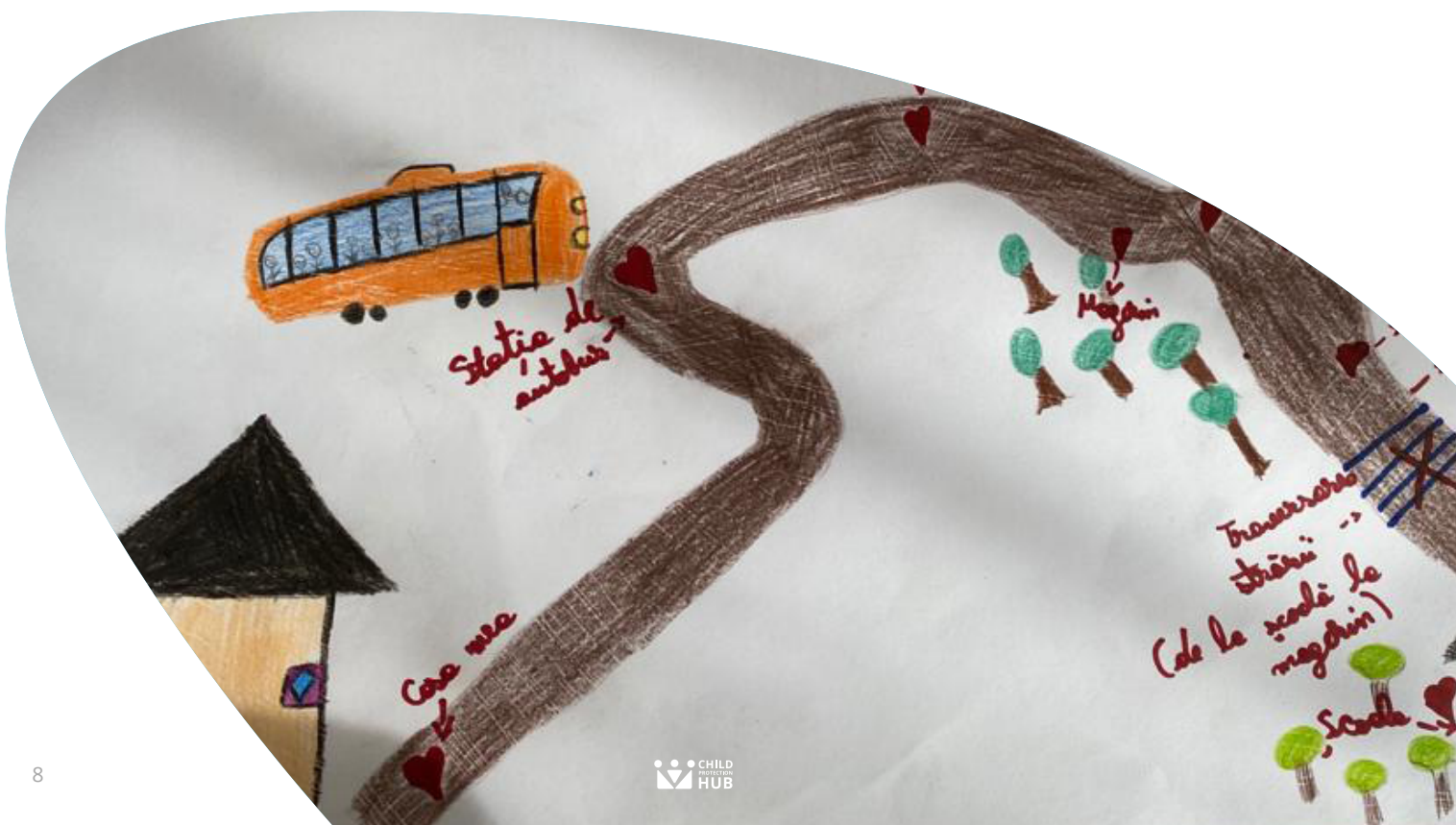
Methodological Overview: Overview of multi-country study

This study was conducted in South Eastern Europe, specifically in **Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, and Serbia.**

The purpose of the research was: **To measure the social and gender norms impacting school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), and the potential role of children in challenging these social norms (RFP Child Hub).**

2.1. Guiding Questions and Contextual Lens of Analysis

The following questions guided all aspects of the study, and were integrated into the study framework and relevant data collection instruments:

1. What do we know about the incidence and type of violence that children are facing in and around school in Southern and Eastern Europe, as well as the children that are most impacted by it?

2. What are the social and gender norms of school children, community members and school professionals related to violence against children?

3. What are the social and gender norms of school children, community members and school professionals related to gender-based violence against children?

4. What are the informal and formal mechanisms, child-led actions, community resources, values and services that protect children from violence and promote a child's well-being?

5. To what degree do children feel able to prevent or respond to violence (and GBV specifically) against themselves and their peers, and what ideas do they have for preventing and responding to violence?

6. How has children's experience of violence in and around school changed since COVID-19?

Note: due to measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic, data collection in some countries was temporarily suspended until it could be resumed in accordance

with national and local requirements to ensure the safety of participants and researchers. To maintain the consistency and legitimacy of the data collection, the research questions remained the same, but additional contextual information provides clarity on data that refers to retrospective perspectives of what was occurring prior to pandemic policies and school closures, and any changes that have occurred as a result of lockdown measures. Some additional questions were added to explore the perception of the change in experiences of violence in schools and other educational experiences (including online, learning from home) that occurred as a result of COVID-19 measures.

In order to gather information on the current status and practice of violence against children, as well as on social norms, attitudes, practices and knowledge around violence against children, this study explored educational settings in addition to the full context of children's lives within which violence takes place. This study focused on:

1. Girls' and boys' experiences and life stories (in general),

2. Educational settings (including formal and informal educational settings [in person, at a distance, online], for teachers, principals and fellow students),

3. The route to educational settings (including outdoor spaces, recreational areas, business areas, roads, etc.),

4. Formal and informal support services (including social services, state care and the judicial system)

5. Cultural values, beliefs and norms that shape children and adults' social and gender norms with respect to violence against children.

6. Children in exceptionally difficult circumstances, such as children with disabilities, children living on the street, migrant children, ethnic or religious groups, etc.

2.2 2.2 Research Methods and Approach

This is a mixed methodology study with a "qualitatively driven approach" (Hesse-Bibber & Johnson, 2015). It is both inductive and deductive, as well as exploratory, drawing on participatory methods. Using a variety of research instruments with groups of children and adults (see the table below), the researchers' understanding of children's lived realities gradually deepened. Further exploration of children's lives will yield stronger indications of social norms and practices, and will enable clearer direction for future programming and policy, rather than a process that reaches larger numbers of participants with less depth.

Within the participatory methodology, the focus of the instruments was to provide children and adults with a framework in which they could explore the violence that is taking place in children's lives. Rather than asking closed questions, researchers created the space for children to name what they perceive as violence, explain

its prevalence and its impact on their daily lives, discuss their attitudes towards violence as well as the attitudes of their peers, parents and the broader community, and the impact of these attitudes. In addition, attention was given to creating space for children to identify strategies for prevention and support services, as well as for social change.

Researchers in each project country identified the most appropriate sites based on the sampling frame.

The sampling frame aimed to include the following:
• Children aged 13–18 (approximately 30 children/site [2 groups of 10–15 children, one boy group and one girl group], in approximately 2-4 sites)
• Adults, including: parents, teachers, principals, other school professionals, community and religious leaders, social service providers and community members (approximately 15 people/site)

However, given the added complications associated with COVID-19 distancing protocols, the sampling frame was adapted according to health and safety specifications.

Two local communities in Serbia were selected: an urban city in Central Serbia with approximately 120,000 inhabitants, of which, 18% are children and youth aged 0–18; and one rural town in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, in Northern Serbia, with approximately 15,000 inhabitants, of which, 17% are children and youth aged 0–18.

Two schools were involved in the research:
• A rural elementary school with 17 children, aged 13–14, and 10 adults: representatives of the local community, teachers, parents and service providers.
• An urban secondary school with 18 children, aged 15–18 (9 girls and 9 boys), and 13 adults: representatives of the local community, teachers, parents and service providers.

Methods conducted with Children and Adults

Children	Adults
Tool 1: Social Mapping- Part 1	Tool 7: Vignettes
Tool 2: Vignettes	Tool 8: Focus Group
Tool 3: Participative Ranking Methodology	
Tool 4: Social Mapping-Part 2 (Optional)	
Tool 5: Social Network Mapping	
Tool 6: Focus Group	

Although the COVID-19 pandemic hit during data collection, there was no need to adapt these tools as the researchers had completed most of the data collection before the state of emergency was announced in the Republic of Serbia. Therefore, the data collection was completed in person, respecting physical distancing at all sites.

2.3 2.3 Ethical Considerations

Research on sensitive subjects, such as violence against children, can cause unintended harm to participants, for example, if confidentiality is breached, informed consent is not obtained, or a group of people is stigmatized. Researchers need to be careful not to raise expectations, which can lead to mistrust of outsiders and disillusionment. Researchers also need to be cautious not to increase power imbalances that may cause a particular group to become vulnerable.

The research on violence may ask children and adults, even without direct questions concerning personal experience, to re-live painful and difficult trauma. For researchers working with children who may have suffered from violence, abuse, neglect and/or exploitation, there is a critical responsibility to "do no harm" in their interactions with children and youth.

The researchers in this study were trained to watch for signs of distress (both verbal and non-verbal) among children. They ensured that the environment within the activities remained respectful and supportive, and took time to speak with children who may have needed extra support outside of the activity. The name and contact details of a support worker, as well as emergency numbers and local reporting protocol, were listed on a flipchart at all times, enabling children to reach out for additional support on their own. Where a flipchart was not practical, handouts were given to young participants before each session. When, for example, a researcher saw that a young person required support, they were able to discuss this with the child and call a support person to request a personal visit be made to the community. The researcher was then able to follow-up with both the child and the support worker using appropriate child safeguarding protocol, as per the Tdh Child Safeguarding Policy and national legislation.

Please see Appendix B for more on Ethical Research Protocols, including further ethical guidelines, recommendations and practices for working with children, informed consent and limited confidentiality procedures and considerations.

Country-Level Methodology

3.1 Research Team

The key members of the research team were the national researchers, Slavica Milojević and Tatjana Lazor Obradović, who conducted data collection at both sites, data processing and report writing. Field data collection support was provided by Dragana Vučković and Lazar Milošević from the Centre for Youth Integration in Belgrade. Vesna Cvjetanović and Nikola Petrovic transcribed the materials.

3.2 Site Selection

The research took place on the premises of schools in the selected local communities. The Centre for Youth Integration from Belgrade, Terre des hommes' local partner, was involved in site selection for the research. We conducted research outside of the capital — at a location in Central Serbia and in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. The research findings have no specific references to COVID-19 as most of the data collection was completed before a state of emergency was announced in Serbia on 15 March 2020. Data collection was carried out in May with one group of adults in a rural location, but all protective measures were taken by both researchers and participants, who respected physical distancing and wore masks when appropriate.

3.3 Participants

Children between the ages of 13 and 18 participated. There were 17 children aged 13 - 14 years old in the rural community (9 girls and 8 boys), and 18 children aged 15 - 18 from the urban community (9 girls and 9 boys).

The children **aged 13 and 14** in the rural community in AP Vojvodina are pupils at an elementary school. They are of various ethnic backgrounds (this is a **multi-ethnic community**), but most are Serbian nationals. They are from families of **various social-economic backgrounds**. All live relatively close to the school, with the exception of two children: one child is from a village next to the town, and one is from a more distant settlement and walks a long way to school.

The older children, between the ages of 15 and 18, attend secondary school in the urban city. Among these 18 children, some come from the urban part of the

city, some from other parts of the city and some from villages nearby. Most of the children live with their parents, in various socio-economic circumstances. Two of the girls stay in alternative care, and 3 of the children (two boys and one girl) are from other cities, but live in a school dormitory.

Of the 23 adults there were: 7 parents, 6 teachers, 2 school pedagogues, 8 local community representatives (2 social services providers, 3 CSO activists, 1 community leader-retired police inspector, 1 cultural worker with extensive experience working with children and youth, and 1 paediatrician).

Locations:

Researchers worked with children and adults at two locations. These locations were selected as areas that are specifically compelling for social norms, gender-based issues and violence. The rural location, near the northern border of Serbia, is multi-ethnic and multi-religious, and has been significantly impacted by migration since the 1990s. It once belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The other is an urban location in Central Serbia. It is ethnically and religiously more homogeneous (with Serbs being the prominent majority), and has experience hosting Serbian IDPs from Kosovo. Historically, it was part of the Ottoman Empire.

At each location, the research teams spent 3 days working with 3 groups: 2 groups of approximately 10 children, and 1 group of approximately 10 adults.

Given the nature of the research, children aged 13–18 were selected as they represent an **age group that has reached a developmental stage that can understand the complexities of violence and the systems that influence it.** Given the gendered nature of experiences of violence, the participants needed to include a nearly equal number of participants from both genders. Children on the gender-spectrum had the opportunity to choose to participate in the group they most closely identified with.

Group size was determined by engaging the largest number of participants without compromising the depth of the research for a team of researchers (1 to 2 people). At each research site, researchers worked with 2 separate gender-specific groups of children, and 1 separate group of adults, for a maximum total of 30 children per site (ideally equal numbers of girls and boys), and a maximum number of 15 adults from each site (ideally equal numbers of men and women). This means a maximum of 30–60 children and 15–30 adults were engaged per country, making the project's total maximum sample size 240–480 children and 120–240 adults.

Whenever possible, sensitivity to the gender of the group was matched with the gender of the researchers.

3.4 Sampling

Choosing the appropriate school was limited by numerous pragmatic and sampling constraints. The research is exploratory in nature and the sampling strategy was drawn on convenience sampling, allowing researchers to choose schools that are accessible to them and the opportunity for schools to identify children who meet the criteria for inclusion in the study. Therefore, the schools were identified via convenience and purposive sampling in order to select specific populations representing a diverse range of children in a diverse range of settings. This was set collaboratively by national researchers, and included schools representing both urban and rural contexts. It is worth noting that the rural location borders Croatia and BIH, and there are significant number of migrants in the area. This had an impact on the children and adults' perspectives on violence.

The target population was elementary school children aged 13–14 (grades 7 and 8), in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (Northern Serbia), and children aged 15–18 from a secondary school in Central Serbia. The secondary school group included **children without parental care living in SOS Children's Village, Kraljevo**, as well as children from other cities living in the school dormitory.

It is also important to note that we worked closely with schools, community organizations and local governments to ensure that we could conduct this research with the same children and adults throughout the research process; the same participants were involved throughout so that researchers and participants could deepen their understanding as each research tool progressed.

Sampling Children

Working with local partners, secondary schools and community organizations were contacted in advance to inform them of the research. Based on the sampling frame provided above, national researchers identified schools and invited them to participate. The research in Serbia included two schools: one elementary and one secondary school.

Each school in Serbia included 2 groups of approximately 17 children: one group of 8 boys and 9 girls, aged 13–14 years old; and one group of 9 girls and 9 boys aged 15–18 years old. Both groups were purposively selected by the school administration and invited to participate in the research.

Sampling Adults

Adult participants included: **mothers, fathers, caregivers, educators (teachers, principals) and community leaders** (community and religious leaders, and social service providers). A mixed-gender group of 8–15 people was involved at each research site. In order to obtain a group of 15 adults, it was sometimes necessary to invite a larger number of adults, based on convenience. In total, 23 adults with different backgrounds and experiences related to violence among children participated in Serbia.

Data Analysis

Since the research was conducted in **two different locations, with two separate research teams**, the data collection and analysis included gathering all of the relevant materials outlined by the methodology designed for this research.

Data analysis started after collecting all of the necessary information and transcripts for both groups. The main concern was to see what, despite their different locations and socio-economic backgrounds, the two groups have in common, how they differ in understanding various types of violence and how they react to cases of violence in their communities.

3.5 Ethical Issues

Before research began with the groups of children and adults in Serbia, they received an Informed Consent Letter to let them know what the research was about and asking if they would like to participate. The consent was documented by asking children/parents and adults to sign consent forms. The first research meeting began by creating a common understanding of the aims and methodology of the research, with a detailed explanation of the activities that would be carried out.

Great emphasis was placed on tolerance and respect in the meetings with children and adults. The research team explained that respect implies valuing every participant and the context of their lives and recognition of their dignity. Obtaining their informed consent was an important means of demonstrating respect for the participants' dignity. Furthermore, the team explained that respect also means keeping in mind that everyone has their cultural context they live in, and their own experiences, capabilities and perspectives. These perspectives are based on the subjective and relational experiences within their communities, including family, peers and social structures, which should be taken into account.

The team then explained the meaning of and differences between privacy and confidentiality: privacy referring to the right to non-interference in an individual's thoughts, knowledge, acts, associations and property (i.e., participants have the right to decide whether or not to share information about their emotional and behavioural challenges or beliefs); and confidentiality meaning the right to keep secret or private the information individuals entrust others with during the research.

Special note during COVID-19: As each local context changed rapidly during the COVID-19 pandemic, both for children and project staff, ethical protocols needed to be examined regularly (at each point of change).

3.6 Research Tools: Adaptations and Reflections on their Implementation

The research was carried out using the proposed research tools for both children and adults.

Six research tools were used with the children:

1. Social Mapping Part 1: mapping protective mechanisms;
2. Vignettes to explore the boundaries of social acceptance of violence;
3. Participative Ranking Methodology to understand the relative importance of different kinds of violence in schools from the children's perspectives;
4. Social Mapping Part 2: the spatial and temporal elements of violence and protection from violence;
5. Social Network Mapping to understand the links between support/protection and types of violence; and
6. Focus Group for participants to share additional ideas or perspectives, and fill gaps on norms, protections and violence.

All of the tools were applied with groups of children split by gender and age (boys or girls aged 13–14, and boys or girls aged 15–18). Attention was also paid to ensure that the gender of the researchers corresponded with the gender of the participants.

The research tools used in data collection with adults were:
1. Vignettes that explore the boundaries of the social acceptance of violence in schools; and
2. Focus Group for participants to share additional ideas or perspectives, and fill gaps on norms, protections and violence.

All of the tools were well accepted by both children and adults, who showed a readiness to actively participate in each of them.

3.7 Limitations

We were aware of the **cultural issues which might hinder adult men from participating** in the research. This problem arose when inviting participants, and in both adult groups, we had only **two male participants**: there were no male participants for the urban location, and only two in the rural location. This should be considered when discussing the responses to some of the questions.

4 Violence Against Children in Schools in Serbia

On 21 May 2020, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Strategy for Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence for the period 2020–2023, and the accompanying Action Plan for 2020 and 2021. This document is an important step in the strategic improvement of the protection of children from violence in Serbia, especially bearing in mind that the previous National Strategy for Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence covered the period 2009–2015. The Strategy defines different types of violence and, unlike its predecessor, it recognizes a larger number of environments in which violence occurs. In that sense, it also indicates that corporal punishment of children, to correct or control their behaviour, is child abuse, and that society must have zero tolerance for it. This document stresses the importance of special protection of children from vulnerable groups who are often exposed to multiple forms of violence. It specified children in street situations, refugee children, migrant children, LGBTI children and Roma children, among others, as particularly vulnerable groups of children.

Research findings show that violence against children in Serbia is widespread in various forms. Serbia is one of the countries that initiated the Research to Policy and Practice Process, an approach designed by the UNICEF Office of Research — Innocenti, that aims to build an evidence base upon which to ground interventions to prevent and respond to violence against children, with a focus on the underlying determinants and factors of violence. The aim of this process is to better understand what drives different forms of violence against children in different settings, and to provide good evidence as a basis for improving the system of preventing and protecting children from violence. During the initial stage of the R3P process, the national study on determinants and factors of violence against children in Serbia was produced.

Determinants refer to factors at the institutional and structural level that create the conditions in which violence is more or less likely to occur. Determinants are recognized as structural or institutional determinants. Among the structural we underline two very important areas of this research: cultural factors that appear in different forms (as high tolerance for violence resulting from wars, crisis, and social unrest; as discriminatory attitudes towards minorities; and as norms and values related to gender roles and relations), and digitalization – the development of information and communication technologies, the Internet and social media, which are linked with new forms of violence against children. Institutional determinants may include ineffective instruments of coordination, identification and treatment in cases of violence.

Risk and protective factors reflect the likelihood of violence to occur due to characteristics most often measured at the individual, interpersonal, and community levels. The risk and protective factors were divided into: (1) Community risk factors, such as attitudes toward corporal punishment, legitimacy of violent disciplining methods, and parenting methods; (2) interpersonal risk factors, including norms and values creating a specific "school culture/atmosphere" in regard to violence; (3) Individual risk factors – studies show exposure to violence is connected to certain characteristics of the child (gender, age, disability or other forms of vulnerability). However, these personal factors are not "real" factors of violence. If girls (or boys) are more exposed to violence in the family, this is not due to the fact that they are girls (or boys), but rather the fact that cultural norms defining legitimate or desirable child-rearing and disciplining methods determine the gendered patterns of violence.

Specific forms of violence against children in Serbia are: (1) violence that affects girls to a greater extent (child marriages, sexual exploitation and violence, and trafficking); and (2) violence that affects more boys (child labour in rural areas and physical peer-on-peer violence in urban areas). Two groups of children are particularly at risk for violence: children living and working on the street (who easily become victims of exploitation, especially sexual exploitation, and are at risk of human trafficking) and children living in residential social-protection institutions.

School should be a safe place devoted to learning, youth socialization and norms transfer. However, research on violence in this setting has documented a high prevalence of violence. In 2013, 44% of students reported being exposed to peer-on-peer violence in the three-month period preceding the survey. Among them: 45.8% experienced verbal abuse, 33% physical violence, another 33% social violence (plotting, manipulative relations, etc.), while 21% of children were perpetrators of violence. Boys were slightly more likely to label themselves "bullies" than girls, and were more often exposed to violence by peers and adults. A quarter of the students in years 5–8 of primary school were victims of bullying by a teacher, 15% of them said that they had been hit by a teacher, and 5% had been threatened by a teacher (Popadić, et al., 2014). Gender-based violence is widespread in schools, as 69% of primary school students and 74% of secondary school students reported having been exposed to at least one form of gender-based violence. Boys, more often than girls, express views justifying gender-based violence against women (Ćeriman et al., 2015).

Increasingly, children face online violence. Violence from school and the community is often transferred to the digital space, but new threats and forms of violence are also lurking on the Internet and social media. Last year, 62% of primary school students and 84% of secondary school students were exposed to at least one Internet risk (Popadić & Kuzmanović, 2013). Violence against children in the community exists in various forms. Some are based on ethnic affiliation (e.g., violence against Roma children, between Serbian and Hungarian youth in Vojvodina), political affiliation (e.g., the LGBT movement attacked by right wing groups), sport club affiliation, etc. Instead of being a zone of promotion of healthy lifestyles, sport clubs are an arena for violent experiences. Among children involved in sports, 51% said they had experienced some form of violence from their teammates, 41% by their opponents, and as many as 61% of them experienced violence from their coaches (Popadić, et al., 2011: 73).

5 Findings

5.1 Incidence, Type and Perpetrators of Violence Against Children

Among younger children, those aged 13–14, the most frequent types of violence are psychological (girls) and physical (boys). For older children, those aged 15–18 years old, it is nearly identical to the younger group: girls said emotional (psychological) violence is the most common, while for boys it was physical violence.

The ranking of places where they experience the most violence are: school, street/ city (night clubs and some particular locations during night hours), in the family and on social networks. There was a slight difference among older children, whose ranking was: street/city (night clubs and some particular locations during night hours), social networks, school and in the family.

In the school environment, peers and some teachers are seen as perpetrators. Also, both groups of children mentioned members of minority groups, like Roma or migrants/refugees[1], who are considered problematic; boys mentioned these groups in regard to several school and street fights, and girls were concerned about their safety at night, on the street and in the city centre. The question, "Have you ever been a perpetrator?", was provocative for the older children who had a very dynamic discussion on the topic. They concluded that most often children do not perceive themselves as causing violence, but are sensitive to being victims. This is especially the case for girls — boys are more critical towards their own violent behaviour than girls.

The most commonly recognized type of violence at school according to girls in both age groups was false gossip, mockery, swearing, sharing photos without permission, humiliation and provocation. The older children also mentioned physical violence. When discussing violence on the way to or from school, girls said that the most frequent types of violence are hitting, arranging group fights, quarrels and conflicts for no reason, exclusion from the peer group, insults, but rarely physical violence.

"I don't like girls to fight, but when my friend called me to defend her from girls from another school, I said yes." (Girl, 16)

The most common forms of violence among boys in both age groups was shooting rubber bands, fighting, insults, online violence, ridicule and blackmail. Most often

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[1] This refers to refugees from Afghanistan

boys experience violence on the way to and from school through insults, ridicule, derogatory name calling, rumbling, fighting and blackmail. It is interesting that blackmail, as well as physical fighting, often appears among the boys' answers about violence at school and on the way to and from school. These types of violence are mostly related to relationships within a peer group, and peers are referred to as those who commit the violence.

Both boys and girls said that teachers and professional associates use a subtler form of violence: ridicule and neglect of children's needs for conversation and support. Boys, however, emphasized the occurrence of verbal conflicts with teachers more than girls.

When talking to the children about the types of violence that have the biggest impact on them, girls mentioned, as particularly threatening but occurring not so often, sexual and gender-based violence: rape, posting intimate things on social networks, groping, exclusion from society, insulting and belittling.

"I think psychological violence is worse. You get beaten up and it passes, but with psychological [violence]...you have longer consequences." (Girl, 13)

"It's hardest when no one wants to hang out with you, when you're isolated and everyone looks at you like you're from another planet. And you are ashamed to complain to anyone and ask them to understand your situation... somebody could die from this isolation." (Boy, 15)

"I think the worst is psychological: exclusion from society, the group. Then everyone retreats into themselves. Both boys and girls." (Girl, 14)

For boys, it is primarily physical violence (fighting), then insults, ridicule, online violence and blackmail that have the biggest negative impact. Adults have similar opinions, but they also think see a lack of awareness among children on the need to report violence.

The community is most likely to tolerate verbal violence, and least likely to tolerate sexual violence. But overall, there is a low level of trust in institutions and their effectiveness in response to violence, especially the judicial system. This may be why there is a low level of reporting when it comes to violent incidents.

Some children are more vulnerable than others, and children recognize this:

"There is one girl in my class who constantly suffers violence from our classmates, more mentally than physically. It is usually the insult, pushing, that no child is comfortable with, not even her. She is very withdrawn. She has difficulties establishing contacts with people. She hangs out with my sister. I see that she does not like it. She is very sad. She reported it, but then the whole class attacked her for lying. Mostly, my sister and I take her side. The school is generally never interested in solving that. We have these workshops on violence, but mostly it never helps." (Boy, 13)

"Before, when I had just started here, I used to get annoyed and often fought when someone called me a 'homemaker'… and now I don't … Sometimes I just make fun of myself and say something offensive. I'm tired of explaining that I'm from a small place where there isn't a school." (Boy, 17)

Adults think that psychological and emotional violence has the biggest impact on children, and that the community lacks preventive measures or a real response to these issues. They believe that the community would be motivated to react to sexual and physical violence against children, although physical violence against boys is more likely to be tolerated. Also, in terms of the social status of the perpetrator, if the perpetrator comes from a family with a higher social or economic status, their behaviour will be tolerated or ignored. The adults furthermore believed that not many people in their community would report violence.

"My biggest fear is that something will happen to me when that bully comes out of custody, or to my children, because our society is like that. It is that double-edged sword, whether to report violence or not." (Community representative from a small community).

"What we would like is for there to be trust in the institutions, to address the class teacher, pedagogue or professional worker, but that probably rarely happens. And that is our responsibility. I think about it often." (Service provider)

"Well, I wouldn't report a parent who beats his child in the street." (Parent)

"If they saw children fighting in the street, everyone would surely separate them, but I don't think anyone would report it." (Teacher)

5.1.1 Attitudes toward refugees

Children and adults in the local community with a high percentage of migrants/refugees, wherein most refugees are placed in camps, but some are not, claim that single male refugees are perpetrators of some of the violence. Since there were incidents in the local community, some participants in the research, especially girls, expressed their concern in regard to the presence of refugees in the territory of their municipality. Children didn't emphasize any violent situation in the school environment where refugee children were involved, moreover, they declared that the school and their peers are trying to overcome language and cultural barriers with refugee children. On the other hand, the presence of single male refugees in the city streets and the incidents that happened, make them (especially girls) feel unsafe.

5.2 Social and Gender Norms Around Violence Against Children, including Gender-Based Violence in Serbia

Children and adults expressed a **high level of tolerance to some types of violence**. Some teachers believe that gossip and giving funny/scathing nicknames are *"normal at their age"* and can be considered a *"way to learn how to protect yourself"*.
The gender aspect of violence was initially not really recognized by child and adult informants. Through the discussions, however, both children and adults revealed that there is a significant difference in how the community perceives and responds to violence depending on the gender of the child involved.

The older group of children was a bit more sensitive to gender norms, but unexpectedly, they underlined that some children think "that girls act like they do not have worth". This was accepted even by the girls themselves. It is interesting to mention that some girls were more likely to believe that the victim (especially if the victim was a girl) was responsible for the violent act he/she experienced — they perceived the victim as sharing the blame for causing the violent situation — while boys did not express such an opinion. The explanations the girls offered for the violence confirm their belief that this type of behaviour is, in most cases, acceptable: *"He had to protect his dignity. Otherwise… I mean she deserved all these 'compliments'… You know – action and reaction…" (*Girl, 16)

Adult community representatives recognized that girls are more often exposed to online violence and shaming, while physical violence among/against boys is somehow seen as common and not alarming.

"There are differences between boys and girls when it comes to violence. Verbal violence is more prevalent among girls. Boys practice physical violence more." (Elementary school teacher)

"When it comes to gender-based violence, we often mean abusing the dominance of boys over girls, and we are always sensitive to that. We often normalize the opposite situation." (Secondary school pedagogue)

But, also, there are opinions that put a slight shadow over traditional views:

"We all should admit that girls are becoming more and more violent. They are sometimes even more involved in certain physical violence happening on the way to school than boys. It's not good if we continue to ignore these obvious situations that are happening more and more frequently." (CSO activist from an urban area)

"I think it's more honourable in boys. Me to you, you to me. Girls knit a net, so there are a lot of them involved, and they are more manipulative than boys." (Community representative)

"Girls, I think, are crueller than boys." (Elementary school teacher)

"Children are freer on the street than at school. They have one person for the family, one for the school and one for the street. They know the rules of the game, they know the boundaries. They know what the code is when it passes. I'm talking about most children." (Community representative)

Adults think that girls are less likely to report violence than boys, especially in cases of physical and domestic violence. The adult group declared that domestic violence is a taboo.

"When we conducted some surveys about it and talked about it, it was specific. We asked if they would report any violence to a neighbour. Nobody wants to interfere. We also have situations where victims drop out at some stage of the proceedings." (Social protection professional)

"Boys are more likely to tell you about domestic violence than girls. So, one of the boys openly said that his father beat him, showed us bruises, but his mother [...] said that it wasn't exactly like that [...]The girls are more closed and maybe they protect the family more." (A teacher from secondary school)

Parents think that girls experiencing some type of violence would prefer to talk to their peers, rather than parents. Teachers pointed out that depending on the personality of the teacher and how close they are with their pupils, girls would or would not talk to them. Furthermore, community representatives emphasized that in rural communities, parents support the silent, passive attitude: *"The problem in the villages is that the influence of the parents is patriarchal, in the sense of 'Don't draw attention. Whatever happens to you, you keep quiet and suffer'..."* (Teacher from a small community)

This phenomenon is more present in how parents deal with girls. It is important to underline that parents, when it comes to violence, often think of their children as victims, but are not ready to accept that their child might be a perpetrator — especially if their child is a girl.

"It is hard even to imagine that my daughter could be violent with someone. OK, she maybe likes to make jokes with her friends, maybe she is provocative sometimes, but that is not violence. I mean..." (Parent from an urban area)

The children clearly made a distinction in the behaviours and reactions of girls and boys: *"This environment of ours is very small and everyone here knows everything — everyone knows everyone. If I were Valentina's[2] parent I wouldn't blame her for anything, considering that I know how she feels. She works hard. If Valentina was a boy, she would surely object to the teacher's shouting. Most boys would react like this. There are some boys who are quiet and withdrawn, but there are not many of them. Most of the boys would certainly react. They are much freer."* (Boy, 14)

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[2] Valentina is a girl from a case study who experienced violent behavior from her teacher.

Children and adults also make a distinction between the status and behaviour of popular pupils with those who are less popular. Popularity is related to the social and economic status of the family, the parent's influence in the community, style of clothing, etc. According to the boys group, it is more likely that children from a better social and economic background will experience more efficient protection from school professionals, although some boys didn't agree with this. More popular children will also gain more support from their peers: *"If Martin was the son of the mayor, the story would probably have been covered by the media and there would have been reactions at all levels."* (Elementary school pedagogue)

Adult community representatives emphasized the negative influence of social networks and reality programs which are very popular and widely available in Serbia. They say that social and cultural values have deteriorated over the last two decades and that children do not know real values today. They blame society, media and the state:

"Everything comes from the family. Psychologists and various experts teach that if we talk one way and act another, children watch us and chaos arises in their heads. This is happening to our society. All of the television programs are available to children. Not to mention the internet. We went to bed at 7:15 pm, after the cartoon, in our time. If other children can watch the broadcasts from the parliament, where people are spitting, throwing shoes and no one faces any consequences…these adults are sending a message to all of us that we can behave like that too. I think that children, from kindergarten until our age, are aware that no matter what some people do, there will be no sanctions. And that's why all this is happening. You know at school whose child will never be sanctioned; there will be no relocation. We all know that." (Elementary school teacher)

5.3 Protection from Violence and Promotion of Well-being

Children in small communities and urban areas generally feel safe among their neighbours and in most public places, especially during daylight hours. They say that they avoid locations which lack public lighting (like parks, cemeteries, or dark streets). They feel safest with their families; they see their home as the safest environment, and then school.

When talking about cases of violence, children usually speak to their head teacher[3], but this depends on the teacher; some children prefer to address school professionals (pedagogues) rather than their head teacher, or a teacher they find more perceptive to their needs. Coaches are also seen as trustworthy people to speak to about cases of violence. Some girls said that they would rather speak with a relative (aunt or uncle), than with their parents: *"Whenever I had a problem, I used to call my uncle. He understands everything and he used to show me the male perspective to my problem. Usually he has very clever advice. Maybe he later tells my mom, I don't know, but I trust him. He is always, always on my side — more often than my dad."* (Girl, 17)

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[3] The teacher in charge of a particular class.

Children also often talk to their peers about violent situations and ask for their support. When discussing cases of violence in school or in relation to the school community, children declared that a victim should talk to their head teacher and school pedagogue. Boys think that it is more likely that boys will support each other rather than girls. Also, they say that it is less likely that a girl will support a boy victim of violence. *"It would be more common for a boy to help a girl than vice versa. Parents teach us that it is more a matter between the same sex. When they hear that there is a friendship between a boy and a girl, stories immediately arise. Everything is misinterpreted. If it weren't for those stories and opinions, boys would surely hang out with girls more."* (Boy, 13).

Children share a certain lack of trust in community institutions and their capacity to provide effective protection. While discussing this with children, they expressed their lack of confidence in the effectiveness of community mechanisms and internal school mechanisms, both in terms of prevention and protection. Although most children, girls and boys, feel confident that they could talk to their teachers and school pedagogues, they think that more should be done in order to change the way violence is addressed.

"Workshops should be organized with pupils who commit violence. For example, when we had workshops on violence, those pupils who were problematic did not even come to the workshops; they ran away. So why should I go to those workshops when I know that I am not committing violence? We have had countless such workshops so far, but without success. Why do I think that these workshops are not effective? Because they do not include those who cause violence, so they cannot be educated. Teachers don't have enough expertise when it comes to violence. We don't need teachers to hold those workshops for us, but an expert. Those workshops are part of the civic education in school. We are constantly learning the same things in these workshops. No one has dealt with the fact that it is not effective. Nobody tried to change something in those workshops or change the way they work." (Boy, 14)

In addition, children have doubts about the consistency of the school as an institution that can process cases of violence: *"If the teacher was the perpetrator, they would not act the same as when it comes to a classmate, because the school, for example, will always defend the teacher as a colleague."* (Girl, 14).

Although children see psychological violence as the most difficult and prevalent type of violence, school professionals do not always react as if that were the case: *"They see psychological violence as easier and do not always react."* (Girl, 13)

Furthermore, both girls and boys gave numerous examples of children suffering violence at the hands of their parents. In some cases, school professionals were involved in resolving these cases. It was clear, however, that children speak about family violence among themselves. Some children heard about cases of family violence from their parents and discussed it with them. In most examples, children expressed their concern about the lack of effectiveness of the institutions processing violent cases. They also show a low level of understanding about the

mandates of various institutions (i.e., *"the centre for social work takes children from their parents, that's what they do."*). Generally, however, they want to know more about prevention and protection mechanisms.

Adults, on the other hand, find organizing activities which will address the violence, especially when working with victims, problematic: *"I often feel helpless. We offered some counselling services in the school, but when we talk about children who suffer violence, we cannot single them out and organize group work, because that would be a kind of segregation. If we have students who are marginalized, we want to strengthen them. If we make a group of them, we have again made some kind of discrimination. Of course, we are trying to do as much as possible. We include them in the work of the student parliament, in some sections, but those activities are almost nothing... It's hard to see that we are making any change."* (Secondary school teacher)

The lack of specialist services, such as child psychiatrists and psychologists, etc. are an additional problem in small communities. These parents can't afford to take their children to big cities to reach such services.

Adults recognize the importance of family rules and how these can affect a child's behaviour outside of the home and in school. They underlined that, in most cases, the families of children who are violent in school tolerate this kind of behaviour. *"When it comes to violence perpetrated by one child against another in the family, if a brother or sister suffers violence, I think that the reaction of the parents depends on how rules of conduct between family members are set. It depends on some internal family rules. That is why I think that the main source of protection for children is family and parents. Without them we can't do anything."* (Social protection professional)

The most influential factors in the way communities deal with violence are related to the social and economic position of families and professionals. The general impression of the adult group is that the overall social-economic crisis in Serbia has a deep impact on the way we raise our children. *"The role of adults is crucial. Prevention is very important for children to have information."* (Parent)

School professionals lack motivation and support:

"I think it's very important to let the people who are passionate do their job. Dedicated people. Let the ideas come to life. That is the role of adults. But, since we are financially 'ill', we cannot just focus on what we are good at. I know that I could raise my job to a much higher level if I had money. But since I don't have the money, as much as is needed, I won't get involved much more. I wish I could afford to volunteer at the Centre for Social Work, but I can't, because after work I have to hold private lessons." (Elementary school teacher)

"I cannot fully express my potential at work for the same reasons, because we always have to work [additional jobs to provide for our families]." (Another teacher)

"I think we are a lost generation, and we have somehow lost these children who are coming because of the general crisis.'(Teacher)

A community representative explained that children with more capacity, talented children, have more chances, while children who need more support and are not so talented, stay at the margins and become lost, despite school professionals' efforts to include them in sports, culture, etc. He says that the problem is the lack of an alternative for adults.

"We have no alternative. Especially in the villages where you have no theatres or music schools. The child is completely left to himself and nature. [...] the only salvation is in the hands of preschool institutions. Let's start from there. In Serbia, culture is marginalized for no reason, and culture has a very big impact on a child's development. The greatest works of art were created in the midst of greatest poverty. It is an escape from everyday life and reality. Children can get away with that creativity, to understand others, to get rid of prejudice. We are constantly saying that we need to accept something, for example. We have performances that point to violence against women, and every year we have more and more women killed as a result of domestic violence. It's like we're inciting those killers. Nothing concrete was done. Just some stories, some seminars, focus groups, without any concrete action. In my opinion, alternatives for children should really be made at the local community level: dance groups, choir, etc. [...] invest more in it and for young people to join it."

5.3.1 Attitudes toward refugees

Research participants declared that the system (army and police) is not efficient and that their presence should be made stronger in order to protect the domestic population from refugees. Boys tend to propose stronger penalties for perpetrators, and ask for more efficient responses from the police and other institutions in cases of violence carried out by refugees. *"I would change that about migrants. They have all the rights. What are the police doing here? They catch them, beat them and let them go. Then it only gets worse. What do migrants care about? When they can't arrest them, they can do whatever they want."* (Boy, 14)

5.4 5.4 Children's Agency and their Responses to Violence

Small community

There is a total lack of civil society organizations, especially those dealing with child rights, child participation and youth empowerment. This fact is reflected in the lack of activities that would organize children into informal or formal groups to speak about their rights and needs. Children are aware of the fact that their voices aren't being heard enough. Children are clearly expressing their need to be heard, asked and seen by sending messages to the community like: "Please pay more attention to the opinions and attitudes of the children" (Boy, 13); "We should never be ashamed to say something" (Girl, 14); or "Do your job better" (Boy, 13);, and "Do not ignore youth" (Girl, 14). In addition, younger groups of children involved in the research in small communities had no clear idea about how to increase their own participation. Most of their expectations were addressed to adults and to the community. Their lack of confidence in their own power to change things is quite

indicative of the situation; they generally don't see themselves as agents of change: *"Maybe we don't have much influence because we are children. We have no influence, actually, in terms of talking about safety or something we don't like."* (Girl, 14)

"Maybe someday we'll be able to change something, later, not now. Who will take us seriously? Especially some eighth-grader from a small city." (Girl, 14)

However, they are still aware that their participation in after-school activities (sport, recreation, humanitarian actions, cultural activities, playing musical instruments, dancing, acting etc.) can somehow contribute to a higher level of participation in their community, and they have some concrete proposals in addressing violence.

"I think we can still change something. An example is that girl who talks about ecology [Greta Thunberg]." (Girl, 14)

"For a start, I would change the public lighting on the way to school." (Girl, 13)

In the urban community, the situation is a bit better since there are some opportunities for voluntary work and youth activism. However, children aged 15–18 are not proactive enough to do something themselves, and adults consider them too young to get involved. In such a situation, there are wasted opportunities. That is why school-organized activities are recognized as very important and useful, although there are some doubts about the final results: *"I know that it [the workshops organized jointly by an NGO dealing with youth and school] will not change the behaviour of the violent pupils, but it would be even worse if we would all stay passive…Maybe one day some of them will realize that violence is not the answer…I know, I know. I'm an optimist, but still…"* (Girl, 17)

6 Discussion

- Children in Serbia recognize psychological violence as the most common type of violence, and also as the violence that has the greatest, most long-term, negative impact on their lives. Yet, children's responses show (and adults agreed) that institutions, especially schools, are less responsive to cases of psychological violence than to cases of physical violence.

- There are social norms in the local community which do not encourage children to report violence, and which tolerate psychological violence. Physical violence among/against boys is more likely to be tolerated than among/against girls. The community has the lowest level of tolerance for sexual violence. Domestic/family violence is taboo. Some of the most prominent factors that design the way a community deals with violence are deep crisis, low social and economic status of a family, low motivation of professionals who work with children, lack of local initiatives and cross-sectoral cooperation.

- For children in both rural and urban areas, the closest circle of support is their family (parents), followed by school professionals and peers. Children are ambivalent in terms of peers: they do talk amongst themselves, but do not see each other as a strong protective factor. They seek protection from adults. The last circle of support are institutions: police, the centre for social work, and the health centre. Children generally do not have enough trust in institutions, although they are aware that after the family and school professionals, they seek help from institutions such as the police and the centre for social work.

- One important finding is that, most often, children do not perceive themselves as someone who commits violence. Therefore, it is important to develop an awareness of their own behaviour and communication style to increase their accountability and understanding of situations in which violence occurs and how they themselves play a role in it.

- There are not enough preventive and educational programs, and those that do exist in schools are not seen by children as efficient or effective. Children want new approaches, new actors, and to be able to participate in creating prevention and intervention programs. At the same time, both children and adults recognize the importance of educational activities for children, adults, and whole families in order to reduce the level of tolerance to certain types of violence and to increase the level of understanding of the consequences of violence on children and the community as a whole.

- Children do not see themselves as agents of change and they all agree that the level of children's participation is generally low. They feel that they have not been asked nor respected enough. Although they have some suggestions for better prevention and protection from violence, they don't have enough ideas about how to be involved, or consider that they could even lead these activities.

- There is a certain level of negative views and concerns in regard to the increasing number of refugees at the borders, i.e., in the territory of the border municipality. Local populations, including children, perceive some of the refugee population as dangerous, and as perpetrators from whom they need protection.

- There is a certain lack of trust in the effectiveness and efficiency of the institutions that have a mandate to deal with violence. The reasons for this are multifaceted: the general perception that institutions are sluggish and insufficiently sensitized to the needs of children; the influence of adults (parents, neighbours) on children's attitudes towards institutions; prejudice against some institutions (e.g. that centres for social work take children away from parents, or that police do not react when the perpetrators have a connection to the police, etc.); personal experience of the school not acting consistently or coherently in preventing and reacting to violence; insufficient cross-sectoral cooperation and visibility of the connection between local institutions fighting violence; and finally, inadequate or lack of outreach from protection institutions to help inform children about the way the they function and how they can help/protect them.

7 Key Recommendations

- The government should enforce the development of local child protection policies and find resources for their implementation. The implementation of violence protection measures will gradually increase the effectiveness of protection from violence and trust in institutions.

- There is a strong need for a wider awareness campaign to address psychological violence and its impact on children's well-being. Furthermore, all adults working in institutions dealing with children should have the opportunity to continuously improve their professional competence in order to make them more responsive to all types of violence.

- Social norms influencing attitudes toward violence against and among children need to be changed in order to alleviate the high tolerance for some forms of violence. Children and adults need to be educated regarding the proper reaction to cases of violence. It is extremely important to underline that changing social norms is as a process which needs time, and understanding of the joint effort to fight violence among and against children. A comprehensive approach which involves the community as a whole could contribute to overcoming problems caused by social and cultural norms

- It is necessary to create a comprehensive education program for families, and to involve parents of very young children in education for preventing violence as research shows that these parents are more open to influence and support from the system. These community programs should first motivate parents to get involved, and then support them in sharing their dilemmas and problems, and exchanging their experiences.

- Children's agency needs bolstering, especially in rural areas. There are programs that would empower children, even in kindergarten, to be proactive, more engaged and to understand that their voice is important and needed. In order to develop and implement effective programs, children should be involved in their creation.

- Work needs to be done on developing awareness among children and youth concerning their own behaviour and communication styles, to increase accountability, to understand situations in which violence occurs, as well as the roles they can find themselves in (perpetrators or victims).

- Increase awareness of professionals concerning the importance of child participation, and educate them on how to support children to increase their participation both in school life and the community itself. Give schools resources to deal with violence: more education and support to school professionals, support in implementing participatory approaches i.e., increasing substantial participation of children. Education programs for school professionals, teachers and community members should not only address the topic of violence — they need more comprehensive programs that would address more complex topics (such as social, cultural, gender norms and much more). They need fresh faces and programs that could mobilize them.

- Educating children on good practices in self-organizing beyond school parliaments could be a good approach to involve children in planning violence prevention and protection programs.

- All programs should be inclusive, i.e., should include minority and marginalized groups, especially in communities with a high number of refugees.

- The institutions should make serious efforts to build and/or rebuild trust among both children and adults: conduct outreach programs, produce child-friendly and youth-friendly promotion and informative materials, and ensure that these materials reach children and youth, further improve the institutional culture by orientating and sensitizing it to the needs of children, increase visibility of cross-sectoral cooperation in the local community, and enhance visibility of local institutions for children.

8 Key Recommendations

- Child Rights Centre at
  https://cpd.org.rs/strategy-for-prevention-and-protection-of-children-from-violence-for-the-period-2020-2023-adopted/?lang=en

- UNICEF, Serbia, available at
  https://www.unicef.org/serbia/en/reports/determinants-and-factors-violence-affecting-children-serbia

- UNICEF https://www.unicef-irc.org/files/upload/documents/serbia_report.pdf

Appendices

9

Appendix A: Key Definitions

Violence Against Children: *"All forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse."* (UNCRC, Art 19)

3.1

Sexual violence: An umbrella term used to refer to all forms of sexual victimization of adult women, men and children, including different forms of child sexual abuse and exploitation. *"Any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person, regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work."* (Kewkes, Sen, Garcia-Moreno, 2002, p.149)

3.2

Child sexual abuse: *"Engaging in sexual activities with a child who, according to the relevant provisions of national law, has not reached the legal age for sexual activities (this does not apply to consensual sexual activities between minors), and engaging in sexual activities with a child where use is made of coercion, force or threats; or abuse is made of a recognised position of trust, authority or influence over the child."* (UNICEF, 2017, p.6)

Types of Violence Against Children (Adapted from Dawes, Bray, & Van Der Merwe, 2007)

Particular types of violence against children are elaborated below:

Physical Violence: Intentionally inflicting injury or death on a child.

Emotional Violence: Exposing a child to or inflicting psychological or emotional harm on a child.

Sexual Violence: Sexual activities, with or without the child's consent, where the perpetrator is older or in a position of authority. (This may also involve force or trickery.)

Neglect: Lack of care provided by caregivers, usually over a longer period of time that results in physical or psychological harm to a child.

Exploitation: Broader term usually referring to the use of a child for another person's gains, that has a negative impact on the child, such as harmful child labour, early marriage, child trafficking, child prostitution or pornography, etc.

Categories of Violence Against Children CRIN (n.d.)

Physical and Psychological Violence

- Abduction
- Bullying
- Death Penalty
- Domestic Violence
- Extra-judicial Execution
- Gang Violence
- Harmful Traditional Practices
- Honour Killings
- Infanticide
- Judicial use of Physical Punishment
- Kidnapping
- Physical Abuse
- Physical Punishment
- Psychological Abuse
- Psychological Punishment
- State Violence
- Torture and Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment

Neglect:

- Abandonment
- Dangerous, Harmful or Hazardous Work
- Deprivation
- State Neglect

Exploitation:

- Pornography
- Sex Tourism
- Sexual Exploitation
- Slavery
- Trafficking
- Violence at Work

Child: The Convention defines a "child" as a person below the age of 18, unless relevant laws recognize an earlier age of majority.

Child Protection: UNICEF's definition of child protection is the *"strengthening of country environments, capacities and responses to prevent and protect children from violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and the effects of conflict."* (UNICEF, 2008)

Child Participation: *"Participation is the term used to encapsulate activities that ensure a child's right to participate in matters that affect them are adhered to. This draws on the concept that 'children are not merely passive recipients, entitled to adult protective care'. Rather, they are subjects of rights who are entitled to be involved, in accordance with their evolving capacities, in decisions that affect them, and are entitled to exercise growing responsibility for decisions they are competent to make for themselves."* (Lansdowne & O'Kane, 2014, p. 3)

Child Well-being: *"Child well-being is a dynamic, subjective and objective state of physical, cognitive, emotional, spiritual and social health in which children:*
- *are safe from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.*
- *meet their basic needs, including survival and development.*
- *are connected to and cared for by primary caregivers.*
- *have the opportunity for supportive relationships with relatives, peers, teachers, community members and society at large; and*
- *have the opportunity and elements required to exercise their agency based on their emerging capacities."* (ACPHA, 2019, p.10) Please see Appendix F: Tdh Conceptual Framework on Well-being Pillars.

Child Safeguarding: *"The responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organisation has about children's safety within the communities in which they work, are reported."* (Keeping Children Safe, 2014, p.3)

Social Norms: *"The full range of these definitions includes a constellation of social rules ranging from mere etiquette to the most fundamental moral duties [13, 14, 37, 38]. In their simplest definition, social norms are the informal, mostly unwritten, rules that define acceptable, appropriate, and obligatory actions in a given group or society."* (Cislaghi & Heise, 2018)

Gender Norms: A simple definition suggests, *"gender norms are the social rules and expectations that keep the gender system intact."* (Cislaghi & Heise, 2019, p.4) However, a more nuanced and complex definition suggests that *"gender norms are social norms defining acceptable and appropriate actions for women and men in a given group or society. They are embedded in formal and informal institutions, nested in the mind, and produced and reproduced through social interaction. They play a role in shaping women and men's (often unequal) access to resources and freedoms, thus affecting their voice, power and sense of self."* (Cislaghi & Heise, 2019, pp.9–10)

Appendix B: Ethical Protocols

In addition to the information contained in **section 2.3**, the following ethical protocols were considered.

Research on sensitive subjects, such as violence against children, can cause unintended harm to participants. For example, if confidentiality is breached, informed consent is not obtained, or a group of people is stigmatized. Researchers need to be careful not to raise expectations, which can lead to mistrust of outsiders and disillusionment. Researchers also need to be cautious not to increase power imbalances that may cause a particular group to be vulnerable.

Given the timing of the research with the COVID-19 pandemic, protocols will be more stringent for online interactions. It is strongly recommended that remote violence against children (VAC) data collection does not take place with children while lockdown measures are in place (Bhatia, Peterman & Guedes 2020). Where it is deemed appropriate for research to continue, adaptations will take into consideration the kinds of questions being asked and the level of privacy afforded participants in the setting where they are joining. Given the potential for heightened levels of violence experienced by children and young people during the COVID-19 pandemic, and in keeping with recommendations by UNICEF–IRC 2020, no direct questions will be asked about participants' experiences of violence, but rather their understanding of violence occurring in their communities.

Research on violence may ask children and adults, even without direct questions concerning personal experience, to re-live painful and difficult experiences. As researchers working with children who may have suffered from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, there is a critical responsibility to "do no harm" in our interactions with children and youth.

Researchers will be trained to watch for signs of children expressing distress (both verbal and non-verbal). Researchers will ensure that the environment within the activities remains respectful and supportive, and will take time to speak with children who may need extra support outside of the activity, from a safe distance. The name and contact details of a support worker, as well as emergency numbers and local reporting protocol, will be listed on a flipchart at all times, enabling children to reach out on their own for additional support (for example, the psychosocial service of the school and Child Protection Unity in Albania). Where a flipchart is not practical, handouts will be made to give to young people before each session. Should a researcher see that a young person requires support, the researcher will discuss this with the young person and call the support person to request a personal visit to the community. The researcher will follow-up with both the child and the support worker using appropriate child safeguarding protocol, as per the Tdh Child Safeguarding Policy and national legislation.

When working with participants, researchers will pay close attention to the following ethical guidelines, recommendations and practices:

Confidentiality:
- Inform children that you will be collecting quotes and stories, but no names will be attached, only gender, age and community.

- Ensure that you obtain children's written permission as well as the written permission of their parents or caregivers. In some cases, permission might need to be gained from the Ministry of Education in each country. Please see Appendix A for a sample Consent Form.

- Ensure that you obtain the written permission of adults as well. Please see Appendix B.

- Remember, informed consent is an ongoing process. Participants should be regularly reminded of their options. No child should be made to feel that they must participate.

- If you plan to use a recording device, be sure to inform children of this and obtain their consent. Explain how the recordings will be used and what will happen to the recordings at the end of the project.

- If attending virtually, request that participants have a place that offers some privacy, and where this is not possible, that they share who else is in the room and when with the group (as noted below).

Voluntary informed Assent/Consent Conversations

Special note during COVID-19: As the local context may change rapidly during COVID-19 for both children and project staff (for example, if governmental restrictions on physical distancing are suddenly relaxed), it is recommended to regularly address voluntary informed consent (at each point of change). It is useful to think of consent as an ongoing conversation that you have with children (and their parents/carers). You can document consent by asking children/parents to sign consent forms, and you can digitally record their verbal consent if physical distancing is required, or if children and/or their parents/carers have low levels of literacy. Signed consent forms or recordings of consent should be kept securely. It may be useful to use a "script" or checklist when having a consent conversation to ensure that you do not forget anything.

Make sure participants are comfortable and fully informed:
- Select a suitable location where children feel comfortable and at ease.

- Be open and honest with children.

- Explain the entire process, including how the tools could affect young participants.

- Don't raise expectations. Be clear about what can and cannot be achieved through the research.

- Privacy and confidentiality are extremely important, but cannot be guaranteed due to the involvement of the group of participants in the research. Make sure that limited confidentiality is clearly communicated before the start.

- Let children know that they can always ask questions: No question is a bad question.

Know yourself:
- Learn about and be reflective of your lived experiences, biases, assumptions, and trigger points.

- Be comfortable with the uncomfortable. Change can often include feelings of discomfort and confusion. Recognize and pause during these moments.

- Be emotionally present and available to engage with children and listen effectively.

- Communicate genuinely and honestly.

Develop an understanding of the local culture, context and understanding of children and youth:
- Understand the local culture and context you are working in.

- Remember child protection factors differ across gender, age, race, culture, socio-economic status, ability, and other factors.

- Learn about local power dynamics as they may undermine genuine participation.

- Be open to learning. Inquire and ask questions to seek understanding.

Build relationships:
- Build relationships with organizations, communities, families, children and youth.

- Learn from and with children, youth, families and communities.

- Work in partnership, not opposition. Exercise humility.

Be prepared:
- Remember that children may be resilient in one area of their lives but not in others due to their social-ecological framework.

- Remember that talking about one's experiences can be harmful in some contexts.

- Make sure to identify someone to provide follow-up support for those who may need help or want to have a more in-depth conversation.

Be inclusive:
- Be inclusive and involve the most vulnerable populations.

- Remember that most victimized children and youth do not receive services.

Support the group:
- Be flexible and adaptable. Situations and circumstances change, and sometimes things do not work out as planned.

- Hold people accountable. Do not be afraid to hold people accountable for their actions. Be firm but respectful and create an opportunity outside the group to talk through any issues.

Build from strengths and bolster resilience:
- Build from the strengths in people (e.g., positive behaviours, coping techniques), cultures and systems.

- Build capacity. Nurture innate self-healing and protection capacities.

- Recognize people's agency and capacity. See people as experts and survivors and not as victims.

Follow-up:
- Follow-up with participants afterwards to make sure they are doing okay. For example, you might want to check in with them at the end of the session.

- Leave participants the phone number of someone they can talk to, and with information on how to access helpful resources.

- Remember, if you hear about violence or abuse, you have a responsibility to connect that young person with a support person, and to report it the appropriate organization following local protocol.

Informed Consent (Adapted from Columbia Group for Children in Adversity [2011])

Participation in research must be voluntary, and people must be free to decline or end participation without any negative consequences. The decision to participate should be informed by an understanding of the purpose of the research, how and what information will be collected, how the information will be used, and potential risks and benefits to participants. When participants are children, informed consent must be obtained from the children themselves and from their parents or guardians.

Obtaining informed consent is inherently difficult for many reasons, such as the power imbalance between researchers and participants, the pervasive expectations that participation will bring material improvements now or at a later point in time, and the prevailing norms of hospitality, among others. Obtaining written consent may not be feasible because of low literacy levels and/or prospective participants' fears that written documents will be used against them. Because of this, it is important to treat informed consent as an ongoing process rather than a one-off action.

Specific steps to ensure informed consent:
- Use a child-friendly approach in explaining to children the purpose of the research, what and how information will be used, and their right to say "No" without negative consequences.

- If the participant is a child under the age of 18, obtain the informed consent of both the child and his or her parent or caretaker.

- Tailor the approach to obtaining informed consent to local circumstances.

Where appropriate, use the forms provided in the Appendices and request signatures to indicate voluntary and informed consent.

- The process of obtaining informed consent must be implemented for each individual participant.

- Avoid the subtle coercion that can occur. For example, if a parent tells a child "you should participate" or if a village leader says, "we should welcome the researchers and answer their questions", explain informed consent to the person in power and ask them to explain to others that they are free not to participate, and that there will be no disadvantages or penalties for people who decide not to participate.

- Manage expectations by explaining in simple, clear language that no material benefits will come from participating in the research. Add, however, that the information collected will be fed back to communities and countries, which may find the information useful in taking stock of and improving community-based mechanisms of child protection.

- Explain that, should someone begin to participate and decide that they are not comfortable, they can always leave the research without any penalty.

Limited Confidentiality (Adapted from Columbia Group for Children in Adversity [2011])

Research participants will be informed that the information they provide is confidential, unless they share anything that puts themselves or others at risk. If there is an incident, suspicion, or disclosure of current violence or abuse, the researcher will work with the child or adult to follow up and explore appropriate services of support using the Tdh Child Safeguarding Policy, Research Ethics Protocol of the local University research partner, and the legal protocol in the country. The researchers will not publicly share any personal information such as names that could be used to identify specific individuals or sources of information. Where identity information is collected, it will be maintained in a separate, locked file, and will be made available only to people who have a legitimate need to know. Pseudonyms will be used when data is being quoted. Specific steps to ensure confidentiality include:

- Conduct discussions in a private setting. When conducting interviews with young people, ensure that there is always a minimum of three people present (either two children or two adults) and if not, there is a third person within vision for child safeguarding purposes. If there are departures from privacy, make sure all participants know who else is present and listening or observing, and get their informed consent to continue.

- Keep any records of names and other identifying information in a safe, locked place that is not open for public access.

- Do not leave confidential files open on a desk or computer. Always close them and put them out of public access, even if you leave your desk only for a minute or two.

- Use general descriptors (e.g., 13-year-old girl) rather than a specific name or other identifying information in writing up your data and reports.

- Share information from your field notes, including identifiers, with members of the research team, but not with people outside the research team.

- Hold information about specific cases of abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect in strict confidence, sharing information only with the Lead National Researcher or the UNICEF Focal Point.

Please note: It is important to be clear with participants, that they should only share information in the activities that they want the group to know; you cannot guarantee that other participants will keep the information they hear confidential, though you will strongly encourage it. Participants are welcome to speak with you after the activity in private, should they want to share additional information.

Remote adaptations: Restrictions in meeting children face-to-face due to the COVID-19 pandemic means that online interactions and participatory activities via devices, such as smartphones and computers, are likely to increase. This increases risks to children that are specific to the online environment, such as increasing the likelihood that family members will be present, through to more significant risks like the dissemination of false information, exposure to violent extremist messaging, or surveillance and censorship. For the former, transparency and good communication allows participants to be clear on the level of privacy they are able to maintain within their physical environment (as noted above). For the latter, digital applications, platforms and services need to be safe, secure and should not result in inappropriate or unethical capture and/or use of data on children. Safeguarding considerations for online communication and interaction fall into three key areas:

Safe behaviour online
- Guidelines are developed for users of digital platforms and products. These explain expectations regarding posting, speaking, commenting on the site or platform, and establish consequences for misuse.

- Build relational safety by having regular "safety" check-ins with children at the beginning or end of virtual sessions, where a key worker listens carefully and responds sensitively to the child.

- All websites, phone lines and platforms where children are commenting or sharing information, photos and stories are moderated by staff to maximise safety and privacy and minimise risks. Where concerns of harm or abuse are identified, reporting procedures are followed.

- Procedures for reporting and responding to harm or abuse exist for each digital platform or product. These take into account local laws, cultural norms and the availability of protection services.

The Canadian Women's Foundation developed the following hand signals for people who want to safely disclose violence in the home while on a video-call.

THE VIOLENCE AT HOME SIGNAL FOR HELP

Ethical access to and use of children's data
- Children using digital platforms must be given the opportunity to agree to a specified use of their personal data. This consent should not be assumed based on their consent for other activities (e.g., for their photo to be used in media activities).

- Active consent must be captured in a way so that consent is not the default option.

- A written agreement is in place to control and authorise the release of information on children (data, images) to partner organisations, the Internet, the public domain or any third party. Consent conversations with children (see above) should include an assessment of the need/benefit of sharing information that is balanced against potential risks, before consent is given by children for use of their data.

-

Responding online to disclosures and allegations of child abuse during COVID-19
If a case of abuse is reported or disclosed when physical distancing restrictions are in place the following issues will need to be addressed for responding online:
- Seek the views of the child victim/survivor (where it is possible to establish safe, direct contact) on their situation that will inform a risk assessment for responding to the report of abuse. It may be useful to connect to child helplines to identify services that might support the child victim/survivor.

- Conducting remote interviews, focus groups and other participative activities (e.g., via Zoom or WhatsApp): Outline the process in advance to participants. Make sure they can safely participate online and are able to use the software. If it is not safe to do so (e.g., a child is in the same room as a violent parent/carer) do NOT conduct the process. Establish the identity of the participant and

ensure you are communicating with the person you are intending to speak to. Provide information on local support services at the end of every interview.

- Ensure privacy and manage confidentiality: participants should use a computer that is private or isolated, make use of headphones and limit the use of identifying information (i.e., agree to refer to Mr. Smith as Mr. X). Check there is no one else in the room or nearby and record interviews if possible.

Appendix C: Country Level Consent Forms

Saglasnost deteta

PISMO O SAGLASNOSTI ZA DECU I MLADE

DOBRODOŠAO/DOBRODOŠLA NA RAZGOVOR O NASILJU U ŠKOLAMA

UVOD
Ovim projektom želimo da istražimo neka od pitanja koja se tiču bezbednosti i dobrobiti dece i mladih u školama.

KO SAM JA?
Moje ime je....................... . Ja ću tokom narednih dana dolaziti nekoliko puta u vaše mesto kako bih od vas naučila više o tome kako se suočavati sa nasiljem nad decom i šta treba uraditi da bi se nasilje sprečilo a deca i mladi zaštitili. Mi ćemo se sresti tri puta tokom ovog istraživanja i biću ti na raspolaganju za sva pitanja koja imaš u vezi sa njim. Sve ovo radim u saradnji sa beogradskom organizacijom Centar za integraciju mladih i međunarodnom organizacijom Terres des home koja radi u celom svetu na zaštiti dece i mladih.

ZAŠTO RADIMO OVAJ PROJEKAT?
Želimo da otkrijemo šta je to što čini da se deca i mladi osećaju bezbedno u školama, kao i koja vrsta nasilja koje se dešava čini da se osećaju tužno i/ili loše. Takođe, želimo da čujemo vaše ideje o tome kako se nasilje i zlostavljanje mogu sprečiti, i kako reagovati na njih.

ŠTA PODRAZUMEVA UČEŠĆE U OVOM ISTRAŽIVANJU?
Ako odlučiš da učestvuješ u ovoj studiji, zamolićemo te da se uključiš u različite aktivnosti (na pr radionice, grupni intervjui i diskusije). Imaćeš priliku da odlučiš da li želiš ili ne želiš da učestvuješ. Za tebe, kao i tvoje vršnjake, važna informacija je i da će nam za ove aktivnosti biti u zbiru potrebno oko 1,25 dana (desetak sati), kroz nekoliko susreta. Tokom svakog susreta imaćemo osveženja i obroke.

KOLIKO VREMENA ĆE SVE TRAJATI?
Naše aktivnosti trajaće u zbiru 1,25 dana. Mi ćemo zajedno sa odraslima u vašoj sredini raditi na tome da se susreti organizuju na način da ne remete tvoje svakodnevne obaveze, nastavu itd (na pr pre ili nakon školskih časova, vikendom i

sl). Pitaćemo vas, decu i mlade, koji su to termini koje smatrate najpogodnijim.

ŠTA JE ONO ŠTO JE DOBRO A ŠTA LOŠE U VEZI SA OVIM ISTRAŽIVANJEM?

Ono što od tebe i tvojih vršnjaka naučimo u ovom projektu koristićemo za podršku budućim programima i politikama za decu i mlade. I to je jedna dobra stvar. Naravno, u bilo kojem životnom iskustvu mogu postojati neki delovi/momenti koji su nam neprijatni. Ako smatraš da ovom istraživanju možeš imati takvih iskustava, ne moraš da se pridružiš.

AKO POTVRDIM UČEŠĆE U OVOM PROJEKTU, DA LI MORAM DATI ODGOVOR NA SVA PITANJA?

Ako postavimo pitanja na koja ne želiš da odgovoriš, molim te da nam to i kažeš, ili da se jednostavno suzdržiš od odgovora. Ako od tebe tražimo da radiš stvari koje ti ne želiš, onda nam to i reci - da ne želiš da ih radiš. Možeš reći ne i izabrati da ne učestvuješ u bilo kom trenutku u okviru neke aktivnosti.

KO ĆE ZNATI DA SAM DEO OVOG ISTRAŽIVANJA?

Ono što kažeš i bilo koje informacije koje zapisujemo neće sadržati tvoje ime, tako da niko neće znati da su to tvoji odgovori ili stvari koje si ti uradio/la. Istraživači neće dozvoliti da bilo ko osim vas samih koji učestvujete u istraživanju vidi vaše odgovore ili bilo koje druge informacije o vama. Tvoji nastavnici, roditelji, članovi zajednice nikada neće videti odgovore koje si dao/dala ili podatke koje smo napisali o tebi. Tvoji vršnjaci koji takođe učestvuju u ovoj aktivnosti čuće ono što govoriš, ali od njih kao i od tebe će se tražiti da sačuvate poverljivost. Radi vaše privatnosti i sigurnosti, nećemo objaviti vaša imena ni u jednom izveštaju o istraživanju.

DA LI MORAM DA UČESTVUJEM U OVOME?

NE! Ne moraš da učestvuješ u ovom istraživanju. Niko se neće naljutiti ili se iznervirati ako ne želiš da se pridružiš. I zapamti, ako se odlučiš za učešće i kasnije se predomisliš, možeš nam to takođe reći; da ne želiš dalje da učestvuješ.

PITANJA?

Možeš postaviti pitanja u bilo kom trenutku. Možeš pitati sad ili kasnije sve što te zanima. Možeš razgovarati sa mnom ili sa nekim drugim u bilo koje vreme tokom istraživanja. Možeš me kontaktirati na tlefon br_____ ili e-poštom na _____ . Ako želiš da razgovaraš sa nekim drugim uključenim u projekat, možeš se obratiti i na _____ .

Radujem se što ću učiti od tebe!

Sve najbolje,

Formular saglasnosti deteta/mlade osobe

☐ Razumem čime se bavi ovaj projekat.

☐ Znam koja će biti moja uloga u aktivnosti i koliko dugo će trajati.

☐ Imao/la sam priliku da postavim pitanja u vezi sa ovom aktivnošću.

☐ Znam da mogu u bilo kom trenutku da kažem da ne želim da učestvujem, i da prekinem moje učešće u aktivnosti.

☐ Slažem se da se ono što kažem i radim tokom ove aktivnosti fotografiše i snimi, pri čemu moje lice neće biti fotografisano.

☐ Saglasan/na sam da učestvujem u ovom projektu.

Ako želiš da budeš deo ovog projekta, molimo te da potpišeš ispod, kao i da zamoliš tvoje roditelje/staratelje da se potpišu.
I ako ne želiš da se fotografišeš ili snimaš, i dalje možeš učestvovati u istraživanju.

Tvoje ime: _____

Tvoj potpis: _____

Datum: _____

Ime tvog roditelja/staratelja: _____

Potpis tvog roditelja/staratelja: _____

Datum: _____

Broj telefona tvog roditelja/staratelja: _____

E-mail tvog roditelja/staratelja: _____

Formular o informisanoj saglasnosti za odrasle

Svrha istraživanja:

Obraćamo Vam se ispred regionalne inicijative Child Hub za zaštitu dece Jugoistočne Evrope a povod je sprovođenje regionalnog istraživanja koje za cilj ima sticanje uvida u socijalne i rodne norme koje utiču na rodno zasnovano nasilje u školama i potencijalnu ulogu dece u osporavanju ovih društvenih normi. Neka od pitanja na koja bi istraživanje pokušalo da odgovori su:

- stavovi, ponašanja i percepcije dece, članova zajednice i zaposlenih u školama o nasilju nad decom uopšte i kao i o rodno zasnovanom nasilju u školama

- percepcija školske dece, članova zajednice i zaposlenih u školama o stavu njihovih vršnjaka prema nasilju nad decom i rodno zasnovanom nasilju u školama

- percepcija o sprečavanju ili reagovanju na nasilje nad decom uopšte i na rodno zasnovano nasilje u školama

Child Hub za zaštitu dece Jugoistočne Evrope je regionalna inicijativa koja za cilj ima izgradnju znanja i kapaciteta kao i mogućnosti umrežavanja za hiljade profesionalaca iz oblasti dečje i socijalne zaštite u Jugoistočnoj Evropi. Ovu inicijativu koordiniše međunarodna organizacija Terre des Hommes, jedna od vodećih svetskih organizacija za zaštitu i unapređenje dečjih prava a lokalna organizacija koja je nosilac ove inicijative u Srbiji je Centar za integraciju mladih. Istraživanje će, pored Srbije, biti realizovano u Hrvatskoj, Bosni i Hercegovini, Albaniji, Rumuniji, Moldaviji, Bugarskoj. Kao rezultat istraživanja biće objavljeni regionalni izveštaj i nacionalni izveštaji koji će biti upotrebljeni za uticaj na kreiranje usluga i politika za decu i mlade u oblasti zaštite od nasilja.

Istraživač: Moje ime je _____ i na ovom projektu sam angažovana kao nacionalni istraživač. Moj zadatak je da realizujem prikupljanje podataka i sačinim nacionalni izveštaj koji će biti i sastavni deo regionalnog izveštaja o rezultatima istraživanja. Sa bilo kojim pitanjima ili dilemama možete kontaktirati istraživače na imejl_____, kao i na imejl _____

Šta su dobre strane Vašeg učešća u ovom projektu: Ono što naučimo od Vas tokom istraživanja biće upotrebljeno za uticaj na kreiranje usluga i politika za decu i mlade u oblasti zaštite od nasilja.

Procedura: Vaša uloga podrazumeva učešće u dve aktivnosti (jedna radionica i jedna fokus grupa) u toku jednog istog dana, u trajanju do tri sata.

Mogući rizici i neugodnosti: Studija će postavljati pitanja koja uključuju nasilje o deci i mladima u vašoj zajednici i oko nje. Neka pitanja mogu izazvati nelagodu ili neka neprijatna sećanja. Ako se u bilo kom trenutku osećate nelagodno, možda ćete odlučiti da ne odgovorite na istraživačko pitanje i / ili prekinete svoje učešće privremeno ili trajno. Takođe možete odlučiti da zatražite da se svi Vaši prethodni odgovori ne koriste u projektu. Ako nakon ove aktivnosti zaželite naknadnu podršku, obezbedićemo Vam kontakte za podršku i pomoći Vam da pronađete podršku.

Poverljivost: Mi ćemo čuvati Vašu poverljivost a Vaše ime neće biti navedeno u ovom istraživačkom projektu ako to ne želite. Ako imate bilo kakvih nedoumica nakon svog učešća, možete tražiti da pregledate beleške iz naših diskusija. Vaše učešće je dobrovoljno. Imate pravo da se povučete u bilo kom trenutku bez ikakvih

posledica. Ako podelite bilo šta što na neki način može ugroziti Vas ili druge, moraćemo da sarađujemo kako bismo pronašli podršku i prijavili situaciju.

Količina vremena koje je potrebno da odvojite: Bićete zamoljeni da odvojite oko pola dana (tri sata) za učešće u ovom projektu.

Snimanje i transkripcija: Ova diskusija će biti snimana, vodićemo beleške i biće napravljen transkript.

Saglasnost: Molimo Vas da potpišete ovaj formular o saglasnosti

_____
Ime učesnika/ce

_____   _____
Potpis učesnika/ce   Datum

Appendix D: Royal Roads University Consent Form

Child Informed Consent

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONSENT LETTER

WELCOME TO THE DISCUSSION ON VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION
We would like to lead play and art-based activities about children and young people's safety and well-being in schools.

WHO AM I?
My name is [INSERT YOUTH FRIENDLY SENTENCE ABOUT RESEARCHER LEADING]

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS PROJECT?
We want to find out what makes children and young people feel safe in schools, and what type of violence is occurring that makes them feel sad and/or bad. We also want to hear your ideas on how violence and abuse can be prevented and responded to.

WHAT DOES BEING IN THIS RESEARCH INVOLVE?
If you decide to take part in this study, there are some different things we will ask you to join in. You will have the opportunity to decide if you do or do not want to participate. I will ask you and your peers to join in on participatory research activities that will take you 1.25 days. We will have refreshments and meals during the day.

HOW MUCH TIME WILL THE ACTIVITY TAKE?
Our engaging activities will take 1.25 days. We will work with adults in your life

to make sure they take place after school hours or on the weekend so as to not disrupt your studies. We will ask you what hours work best for you.

ARE THERE GOOD THINGS AND BAD THINGS ABOUT BEING PART OF THE PROJECT?
What we learn in this project from you and your peers will be used to support future programs and policies for children and young people. In any experience there may be parts you do not enjoy. If there are, you do not have to join in.

IF I SAY YES TO BEING IN THE PROJECT DO I HAVE TO ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS?

If I ask you questions that you do not want to answer, then please tell us you do not want to answer those questions or simply abstain. If we ask you to do things you do not want to do, then tell us that you do not want to do them. You can say no and choose not to participate at any time.

WHO WILL KNOW I WAS PART OF THIS ACTIVITY?
The things you say and any information we write about you will not have your name with it, so no one will know they are your answers or the things that you did. The researchers will not let anyone other than themselves see your answers or any other information about you. Your teachers, parents, community members will never see the answers you gave or the information we wrote about you. Your peers who are in the same activity will hear what you say but they will be asked to keep it confidential. For your safety, we will not include your name in any research reports.

DO I HAVE TO SAY YES?
NO! You do not have to be in this activity. No one will get angry or upset with you if you don't want to do this. And remember, if you decide to be in the project and later change your mind, you can tell us you do not want to be in the study anymore.

QUESTIONS?
You can ask questions at any time. You can ask now, or you can ask later. You can talk to me or you can talk to someone else at any time during the study. You can reach me at [insert local phone numbers where applicable] or by email at [INSERT RESEARCHERS EMAIL]. If you want to speak to someone else involved in the project, you can also contact [INSERT TERRES DES HOMMES DETAILS]

Look forward to learning from you!

Best,

INSERT RESEARCHERS NAME

CHILD AND YOUTH CONSENT FORM

☐   I understand what the activity is about

☐   I know what my part will be in the activity and I know how long it will take

☐   I have had the chance to ask questions about the activity

☐   I know that I can say I do not want to participate at any time and stop taking part

☐   I agree to having photos taken of the things I make in the research, and my voice recorded (no photos of my face will be taken)

☐   I agree to be part of this project

If you want to be a part of this project, please print and sign your name below and ask your parent or guardian to print and sign their name below too. You can still be a part of this study if you do not want your photo taken, voice recorded, or video taken.

Your name, printed: _____

Date: _____

Your signature: _____

Date: _____

Your parent or guardian's name: _____

Your parent or guardian's signature: _____

Your parent or guardian's phone number: _____

Your parent or guardian's email: _____

Informed Consent Form – Adults

Purpose of the project: This project aims to

Researcher: My name is BLANK, and I am [INSERT TWO SENTENCES FOR EACH RESEARCHER]

For any questions or concerns, you can contact me and/or a member of my team at: INSERT EMAILS

Benefits of being a part of this project: What we learn in this project from you and your peers will be used to. We will provide refreshments.

Procedure: Participation will include engaging in BLANK activities over one day. All foreseeable risks and discomforts: The study will ask questions involving violence in and around schools for children and young people in your community. Some questions may cause some discomfort if you by chance reflect upon an unpleasant memory. If you feel uncomfortable at any point in time you may choose not to answer a research question, and/or discontinue your participation temporarily or permanently. You can also choose to request that all your previous answers are not used in the project. If you are triggered and/or want follow up support we will provide contact information for support services and follow up with you to find support.

Confidentiality: Your confidentiality will be maintained, and your name will not be referred to in this research project if you do not want it to be. If you have any concerns after your participation, you can request to review the notes from our discussions. Your participation is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. If you share anything that puts yourself or others at harm, we will need to work together to follow up to find supports and report the situation.

Length of time involved: You are asked to contribute 0.5 day for the activities.

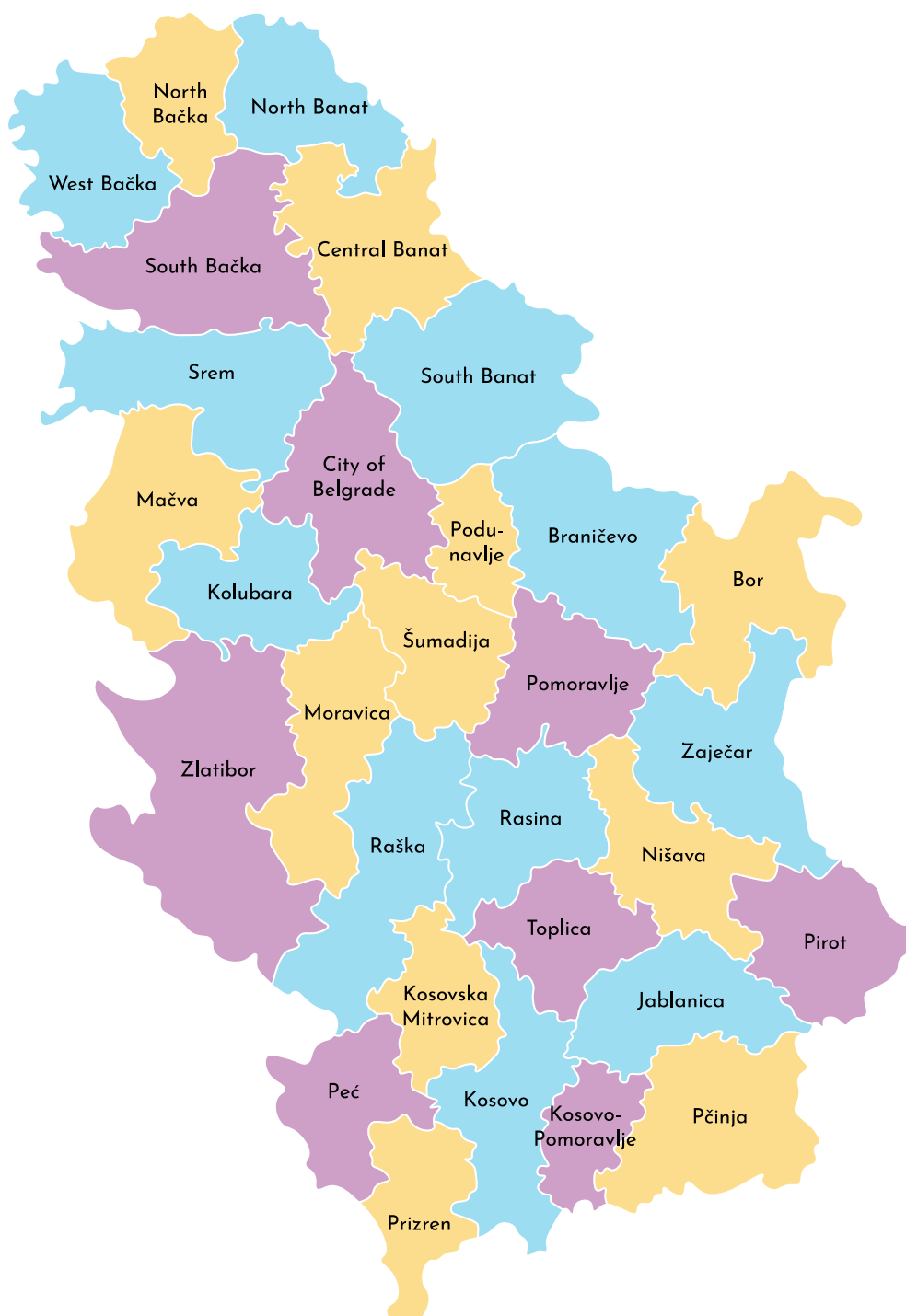**Recording and Transcription:** Our discussion will be recorded and written out.

Agreement: Please sign this form for your consent.

_____
Name of Participant, printed

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

Appendix E: Map of Research Sites

CHILD PROTECTION HUB
FOR SOTH EAST EUROPE

IICRD

Regional Research
ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

Country Report: Serbia

In partnership with the International Institute for Child Rights and Development and Child Hub

Researcher: Slavica Milojević, Tatjana Lazor Obradović
Date: March 2021