



Daphne III -Perspective

Report on Peer Education Trainings on Gender-Based Violence

Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies

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1. Background and Purpose of the Trainings

This report outlines the background, context, evaluation and impact of peer education trainings conducted with adolescents as part of the Perspective Project. This phase of the project was coordinated by the city of Modena and is referred to as: "Peer education activities to raise students' awareness on gender-based violence prevention and to promote new behavioral gender attitudes among young generations".

The primary aim of the peer education trainings was the sensitization of young people to the issue of gender-based violence (GBV) and their encouragement in building models of relationship that are based on mutual respect between the sexes.

The trainings targeted young people in secondary schools, aged 15-16 years. This particular target group was preferred because it is considered to be old enough to have had various experiences in and out of the school environment including involvement in romantic relationships, thus they could relate to the issues outlined in the training sessions. Moreover, 5th year formers have one or two more years to go before they graduate, thus they can continue acting as agents of change among their peers on issues related to gender-based violence.

As these trainings needed to be implemented in the context of peer education, their implementation included two phases:

Phase 1: At first, educational trainings were carried out with the entire class of students. During these trainings, adolescents were trained on issues related to the social construction of gender, relationships between genders, gender roles and gender stereotypes as also the relations of the aforementioned issues with gender-based violence. The last training session was devoted to 'training the trainers', aiming to provide young people with the necessary skills in training and group facilitation, so that they could effectively carry out their role as peer educators.

Phase 2: Upon completion of the initial trainings, a group of students that expressed an interest to become peer educators conducted trainings to their peers. Peer trainings were conducted using techniques learned at the initial trainings and targeted younger or same age groups (14-15 years). The peer education trainings concentrated on raising awareness on gender roles and society's expectations for each gender and explore how GBV is manifested in adolescent romantic relationships.

1.1. Context of the trainings

A series of training workshops took place in three secondary schools in Cyprus. This was done in cooperation with schools and teachers who were willing to offer the time and space for the realization of these trainings. The schools that participated in the Program were two private schools (GC School of Careers and The Grammar School) and one public school (Latsia Lyceum).

Context of the trainings in the private schools

Students from the private schools attended the trainings in the school environment after school hours (around 15-20 minutes after school classes had finished for the day). In the case of the GC School, the trainings took place in the context of the 'Current Affairs' society, a students' club that meets to discuss contemporary issues. The group at the Grammar School was invited to participate at the trainings following an initial information session which was conducted after school hours with the 5th form (15-16 year olds).

In total, 4 trainings of duration 2 hours each were conducted. A short briefing with the peer educators was then conducted followed by 2 peer education training sessions. The peer trainings were shorter in duration, lasting one hour and a half each.

Trainings at the GC School were bi-weekly (twice a month), while trainings at the Grammar School were conducted on a weekly basis (with a break over Christmas vacations)

Notably, the Grammar School was the only school where there was no teacher present in the class during the trainings. In the GC School, the teacher attended at least the beginning and the end of each training session.

Context of the trainings in the public school

In the case of the public school (Latsia Lyceum), the trainings were conducted during school hours, at the period of the music lesson. The trainings were arranged with the cooperation and the incredible support of the music teacher, following an official permission granted by the headmistress of the school. The music teacher was also

present throughout the entire duration of the training sessions, but acted as a mere by-stander, with limited to no interference during the training process.

The trainings followed the same sequence as those conducted in the private schools but with different duration and frequency. Trying to ensure that students would not miss many lessons, trainings were conducted once a month and were shorter in duration (90 minutes instead of two hours, which was the time allocated to the music lesson).

Consequently, this called for some changes to the training program with some of the workshop exercises having to be omitted to shorten each session. More specifically, the ‘Violence in relationships’ role play had to be moved to Session 3, to allow for enough time to discuss the scenarios. Consequently, two exercises from Session 3 had to be omitted, namely the ‘Take a stance’ activity and the ‘Personal story’ exercise, which aimed at raising awareness on how young people themselves have been perpetrators or victims of GBV and explored ways young people can stand up to GBV.

Nevertheless, even though the trainings at Latsia had a greater focus on awareness building rather than on exploring ways of eradicating GBV, discussions on ways of dealing with GBV have been held throughout all training sessions. Despite the inevitable changes that had to be implemented in their trainings program, participants from Latsia appeared to be equally empowered to stand up to abusive situations as their private school counterparts (as was fervently pointed out during the focus group discussions at the end of the training)

Time plan

	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10
GC School					
- Initial trainings					
- Peer education trainings					
- Focus group					
The Grammar School					
- Initial trainings					
- Peer education trainings					
- Focus group					
Latsia public school					
- Initial trainings					
- Peer education trainings					
- Focus group					

Training time plan

GC School	
- Initial trainings	6 th Oct, 20 th Oct, 10 th Nov, 24 th Nov
- Peer education trainings	28 th Jan (briefing), 4 th Feb, 11 th Feb
- Focus group	20 th Feb
The Grammar School	
- Initial trainings	20 th Nov (information meeting), 4 th Dec, 11 th Dec, 18 th Dec, 8 th Jan
- Peer education trainings	22 nd Jan (briefing), 5 th Feb, 12 th Feb
- Focus group	12 th Feb
Latsia public school	
- Initial trainings	8 th Oct, 5 th Nov, 3 rd Dec, 7 th Jan
- Peer education trainings	14 th Jan (briefing), 21 st Jan, 28 th Jan
- Focus group	4 th Feb

Number of participants

On average, 56 teenagers participated in the trainings (there were some very minor fluctuations in the numbers attending each training). Approximately 22 teenagers came from the public school (Latsia) and 34 from the private schools (23 from the GC School and 11 from the Grammar School).

It is interesting to note that the differences in the selection process across schools resulted in a 'skewing' of the gender balance of participants. In Latsia, where the trainings were conducted in the classroom, an equal number of girls and boys attended the trainings (11 each). In the public schools where participants were invited to participate after school hours on their own will and availability, the gender balance was skewed towards the girls. This is not surprising, considering that in most cases it is the girls that indicate a greater openness in attending such workshops. Notably, at a total level, 35 girls vs. 21 boys participated in the trainings. In terms of age, the majority of the children were 16 years of age, with only a small number (3-4) being a year younger or a year older than 16.

The number of students per school and the breakdown by gender is outlined below. These numbers are based on the figures derived from the questionnaires that were completed by the students prior to the training.

	PRE TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRES			POST TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRES		
	Female	Male	TOTAL PRE	Female	Male	TOTAL POST
GC School	16	7	23	16	7	23
Grammar	8	3	11	9	5	14
Latsia	11	11	22	8	8	16
GRAND TOTAL	35	21	56	33	20	53

	Pre -Training	POST Training
15 years	6	3
16 years	47	44
17 years	2	5
18 years	1	1
Total	56	53

2. Training Methodology

When training young people it is important that the methodology that is employed goes beyond traditional methods of learning that solely concentrate on passive hearing and seeing (e.g. lecturing or PowerPoint presentations). Accordingly, this training program employed a variety of interactive methodologies which aimed to enhance participants' learning through interesting, fun and experiential ways. Indeed, it appears that teenagers do learn best when interactive methods are used and when they are encouraged to learn in a experiential way. In experiential methodologies:

- The learning relates to real life and explores issues that are directly relevant to young people.
- The learning builds on personal past knowledge and experiences. It incorporates an exchange of ideas and experiences between people, challenges perceptions, builds on disagreements and encourages participants to directly or indirectly experience a certain situation with the encouragement/validation from others.

Learning Objectives of the Training

The overall goal of the training program was to raise young people's sensitization to GBV. More specifically, the trainings aimed at:

- Enhancing young people's knowledge on what constitutes GBV
- Teaching young people how to recognize and prevent gender-based violence
- Helping young people identify the relationship between gender-based violence and gender roles.
- Enabling and empowering young people to build attitudes and skills regarding healthy relationships
- Helping students explore various ways they can use to protect themselves and others from gender-based violence

Duration of the Training Program

The training program was devised to be conducted on a total of *13 hours of training time per school*, which was distributed as follows:

- 6 hours of training allocated on issues related to gender roles and gender-based violence (3 x 2 hour sessions)
- 4 hours allocated to training peer educators in group facilitation skills (2 x 2 hour sessions)
- 2 peer education trainings (conducted by peer educators themselves), 90 min each.

Clearly, the above specified training duration (6 hours) is not adequate in providing young people with a broad and comprehensive view of *all* GBV-related issues and their implications nor does it provide adequate room for an in-depth exploration of ways to eradicate GBV. It is true that, in lieu of the restricted time duration, the time spent in exploring specific ways of how young people can exhibit assertive behavior and stand up to GBV has been less than what the trainers would have preferred. Discussions on the historical and theoretical background of gender-based violence have also been limited, in an effort to ensure a maximum time for interactive and experiential learning. Hence, all the theory, including definitions, glossary, terminologies and the socio-cultural, legal and political factors that are perpetrating GBV were broadly outlined in handouts, which were given as 'take-home reading' at the end of the training sessions.

Similarly, the time allocated to training peer educators in group facilitation and presentation techniques, has also been short. Clearly, the 2 hours dedicated to the peer education session do not provide adequate time for students to develop into experienced, stand-alone trainers who can provide all the necessary answers and make appropriate interventions without support.

Surely, the specific pre-determined duration of the trainings called for a focused and targeted approach. Priority was given to the key issues affecting young people in relation to gender-based violence (as these were identified by previous research), with the trainings concentrating on gender roles, bullying, rumors and violence in romantic relationships. Equally, the trainings' concentration on awareness-raising and enhancing young people's understanding of what constitutes GBV proved to be fundamental, as most students seemed to be unfamiliar with the term and were often not in a position to name (psychologically) abusive incidences as such. Lastly, even though not extensively trained as facilitators, peer educators managed to draw upon their experiences as participants to the initial trainings and used some of the interactive techniques very effectively.

Recommended Number of Participants

Considering that the nature of the program is a highly participatory one, it is recommended that the number of participants averages around 20. Evidently, 20 is the maximum number of participants that would allow an equal and adequate time for *all* students to engage in the discussion and build and practice new skills, without some of them 'disappearing in the crowd.

It is also worth noting that trainings of this nature, may result in the sharing of personal experiences and the disclosure, at times, of what can be considered as sensitive information. Thus, they may work best in smaller group settings (10-12 participants). This was clearly evident at the Grammar School, where the smaller group setting (12-14 participants compared to 22 in the other schools) constituted a more 'intimate' environment for participants, where they could feel safe to disclose sensitive information regarding abusive behaviors they themselves or their friends have experienced.

In terms of duration of participation, since the focus of the training was on skills development and not on sole exposure to information, students would benefit the most if they attended the entire program (all 4 sessions).

Presence of the teacher during the trainings.

Truly, the absence of the teacher during the course of the trainings is more conducive to creating an intimate environment where sharing of personal experiences and other personal or sensitive information can take place. The fact that there was no teacher present in the Grammar school trainings seems to have enhanced the intimate sharing of information.

In the event that teachers do need to be present (as in the case of the public school where the trainings were conducted during school hours), it's advisable that they remain as impartial and neutral as possible, attending as observers and making no interferences during the course of the trainings. This will provide enough room for young people to openly express themselves without feeling watched or supervised by their teachers.

2.1. Participatory facilitation methods used in the trainings

The trainings focused almost exclusively on experiential learning with activities being designed to be interactive and engage as many participants as possible. In trainings where it was important to provide some theoretical background (i.e. differences between gender and sex, information on the social construction of gender, definitions of violence and GBV etc) there was a brief run through of the theory at the beginning of the session, through the use of PowerPoint slides or pre-prepared flipcharts with definitions.

Overall, all activities were designed in such a way so that they could be conducted during class time and in a class environment. Activities also took into account that access to the use of electronic equipment (PowerPoint, access to the internet, use of audiovisuals etc) could have been limited, as was actually the case in the Latsia Lyceum and the Grammar School. Hence, activities primarily relied on the use of the board, the flipchart, verbal discussions and the use of printed material (scenarios, role plays, handouts etc).

Nevertheless, it was important that all activities were stimulating enough to ensure that they would generate participants' interest, maintain this interest intact and encourage their active participation.

Below are brief descriptions of the specific methods and training techniques used throughout the training sessions:

Brainstorming:

Brainstorming was used as a way to open a topic for discussion especially when a new topic was introduced (gender roles, stereotypes, types of violence etc). Brainstorming proved to be a great way for exploring ideas and perceptions. During brainstorming participants were encouraged to share their opinions freely without criticizing what others have shared. Once the brainstorming came to a natural end, the debriefing discussions identified common perceptions and conflicting opinions. Generally, brainstorming is a great activity and has multiple benefits when used in trainings, as for instance:

- It helps to break the 'ice' when the group gets stuck or seems to run out of ideas
- It invites everyone in the group to participate and thus ensures that all people in the group get a chance to contribute their thoughts
- It encourages participants to expand their thinking about an idea and examine a topic from different angles and perspectives.

Group Discussion:

Group discussion usually followed a brainstorm or an exercise (i.e. the gender in a box exercise, the scenarios and the role-play). Group discussion was a useful tool in eliciting responses from students on a particular topic because it encouraged them to challenge opinions, understand where they agree or disagree and find common grounds. Group discussions provided fruitful ground for facilitators to enhance participants' knowledge on a specific topic and also correct any misinformation.

The effectiveness of the group discussion greatly depends on the use of targeted open ended questions that help to bring out feelings or thoughts about a topic or an activity. Another strategy to ensure effective group discussions is to communicate acceptance and validate feelings. Participants are far more likely to share their feelings and ideas if they know they will not be judged or criticized for what they share in the group.

Buzz groups or small groups

The large group of participants was broken down into 'buzz groups' (or small groups) consisting of 3-4 persons. The small groups were given a topic or a scenario to discuss independently from other groups. Buzz groups were used for the discussion of gender roles, the media depiction of the stereotypical 'male' and 'female' body image and during the discussion of scenarios which depicted incidences of GBV. The

ideas generated in the small groups were then discussed in plenary and juxtaposed with the perceptions of the entire group.

In certain cases, buzz groups can be more effective than large group discussions because they encourage a sharing of experiences in a more informal and supportive manner than is often possible within the large group. Participants appear more comfortable to share their ideas in front of 2-3 people rather in front of a group of 20 and thus buzz groups can provide an intimate environment for 'sensitive' topics that may carry prejudices or biases. Buzz groups also prove to be a great way to involve the shy members of the group, who tend to keep quiet in a large group setting.

Scenarios

Handouts of hypothetical 'real life stories', depicting incidences of GBV and abuse were given out in buzz groups for discussion. The scenarios depicted situations that were close to the realities of young people so that they could relate to them. In addition, scenarios were purposively devised to challenge participants' perceptions, attitudes and behaviors, especially on issues that may generate biases or prejudices. The scenario with Anna (the girl who was sexually abused) and Sam (who was bullied) were such.

Scenarios are a great tool to highlight how incidences of violence are often overshadowed by 'myths', stereotypes, inequalities and well-embedded socio-cultural beliefs and thus have a powerful effect on participants.

Role-Play

Role plays were used to recreate a real-life situation and provide the opportunity for participants to observe how they react and how they feel in such situations. The role play scenarios were devised to appear as 'real' as possible and be relevant to young people's realities.

The role play technique was used to reenact various incidences of psychological abuse that young people may experience in a romantic relationship. Once the role play's scenario was handed out, individual participants were asked to take onboard particular roles. It is not important for participants to have experienced or witnessed similar situations, as long as they have some understanding of the characters portrayed. The 'actors' were invited to play their part using their insight into their particular character to determine actions and words.

Role plays are indeed a very powerful tool to use and are very effective in many ways. Young people often identify themselves with the characters, and reflect on similar situations that they themselves or their friends have experienced. Consequently, role-playing provides the opportunity to experience a real-life situation without taking real-life risks. The debriefing session after the role play can allow room for exploring alternative forms of behavior and ways young people can stand up to abusive situations.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that since role-plays have a direct and powerful effect they can potentially become a strong emotional experience for participants. Thus, when role playing is introduced in the group, it is important to emphasize that all participants need to treat any personal disclosures with care, sensitivity and confidentiality. Moreover, participants need to feel comfortable to stop at any time and leave the room if they need to in the event that a role-play becomes too emotional for them.

Taking a stance

Some training manuals refer to this type of exercises as 'voting with your feet'. Participants were asked to 'take a stance' on an issue by physically going to a pre-designated place in the room that represents a potential action that can be taken to handle an abusive incidence.

'Taking a stance' exercises are useful in allowing participants to explore possible options, discuss the effectiveness and feasibility of each option and practice or model new skills in a safe, supportive environment. 'Taking a stance' are empowering exercises as they can depict solutions or other plausible options that teenagers can employ to act upon a certain situation.

Drawing

Working individually or in groups, participants were invited to create an artistic piece that conveyed messages against gender-based violence. The resulting artwork formed the basis for discussion in their groups. Upon the completion of the training program, these drawings were publically exhibited to convey messages to other young people about gender-based violence.

Drawing is a great technique because it allows for stimulation of the non-rational brain which allows the group to bring out its feelings, become creative and engaged, while also enjoying themselves.

Audio- visuals

Visual aids are great in communicating a message without the use of many words. The most common audio-visuals used during the trainings were pictures and videos (where the necessary facilities were available).

Visual aids are extremely effective. As we live in an era where we are constantly bombarded by visuals, we easily 'absorb' the messages they convey. Audio-visuals are also a lot of fun and stimulate all 5 senses, thus they keep the group engaged. Audio-visuals can also introduce humor into the trainings and help 'wake up' the group, if they're getting tired

Handouts

Since little time was devoted to the theory during the training sessions, handouts proved particularly useful in providing this theoretical information to the students. Handouts were also used to provide additional material to the topics discussed during the training sessions (which were omitted for lack of time).

Facilitation of the trainings

For all the above methods to be effective, it is vital that the trainer assumes the role of a facilitator rather than the role of a teacher. Facilitators create an environment that is conducive to participatory learning, in which all students can teach each other through sharing, discussion and feedback.

Facilitators also need to be in a position to handle the personal and intimate information that is shared in the trainings with sensitivity and understanding, in a non-judgmental but supportive way. Additionally, facilitators need to be prepared to provide emotional support to participants who may become upset after recalling or sharing an unpleasant or hurtful incidence. Thus, given the complexity and sensitivity of this type of trainings, it is necessary that the facilitator carries prior experience in participatory teaching methods and is experienced in working with young people. Familiarity with the concepts of gender, gender roles, gender equality, violence, psychological abuse and human rights are also necessary. Lastly, the facilitator needs

be able to discuss abuse issues openly in the presence of others, in a frank and unembarrassed manner.

2.2. Thematic content of the training sessions

The thematic content of the trainings was drawn from previously conducted research projects on Gender-based violence. The 'Perspective Workpackage II report' was particularly useful in identifying the key issues that are important to young people in relation to gender-based violence. In addition, the trainings drew upon the literature on gender-based violence and addressed 'normalized' or 'accepted' beliefs about gender roles and 'myths' related to violence or abuse.

More specifically, the following thematic subsections were included in the trainings:

I. Gender, gender roles, differences between genders

- The training program commenced with a *distinction between gender and sex*, helping the students understand what is meant by the social construction of gender
- *Gender roles and society's expectations for each gender*. Activities targeted the 'traditional' roles for women and men as 'determined' by society, explored the differences and inequalities that may be present between the genders and challenged 'accepted' or 'normalized' beliefs about masculinity and femininity. In addition, perceptions on sexuality were also explored, taking into account their associations with gender stereotypes
- *Gender and the media*. Previous research suggested that teenagers are exposed to a lot of negative information from the media with regards to body image, male and female role models and gender roles. An exercise targeting the relationship of gender roles and the media was used to help students critically assess the media-portrayed image of women and men and understand how they're influenced by these images.

II. Relationship models and violence in relationships

- Stemming from the media portrayed image of women and men, *models of attraction were discussed*
- As young people also receive negative messages from the media regarding intimate relationships, an interactive activity was used to explore

adolescents' *perceptions of love and what constitutes a healthy relationship*. This activity also challenged beliefs regarding the relationship between 'love and suffering', explored what constitutes healthy boundaries in romantic relationships and highlighted how abusive behavior can sometimes be 'romanticized'.

III. Gender-based violence

- Before young people can take a stance against gender-based violence, it is important that they *understand what constitutes GBV* and are *able to recognize the various forms of GBV as such*. Examples of GBV were presented and various exercises made special reference to *psychological violence*, including rumors, bullying, verbal abuse, control, intimidation, threats etc.
- This section was also *linked to gender roles* and explored how people who do not fit the stereotypical role models for men and women are often subjected to violence and abuse.

IV. Taking a stance against Gender-based violence

- Young people were encouraged to reflect on incidences where they *themselves are perpetrators* of GBV and identified which of their behaviors may be exhibiting tolerance to violence and abuse
- *Alternative options and modes of behavior* were discussed in an effort to help young people protect themselves and others from Gender-based violence. This section aimed at empowering young people to stand up to GBV

V. Training Peer educators

- The last training session was exclusively devoted to training peer educators. Students became aware of what peer education is and explored the role of the peer trainer
- Training tools and techniques were presented and the skills and qualities needed by peer educators were discussed.
- Ways of dealing with presentation anxiety were also discussed
- Finally, interactive activities were used to enhance good communication and group facilitation skills.

2.3. Outline of each of the training sessions

Below is the outline of each of the training sessions. The outline includes the training activities and exercises, the time needed for each activity and the learning objectives

Session 1: Gender roles

Time	Session 1	Objective
20 min	<u>Introduction</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short briefing from trainers about the training • Discuss student's expectations about the training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify students' expectations and ensure that they are fulfilled throughout the course of the training. - Discuss which expectations cannot be fulfilled and why.
10 min	Completion of perceptions 'pre' questionnaire	
10 min	<u>Gender and sex</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read out statements and ask students to differentiate between gender and sex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distinguish between biological sex and the social construction of gender
70 min	<u>Gender Roles</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Gender in a box' exercise adapted from 'Gender Matters' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use magazine clippings to discuss how media depict 'real men' and 'real women' ○ Discuss what messages are conveyed by the media regarding body image and the stereotypical roles for women and men ○ Identify how women or men who do not fit the stereotypical roles become victims of abusive behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore how the media and society shape the roles for men and women - Discuss 'models' of attraction - Critically assess the media-portrayed image of women and men and understand how young people are negatively influenced by these images. - Explore the contradictions that sometimes exist in relation to society's expectations for men and women - Challenge gender stereotypes and also the 'accepted' or 'normalized' beliefs about masculinity and femininity - Introduce concepts of gender inequality and hierarchies of power - Discuss which roles can be changed and how - Introduce concepts of inequality, bullying, abuse and violence - Introduce what constitutes GBV and how this relates to gender roles
10	De-brief -Discuss what the students enjoyed	

min	and what could be done differently	
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Session 2: Violence in romantic relationships

Time	Session 2	Objective
10 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of last session and key messages 	
5 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Definition of Gender-based violence</u> and short examples 	
45 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Scenarios</u> depicting incidences of gender-based violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance students' understanding of GBV (understand what constitutes GBV, when it happens, how it happens and the reasons behind it) Identify types of violence and of GBV Enable students to identify incidences of GBV as such Link how the stereotypical roles for women and men, social taboos and prejudices can lead to GBV Explore hierarchies of power between gender and across genders
55 min	<p><u>Violence in relationships</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'The knight on the white horse', a role play from 'Gender Matters' adapted to young people's issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the boundaries of healthy relationships Draw attention to psychological violence and its serious repercussions Explore what constitutes verbal /physical abuse , control, threatening, intimidation Discuss how violence in relationships can be romanticized. Identify the reasons young people tolerate abuse in romantic relationships Discuss how love may be (wrongly) associated with suffering
5 min	<p>De-brief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss what the students enjoyed and what they would have liked been done differently 	

Session 3: Take a stance

Time	Session 3	Objective
5 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of last session 	
15 min	<p><u>Your personal story</u></p> <p>Participants individually record instances where (i) they have personally witnessed or experienced GBV (ii) they took action against GBV (iii) remained passive to an incidence of GBV (iv) they themselves have been perpetrators of GBV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect on cases where participants experienced GBV either directly or indirectly (as witnesses) Enhance awareness about the commonality of GBV in everyday life Explore modes of behavior and reactions to GBV Understand reasons for young people not reacting to GBV (lack of awareness, fear, intimidation, disempowerment etc) Enable young people understand how their behaviors or tolerance may be perpetuating GBV
40 min	<p><u>Take a stand</u></p> <p>Using the scenarios of the role-plays of previous sessions explore possible actions that can be taken by the persons who have been victims of gender-based violence to protect themselves</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore how young people can respond to instances of gender-based violence Explore how young people can exhibit assertive behavior Enhance young people's understanding of how they can protect themselves and others from GBV
60 min	<p><u>Creative activity</u></p> <p>Preparation of posters or artistic materials inspired by GBV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the opportunity for students to communicate messages about GBV to other young people
	<p>De-brief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss what the students enjoyed and what they would have liked to be done differently 	

Session 4: Training Peer Educators

Time	Session 4	Objective
5 min	Overview of last session	
10 min	Peer education PowerPoint Presentation on what peer education is and how young people can become peer educators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For students to become aware of what peer education is, understand the role of the peer educator and recognize why peer education is effective. - Encourage students to become peer educators
10 min	Overcoming Presentation anxiety PowerPoint Presentation on overcoming fear of public speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help students understand what is presentation anxiety, why it happens and explore ways to overcome stress and presentation anxiety
30 min	Qualities of a peer educator Discuss key qualities of peer educators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Balance o Flexibility o Impartiality o Intuition o Focus on the process o Inclusion o Empathy and good listening skills o Creativity o humor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train potential peer educators on important skills they will need to draw upon during their trainings
40 min	Group Facilitation Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Role –playing. Peer educators practice group facilitation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance peer educators’ skills on group facilitation - Provide the opportunity for peer educators to practice facilitation skills and the put training tools into practice. - Provide feedback to peer educators to help them improve their skills
15 min	Post Questionnaire	
10 min	Evaluation Evaluation questionnaire	

2.4. Educational material and other resources used to devise the training manual for peer education

During the preparation phase of the trainings and the development of the methodology, the trainers drew upon information from the following manuals and reports:

- *The 'Gender Matters' manual* produced by the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe. The manual contains a variety of activities which aim at awareness raising and prevention of GBV. 'The Gender in a Box' exercise and the 'Knight in the white horse' exercise, which were used in the trainings, have been adapted from the Gender Matters Manual. The manual was also used to draw upon the theoretical aspects, glossary and terminologies that were included in handouts given to the students at the end of each training session. The manual can be found at the following website: http://www.eycb.coe.int/gendermatters/chapter_0/2_pre.html
- *The 'Perspective Project : Workpackage II report'*, prepared by the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies, which provided important insights on the ways GBV is expressed and perceived by young people. This report was particularly helpful in drawing the issues that are particularly relevant to young people in relation to Gender-based violence (as for instance bullying, rumors, violence in relationships etc)
- *'Training of Trainers' course toolkit*, prepared by INTRAC UK in association with the NGO Support Center and the Management Center in Cyprus, under the Cyprus Civil Society Strengthening Program. The manual outlines detailed participatory methods and techniques used for workshops. Some of these methods have been included in the handout 'Techniques to use in training', given out to participants in Training Session 4.
- *'Doorways I: Student Training Manual on School related gender-based violence prevention and response'*, developed for USAID's Office of Women in Development by the Safe Schools Program. The manual was devised to enable teachers, community members and students to prevent and respond to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV). The manual includes exercises, scenarios and role plays drawing awareness to the physical, sexual and psychological abuse suffered by both girls and boys in the school environment. In particular, the format of the training manual for peer educators, the statements used in the

'Gender or Sex' exercise, and the theoretical background on gender roles and gender stereotypes have been adapted from the Doorways manual. The 'Doorways I' manual can be found in the following link : http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/doorways.html

- *The FEMNET manual on Gender-Based Violence.* This manual is targeted towards men, aiming to build men's capacity and commitment in eradicating violence against women and girls. The manual includes comprehensive historical and theoretical information on gender-based violence and gender equality and provides a systematic linkage of these two issues. The manual has proved particularly useful for the theoretical background provided in the trainings as for instance the definitions of violence and gender-based violence, as well as the analysis of the social, cultural, economic, political and legal factors perpetuating GBV). The FEMNET manual can be downloaded here : <http://www.femnet.or.ke/documents/gbv.pdf>
- *'Peer education: the training manual for peer educator's'* prepared by the United Office for Drug and Crime. The manual outlines the key principles for using peer educators for contemporary issues faced by young people (nutrition, sexual identity, crime, sexual relationships, substance abuse etc). It can be downloaded here: www.unodc.org/pdf/youthnet/action/message/escap_peers_01.pdf
- *Judith Pinnok's presentation on Peer Education.* Ms Pinnok is an independent education management professional who has been employed by the Perspective Project to provide her recommendations on training peer educators. In her presentation she provides information on the qualities and skills required by peer educators, their expected role and responsibilities as well as exercises and methods that can be employed by peer educators during their peer education sessions.

3. Students' participation and reactions to the trainings

This section outlines students' participation to each session. Each subsection is followed by a short assessment of its effectiveness, including some suggestions for future changes or improvements.

3.1. Students reactions to the gender roles and gender stereotypes

The 'Gender in a box' exercise made a particular impression to the students, and seems to have been a great success. Students were fully engaged in this exercise, passionately contributing to the discussion, expressing opinions and challenging each other's ideas.

Most students identified the differences in society's expectations for men and women. What was interesting to note was the fact that young people's opinions of gender roles and of what is 'feminine' and 'masculine' were outlined within a somewhat 'traditional' context, suggesting that even at this age, gender stereotypes are evident and have an impact in shaping behaviors.

Appearances were considered to be important for both genders, with both women and men being expected to be good looking and have nice bodies. In the case of women the nice body was associated with 'a slender figure'¹, while for men the nice body connoted an 'athletic and muscular built'. In terms of behaviors, young people identified the contradictions and controversies in society's expectations for both men and women. While women were expected to be 'quiet, submissive, polite, responsible, decent and modest' they were also expected to be 'provocative, flirtatious, sexy and sexually liberated'. Similarly, men were expected to be 'tough, confident, powerful and strong' but also 'being gentlemen' and loving husbands.

More specifically, young people considered that women are expected to:

- Be beautiful and have a great body. In terms of physical characteristics young people mentioned the need for a slender/skinny figure, long legs, big breasts and nice long hair. In terms of 'accessories', make-up and high heels were the most common ones
- Be dynamic and powerful
- Be sexy, attractive, seductive, capricious, naughty, wild, flirtatious and provocative.

while, at the same time, being....

- modest, decent and of high morality
- quiet, polite and submissive
- serious and responsible
- nurturing and caring
- mainly responsible for taking care of the house, doing the more 'feminine' chores (e.g. sweeping, mopping, ironing, cooking)

¹ Words in quotes represent actual verbatims of participants

- a 'superwoman', balancing career with family but placing her children and family first
- a good mother and taking care of her children

On the other hand, men are expected to:

- o be muscular and physically strong
- o be handsome, good looking with a nice athletic body. In terms of physical characteristics, muscles and a beard/stubble were considered important. Cars, expensive clothes, expensive watches and tattoos were mentioned as the key 'accessories' for men
- o adopt a sportive style and be active and energetic
- o be rich and professionally successful
- o be powerful, confident, independent, sure of themselves, arrogant, have a big ego and be hard to get
- o be wild, be tough, be a mangas
- o be desirable and sexy
- o inspire respect
- o be the breadwinners of their family
- o take care of women, act like gentlemen and be loving partners

Clearly, media seems to have a strong influence in shaping young people's perceptions about gender roles and the 'expected' behaviors for men and women. It was remarkable that by only looking at magazine pictures, young people could identify society's expectations with regards to appearances and behaviors of the genders. What's more, these appearances and behaviors were all linked to 'normalized', 'traditional' and 'stereotypical' beliefs of what is 'feminine' and 'masculine'.

Notably, most participants agreed that the media often portray a negative image of women and of the relationship between the genders. Students perceived that some of the pictures portrayed men as being superior to women, often forcing women to be submissive or inferior. The 'Sky Vodka', the 'Dolce & Cabbana', the 'Perrier' and the 'Gasoline Jeans' ads were prominent examples of this. In addition, students claimed that some of the pictures presented women as 'stupid', 'naïve', 'brainless', 'weak', 'vulnerable', 'fragile' and 'dependent on men'.

Young people recognized that to some extent gender roles are gradually changing. For instance, it is more customary for women nowadays to consider their careers important and seek professional success. Men are also gradually taking more responsibilities in the care of the home and the children. Even the 'tough, macho' image of men is changing with media portraying a more 'metrosexual' male image.

These transitional changes in gender roles highlighted the controversies in the expectations of society for both genders, and generated a lot of discussions about how difficult it is to 'fit' all these aspects that are expected of us. The majority of young people realized that it is impossible to do so and that most people lie 'outside the gender boxes'.

'I do understand that appearances are important and sometimes you need to fit a certain profile. But with the trainings I understood that I should just be myself and that I should not change to please others', girl from GC School

'I realized how sometimes my (male) classmates are sexist, expecting the girls to be weaker or less competent because they're girls, girl from GC School

'We are not in these boxes, why should we expect others to fit these boxes?', girl from GC School

Adapting the exercise in their context, young people mentioned the pressure they are under to fit a certain profile, as appearances are particularly important in their age. The majority of young people seem to take into account the opinions of their peers and mentioned incidences where friends of theirs are 'trying to change their image so that they can become more accepted'. Participants recognized the controversies that exist in the expectations for girls and boys their age, similar to the expectations for older men and women. They talked about how girls want their boyfriends to be macho but sensitive at the same time, 'cultured' but 'crazy' and 'wild'. Conversely, boys expected girls to be 'decent' but also provocative, sexy but also 'moral' and 'modest'.

One of the most important learnings of the 'Gender in a box' exercise was the ease with which society classifies people in 'boxes', often resulting in judgments, accusations and prejudices against those who do not. Students talked about how there is little tolerance of people who look and behave 'differently'. They mentioned various examples of how women who appear to be provocative and men who appear to be more effeminate are excluded and psychologically abused.

Discussions about hierarchies of power indicated that young people are familiar with notions of gender equality, at least to some extent. These discussions explored differences in the involvement of men and women in public/civic life, the opportunities (or lack of opportunities) each are given to acquire leadership positions and the differences in the freedoms men and women enjoy. For instance,

students from Latsia recognized the lack of women presidents and women in high administrative positions in the government (MPs, ministers). Grammar school students referred to the gender segregation in employment and the few opportunities that are given to women to rise up the company ladders. What was shocking for all participants was the presentation of the 'pay gap'; even though all young people were aware of the inequalities between the genders, they could not believe that it is possible for women to be getting paid less than men for equal work.

Notes on the Gender in a box' exercise

The 'Gender in a box' exercise seemed to have made a strong impression as it was used as a point of reference in other trainings as well; students would often refer back to it and make a connection of the exercise (gender roles) with violence and abuse. Clearly, as indicated by young people's discussions during the trainings, this exercise had a powerful effect in conveying messages about gender roles and gender stereotypes while also indicating how young people themselves are affected by society's expectations to 'fit into the box'.

'I learned that many of the roles we are expected to fill come from society's expectations and society's influence, something that I didn't know or avoided', girl from the Grammar School

Facilitators need to monitor this exercise closely, especially when young people are working on the pictures in small groups. The pictures generate a lot of heated discussions and the 'intimate' small group setting allows for the deeper stereotypes and prejudices to emerge more freely. Facilitators need to guide the small groups towards developing a more in-depth understand of where these beliefs are coming from. Facilitators also need to place particular emphasis on the influence of the media in shaping perceptions about gender roles, pin point the controversies in society's expectations and challenge any 'normalized' beliefs.

Clearly, the effectiveness of this exercise in conveying the necessary messages about gender 'boxes' has been particularly important in preparing participants for the exercises on GBV, by helping them to make the link between gender roles and gender-based violence.

3.2. Students reactions to gender-based violence

Scenarios on gender-based violence

All participants were able to identify that violence does not only include physical violence but psychological abuse as well. They classified name calling, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, sexual harassment and rape as forms of violence.

The scenarios appeared to be quite successful in challenging young people's perceptions. Stereotypes and 'myths' about violence were quite prominent in the discussions that followed. It was interesting to note that all participants, from all three schools alike, rushed to make 'judgments' about the people depicted in the scenarios before they even read the entire story. In particular, boys and girls equally rushed to characterize Sam as 'effeminate', 'coward', 'sissy' and 'gay' because he liked art and literature, did not play football and refused to get into fights. Similarly, Ana, a girl who dressed 'provocatively' and 'frequently changed boyfriends' was perceived as a 'slut', 'indecent' and of 'loose morals'.

Evidently, stereotypical gender roles and societal taboos appear to be deeply embedded in young people's perceptions. Unfortunately, these stereotypes often shape young people's behaviors towards others. Young people would also show low tolerance to people who are different and who lie outside the 'gender box'. Boys found it particularly difficult to accept that Sam was a 'real man'. Some even considered that it was his fault to be abused because he 'wouldn't stand up and fight like a man'. Similarly, boys and girls negatively criticized Ana for her sexual choices, indicating no respect and no acceptance for what was considered to be a 'promiscuous' and 'too loose' lifestyle for a girl.

The scenarios generated a lot of discussion about whether people can provoke violence. A high share of participants (and especially the students from Latsia) considered that both people depicted in the scenarios 'were looking for trouble' and provoked the violent behavior they experienced because they were different and acted different than the 'norm'. The trainers placed particular emphasis on challenging this 'myth', explaining how violence cannot be provoked in any way and that no one deserves to be abused.

Notes on the exercise with scenarios

Apparently, the scenarios proved a useful tool in challenging young people's perceptions. It seemed that it was the first time that young people got the opportunity to work in detail with the notion of psychological abuse and understand that repeated name-calling, rumors, constantly talking behind someone else's back

and rejection/isolation of people who are 'different' are forms of violence. Most of them claimed that in the past they had considered this behavior 'natural' and 'normal' especially in cases where they had felt they had a 'reason' to engage in such behaviors (i.e. mocking a boy because he was more effeminate, creating rumors about girls with more 'liberal' sexual behaviors etc)

Young people mentioned that the scenarios pointed out how easily they tend to jump into conclusions, making assumptions and using stereotypes against people, criticizing them badly. From the discussions following the scenarios (as also from the final evaluations of the training), young people seemed to have reflected on their behaviors and made a commitment to themselves to show more tolerance and acceptance to people that are 'different', without engaging in any type of abusive behavior towards them. This was particularly evident in the Grammar School, where the girls mentioned that from 'now on they would mind their own business and not judge, ridicule or mock people that lie outside the gender box.'

Role play – The Knight on the white horse

The role play was regarded by participants as the most effective and most enjoyable exercise of the entire training. They were all enthusiastic with it and the discussion that followed was highly passionate and participatory.

Overall, young people recognized the psychological violence, the coercion, oppression, humiliation, isolation and control depicted in the play as forms of violence. For many participants, the role play appeared to be an 'eye opening experience' considering that prior to the training they perceived most of these forms of violence as 'natural' and 'expected'. Certainly, the role play had a powerful impact in enhancing young people's awareness on what constitutes GBV in relationships, and enabled them to identify it when it happens.

Another great learning from this exercise seemed to be the notion of romanticizing violence and the risks associated with doing so. The notion of romanticizing violence made such an impact to the students that some of them included this message in their artistic posters, in an effort to pass on the message to other young people as well.

Clearly, the role play had a strong impact to young people's awareness and understandings. The fact that the scenario of the play depicted issues that were directly relevant to young people's realities helped the participants relate to the 'actors' and their feelings. The role play was the first exercise that stirred the sharing of intimate details of personal stories and experiences. Reflecting on their personal

lives, some girls claimed that they recognized their boyfriends in the face of the Knight, boys admitted that they sometimes behave in the same controlling manner towards their girlfriends or their sisters, while others mentioned that they have friends who are in similar (controlling and abusive) relationships. Some girls also mentioned that they themselves had fallen into the trap of romanticizing violence and denying the reality in their relationships, placing themselves at the risk of psychological abuse.

Again, discussions revolved around the question 'Can someone provoke violence?' Some of the participants (and especially the students from Latsia) regarded that the girl in the role play was provoking her partner's controlling behavior because of the way she dressed and behaved. The 'expected' behaviors of women and men were discussed, with participants identifying that controlling behaviors are more 'accepted' if conducted by a boy towards a girl but are completely unacceptable if conducted from a girl to a boy. A girl trying to control her partner's behavior would be considered 'bossy' and criticized badly.

Some 'myths' about the victims of violence were also raised. In their large majority, participants perceived that the girl in the role play was abused because she was 'weak', 'vulnerable', 'submissive' and 'a victim'. They found it difficult to believe that dynamic and more assertive people can also become victims of abuse. This provided a good opportunity for facilitators to address the fact that violence can be directed to all people equally; victims of abuse are not limited to the 'weak' personalities.

Notably, since the role play depicted an abusive behavior of a man towards a woman, some students questioned whether this was an 'one-sided' depiction of reality. As the trainings largely concentrated on the violence against women, some participants considered that this was a 'feministic' approach that disregarded the violence and abusive behavior men are subjected to. Truly the trainings did place more emphasis on the violence against women, taking into consideration that women are the large majority of victims of violence worldwide. Statistics and references of global examples were provided to participants during the trainings, trying to help young people understand why it is important to discuss violence against women specifically and place particular importance to it.

Nevertheless, the ways that men experience GBV were not excluded from the trainings. Trainers tried to maintain a balance during the trainings, with the use of specific exercises (scenarios) and specific examples that highlighted the pressure men experience in fitting a specific 'model of behavior' and the 'punishments' they receive if they don't fit this model.

Notes on the role play

Role plays are indeed very powerful tools to use to convey messages and raise awareness about specific situations. As young people relate with the characters in the play, they make attempts to 'psychoanalyze' them and understand their personalities. It was almost instinctive that participants tried to understand what about the knight's personality made him a perpetrator of violence and what about Suzie's personality made her become a victim of abuse. Some participants even started to seek the psychological causes that may lead to violent behavior (mentioning for instance unhappy childhood, isolation, upbringing, perpetrators having been a victim of violence themselves etc). However, psychoanalysis of the characters is beyond the scope of this workshop. Similarly, domestic violence, violent behavior and the causes of violence are too complex notions to be discussed in one training session.

Consequently, facilitators need to pay particular attention in ensuring that their group remains focused on the objectives of this exercise (the manifestation of GBV in relationships and the risks of romanticizing violence). Since it is important for students to understand the causes of violence and the reasons why women tolerate abuse, facilitators can address these topics in the discussions, but briefly. Facilitators can explain the complexity and multi-faced nature of violence and its repercussions and utilize this opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings or 'myths' with regards to the victims of abuse. It is important that students understand that violence is not only directed towards people who are weak or vulnerable; instead, any person regardless of age, gender, social status, profession etc can become a victim of violence.

Moreover, facilitators need to conduct the role-play exercise with care and sensitivity, creating a 'safe environment' for participants. Taking into consideration that the role play may result in the sharing of personal stories, which may stir some intense feelings for some participants, this exercise can become a very emotional experience for the group. In reality, facilitators do not necessarily know 'who is in the room' and it is very likely that some participants may have experienced abusive behavior in their relationships or have been victims of violence.

Thus, it is crucial that all participants feel that they are in a 'safe environment' and that they are treated with respect and sensitivity. It is important that prior to the commencement of the discussion, the facilitators points attention to the fact that this is a sensitive exercise and that all participants need to treat what their classmates share with respect and sensitivity. In addition, participants need to be reassured that they are not obliged to share intimate details or discuss incidences that may make them feel uncomfortable. Participants can only disclose what they feel comfortable with to share in public. The debriefing also needs to be formulated

in a 'non-personal' manner, so that even if someone has had a painful personal experience, they do not have to answer by referring to it directly.

Lastly, referrals to crisis hotlines (like the domestic violence hotline) can prove vital in the event that students share stories of violence that are placing other people at risk.

3.3. Students reactions on taking a stance against GBV

The session of 'taking a stance' against GBV commenced with an introspective exercise where participants were asked to personally recall :

- incidences where they personally experienced GBV
- incidences where they witnessed GBV but remained passive
- incidences where they witnessed GBV and reacted
- incidences where they themselves had been perpetrators of GBV

Indeed, introspective exercises have a very powerful effect since they encourage participants to reflect on their past behaviors and examine them with fresh eyes, following the awareness they have gained from the trainings. For most students it was shocking to realize that they themselves have been perpetrators of GBV, without being aware of it at the time. The exercise also helped participants understand the commonality of GBV in everyday life, with them admitting that 'GBV is all around us and happens often'. Lastly, the exercise provided the opportunity to discuss the reasons why young people do not react to GBV, exploring how their lack of awareness, tolerance, fear and disempowerment is contributing to perpetuating GBV.

By exploring the reasons that prevent them to 'take a stance' against GBV, young people were geared to look for alternative ways that they could employ in their behavior to protect themselves from GBV. During the following exercise (' Voting with your feet: Take a stance against GBV') participants were given the opportunity to explore alternative ways in practice, by discussing how they would have felt if they had taken specific actions against GBV or exhibited certain behaviors.

Notes on the 'Taking a stance' exercise

From their final evaluations and the focus group discussions, it was evident that young people felt more empowered to stand up to GBV after the trainings. Even the

mere fact that they felt they could now recognize GBV when it takes place gave them a sense of confidence that they can take action against it. The practical exercises in exploring various options they can use to protect themselves and others were also important in helping them identify 'solutions' or 'preventive ways of behavior'.

Undoubtedly, young people need to be further empowered to stand up to GBV. In future trainings, it would be very useful to include additional exercises that can be targeted to empowering young people and enabling them to use assertive behavior.

Artistic Posters

The creation of the artistic posters was enthusiastically embraced by the students because it gave them an opportunity to 'express themselves' and also convey messages to others. The students worked on the posters with a lot of zest and created amazing pieces of art in the limited time that was allocated in this exercise. The more zealous ones took their posters home to work on them in more detail. Clearly, the posters also provide a 'creative note' to the trainings, making the entire experience more enjoyable and more complete.

Posters were inspired from a variety of aspects discussed during the trainings, as for instance

- Gender roles and gender stereotypes: posters depicting the traditional feminine and masculine type, with messages geared towards the need to break free from society's expectations and the traditional gender roles
- The need to accept people who look and behave differently
- The need for equality: drawings of men and women as one
- Messages about violence in relationships (using key words to describe positive and negative aspects of relationships such as love, trust and caring vs. control, intimidation, abuse)
- Messages about the risk of 'romanticizing violence'
- Messages about the fact that 'no one can provoke violence'

4. Key Messages

Following the messages conveyed through the posters, focus group discussions provided an additional opportunity for young people to brainstorm on what messages would be important to convey to other people their age. The following are the key messages that young people came up with:

- *'It can happen to you'*: GBV is all around us. Sometimes young people are oblivious to the fact that they are victims of abusive behavior. They need to be in a position to identify gender-based violence when it happens and show no tolerance to it.
- *'Do not romanticize violence'*: It is very easy for adolescents to fall into the trap of romanticizing their relationships. Romanticizing violence however carries many risks
- *'No one can provoke violence'*: No victim can be blamed for provoking a violent behavior against her
- *'Love yourself and be yourself. Protect yourself from GBV'*
- *'Be alert'*: Young people need to become more alert and less tolerant of certain behaviors in their relationships. Healthy boundaries need to be established in their relationships. Relationships need to be based on mutual respect and there should be no tolerance of control, humiliation, verbal abuse, threats and intimidation
- *'Psychological violence is as equally important as physical violence'*: Formal education usually places too much emphasis on physical abuse and its repercussions. A need for further educating young people on psychological violence and verbal abuse, as also their repercussions.
- *'Anyone can be a victim of violence regardless of age'*: Young people are sometimes mistaken that violence occurs only in adult relationships. They need to recognize that GBV is relevant to them and that they may become victims.
- *'Young people can be perpetrators of GBV'*. Young people can exercise abusive behaviors without being aware of it.

- *‘Every person can make a difference. Stand up to GBV’*: This can be like a domino effect where one person inspires another to act against GBV
- *‘Accept people outside the box’*. Young people mentioned the need for accepting people that are different, regardless of what society may expect from them. Appearances should not be so important and boys and girls should not be judged by their personal appearance
- *‘Μαγκιά δεν είναι ο έλεγχος αλλά ο σεβασμός’*
- *‘Women to express their sexuality freely’*: Women to have more liberty in dating without being negatively criticized, even if they like to dress in a certain (provocative) way or have multiple boyfriends.

5. Young people as peer educators

5.1. Training the peer educators

Taking into consideration that the students who participated in the trainings did not have a previous opportunity to act as peer educators, it was important that they understood the key principles of peer education. The training also allowed young people to discuss their concerns and fears of becoming peer educators and explored the skills and qualities that would enable them to become effective in this role.

Particular emphasis was placed on the skills and qualities that could promote participatory and interactive learning among peers. Some key principles of group facilitation were first discussed theoretically (as for instance good communication skills, impartiality, inclusion, flexibility, creativity etc), followed by practice sessions, where peer educators could put these skills into practice. These practice sessions were particularly important as they provided:

- a safe environment where peer trainers could practice the various skills and learn ‘what works and what doesn’t’
- the opportunity for the trainers to provide tangible feedback to peer educators and help them improve their skills
- a ‘testing ground’ where logistical issues with regards to the flow of the training could be identified and resolved prior to the actual peer education trainings

- an empowering experience to young people, as it helped boost their confidence in standing up in front of others and acting as the ‘experts’
- a safe environment where peer trainers could learn how to handle ‘difficult’ participants (participants that may be indifferent, causing trouble or asking very provocative questions)

However, in lieu of the time constraints of training session 4, not all peer educators had the opportunity to practice group facilitation skills prior to the actual peer training session. Naturally, all peer trainers seemed to have learned a lot by watching the trainers and other peers use group facilitation skills; however, it is more beneficial that all peer educators do get the opportunity to practice before they train, so as they can feel more comfortable and more confident in assuming the role of a trainer. It is also important that peer educators have a chance to practice the actual exercises they will conduct in the peer education sessions so that they can feel comfortable with them. Unfortunately, again due to the short duration of the session, peer educators did not have a chance to practice some of the actual exercises, with some educators experiencing difficulties when they were training their peers.

Young people’s fears and concerns in becoming peer education trainers

Young people realized that ‘acting as a teacher’ carries a lot of responsibility and it entails a certain seriousness on their part. Despite the fact most of them were very enthusiastic and motivated in carrying out trainings to their peers, they still shared some concerns and fears. Even though these concerns were not materialized during the actual trainings, it is important that they are taken into consideration during the ‘train the trainer’ session and that young people are taught ways to overcome them.

A small number of peer educators expressed that they felt stress and presentation anxiety. This is natural considering that most of them did not carry any previous experiences in peer education. A specific section on fear of public speaking was included in the ‘train the trainer’ session and young people were reminded of ways they could use to overcome presentation stress.

Peer educators were concerned that their peers would not pay attention to them or that they would be negatively criticized by them. Some of the peer educators were concerned that they would not be taken seriously by students of their own age and wondered if it would have been easier to conduct this training with younger students. However, peer educators were surprised to see that their fear did not materialize and that that they were well received by their own classmates.

Some concerns with regards to the extent of their knowledge and the ability to transfer this knowledge were shared. Some peer educators were afraid that they were not experienced enough in the subject and thus they may not be in position to answer questions or convey the right messages. Regardless, peer educators are not expected to be experts nor that they carry in-depth knowledge about the subject they are training on. Indeed, peer educators seemed to have gained just the right level of knowledge they needed to hold effective discussions with their peers about GBV. Moreover, the fact that the facilitators were also present during the peer education trainings provided a sense of safety to them, ensuring that all questions would be answered and any misunderstandings could be clarified. Nevertheless, peer educators could always resort to the option of referring their classmates to other reliable sources of information (as for instance handouts, manuals, the internet etc) where they could search more specific information.

Agenda of the peer education training

Time	Session 5	Objective
5 min	Introduction Short briefing from peer trainers about the training	
30 min	Gaining Status Exercise adapted from 'Gender Matters' to be relevant to young people's context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To understand what gives status to boys and girls and women and men in our society - To understand the social mechanisms by which society confers status on girls and boys as also women and men - Explore concepts of masculinity-femininity, gender roles and gender stereotypes
50 min	Violence in relationships Use the role play of 'The knight on the white horse', adapted from 'Gender Matters' to fit the context of adolescents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explain what gender-based violence is - Identify incidences of GBV in romantic relationships - Identify and explore verbal /physical abuse , control, power, intimidation - Discuss notions of how violence in relationships is romanticized.
10 min	Short evaluation by participants	

The peer education training focused on exploring the ways that gender-based violence is manifested in adolescent romantic relationships, considering how

relevant this issue is to young people. In view of its great appeal and its powerful impact, the role play exercise of the 'Knight on the white horse' constituted the center focus of the peer education training. In addition, since it was also important to identify the relationship between GBV and gender roles, an exercise on society's expectations of women and men was also included. However, in lieu of the time limit (90 minutes for the entire session) it was not possible to include the 'Gender in a box' exercise, which also had a great appeal. Alternatively, the 'Gaining Status' exercise was used which is shorter but addresses the same issues.

Peer educators attended one extra session where they went through the training agenda with the facilitators and discussed how they could best implement the exercises. They also discussed anticipated hiccups or difficulties and identified ways they can employ to overcome these difficulties (including presentation anxiety and difficulties in facilitating their group)

5.2. Young people as peer educators

Young people exhibited high enthusiasm and strong motivation to become peer educators. They were so motivated and enthusiastic with everything that they had learned during the trainings that they couldn't wait to share it with others. In total, this program trained 30 peer educators, 8 from Latsia, 10 from the Grammar School and 12 from GC School, all of which expressed an interest to engage in this role more actively in the future, should similar trainings be organized in their school next year.

Peer trainers successfully 'rose up' to the occasion. Even though they didn't have much practice, some of them held a 'natural skill' in peer education. It was amazing to watch children that otherwise had appeared quiet and shy during the trainings, to be so active and enthusiastic. It was very fulfilling to see how many things the peer trainers had absorbed from the trainings in such a short time and how comfortable it was for them to draw upon this knowledge and pass it on to other peers.

Clearly, peer educators embraced the purpose and nature of the peer education trainings, acting as an integral part of their group and providing the opportunity for all group members to learn together and from each other. Overall, the majority of peer educators did not show any presentation anxiety and appeared comfortable and relaxed. They encouraged participants to express themselves freely and openly. Throughout the training session they used informal, slang language which helped participants to express themselves more freely. To make their participants feel more comfortable and to create a more 'intimate' environment, peer trainers in Latsia

started the trainings with their personal reflections, sharing their own experiences of the trainings they had attended. They also used humor to help participants relax and loosen up. The interventions used were good and helped keep the group focused and on the subject. Moreover, peer trainers from Latsia and the Grammar school were particularly successful in engaging their entire group, using a variety of techniques to encourage active participation from all participants.

It was evident that peer trainers took their role seriously and maintained healthy boundaries with their groups. They ensured that all ground rules were followed, ensuring that participants respected people who were talking, waited for their turn to speak and did not criticize each other for what they shared. Peer trainers maintained their neutrality and impartiality, allowing room for all opinions to be heard. They maintained a good flow and kept participants interested by asking questions to challenge them. It was interesting to watch peer trainers implementing some of the techniques their trainers had used, indicating that they had also learned a lot by example. Moreover, peer trainers recalled examples from the trainings they themselves had attended and used these examples during the peer sessions to generate discussions.

Clearly, all peer trainers were challenged with the first exercise, the 'Gaining status'. For the most part, it was difficult for participants to pinpoint what gives status to women and men in our society. Young people applied this exercise in their context and their realities, looking for what gives status to boys and girls their age. Consequently, they resorted to talking about appearances and specific aspects of behavior. Aspects like profession, money, education, social class, motherhood /fatherhood etc were not considered to be important as they were considered to be relevant to older people who are in a different life stage than themselves².

To help gear participants' thinking towards society's expectations of men and women, peer trainers from Latsia asked participants to think of the different expectations they are personally subjected to. Participants were invited to talk about the different expectations their parents, siblings or friends have of them and how these expectations differ between boys and girls. The examples shared by participants included parents giving more freedom to boys to go out while being stricter when it comes to their daughters' outings. Expectations from peers included the need for boys to act in more 'rebellious', more nonchalant, stronger and tough manner, while girls were expected to act more 'wisely', more modestly and more

² In particular, they mentioned that women need to have great looks, a nice body and be polite, honest, down to earth, confident and dynamic. For men, they considered important the athletic body and muscular strength, while in terms of behavior they claimed a need for men to be bold, generous, trustworthy, respected, inspiring trust.

maturely. Peer trainers agreed with the examples shared and mentioned that they themselves experience similar situations.

Other techniques used to encourage participants' involvement in this exercise, was directly linking it to gender roles and asking participants to share their opinions about the traditional roles for men and women and discuss how these roles have progressed over the years.

As expected, the second exercise ('the Knight on the white horse') generated a lot of discussion given that young people could directly relate to it. Participants shared some of their personal stories, admitting that they sometimes engage in similar behaviors. Again young people were encouraged to rethink their behaviors and explore ways they can change it so that they are not perpetrators of GBV.

Overall, the peer education sessions were very successful (as also reflected in participants' evaluations, section 4.4). Some improvement on behalf of the peer trainers could include:

- Better time management
- More consistency in following the order of the debriefing questions to ensure that all issues were discussed
- More impartiality with them consciously withholding their personal beliefs and prejudices, maintaining neutrality
- Better implementation of active listening skills, asking for additional clarifications from participants and probing them to explain their thoughts and opinions further

5.3. The Peer Educator experience³

Young people were completely enthused with their experience as peer educators. They used words such as *'an amazing experience, 'perfect!!!!', 'great!'* to describe it, and mentioned that they *'loved it!!!'* and that they *'We would do it over and over again'* . All peer educators were so motivated after the peer trainings that they expressed a need for the program to continue so that they could repeat the experience next year.

³ This section was derived from the focus group discussions, where peer trainers were encouraged to speak in detail about their experience as peer educators. The statements that are in italics represent the actual verbatim of participants

The peer trainings were undoubtedly an empowering experience for the peer educators. While some of them claimed to be shy, they were very proud of themselves that they could stand in front of their class and talk to their classmates as 'experts' on an issue. The fact that they also spoke about an issue that they believed in enhanced their enthusiasm and motivation to become peer educators.

- *'I never thought that I would ever stand in front of my classmates to talk to them about something. But because I believed in the things we talked about in the trainings, I did it!'*, boy from the Grammar School
- *I felt proud of myself that I could do it!* girl from the Grammar School
- *I felt stronger, I felt like I was someone, that I had a personality'*, boy from Latsia

Giving young people a voice was also a very empowering experience on its own accord. Peer trainers were given a chance to express their opinions in front of others and exchange views and ideas on issues that are directly relevant to them. This exchange of opinions seemed to have created a sense of sharing and a sense of bonding among peer educators and their classmates. As the peer educators admitted, it was the first time that they had the opportunity to speak with their entire class and with people they had otherwise considered too shy or that they felt had nothing in common with.

- *'While we were having the discussions with them I felt like we had become friends'*, peer educator from GC School
- *'I felt wonderful to hear the stories they shared, it felt it was coming from their heart'*, peer educator from GC School
- *'I heard some views from some of my classmates that surprised me. I expected them to be different.... I now realized that we have more in common that we thought'*, girl from the Grammar School

Undoubtedly, the peer trainings actively involved young people in bringing change by enhancing their peer's awareness on what constitutes GBV and consequently helping them reevaluate their perceptions about what is considered to be an acceptable and healthy behavior in a relationship.

- *'We conveyed messages to our peers and help them enhance their knowledge.. this way we can help them become better people', girl from GC School*
- *'I liked the fact that I could express my opposition to people criticizing women for their sexual choices. I never did that but as a trainer I had the chance to express how strongly I feel about it', girl from Grammar School*
- *'I noticed that our classmates were interested to learn from us....some people had their opinions challenged in the training, they learnt new things... Both they and us understood what is really happening in our society and how we can help to change things' girl from GC School*

Peer educators felt that the trainings provided a unique opportunity for them to do their part' in standing up to gender-based violence. The fact that they could take action empowered them and gave them a sense of satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment.

- *'The peer trainings gave us the opportunity to do something...in the past we have been passive against GBV... with the peer trainings we felt we could make a change', girl from Grammar School*
- *'I felt proud that I could be part of the change... that I could act upon something that is important'. girl from Grammar School*

Peer trainers claimed to have gained some very valuable skills from the peer trainings, including the following:

- By teaching others, peer trainers could further enhance their own knowledge on GBV
- They improved their communication and active listening skills
- A considerable share of them claimed that the trainings helped them overcome their fear of public speaking and that they gained skills that will be useful to them in the future in their college and professional lives (e.g. presentation skills, good communication skills)
- Peer educators mentioned that they learned by example, 'copying' techniques that they had seen the trainers use in the first trainings

- *We remembered how you were calm and pleasant and I was thinking that I should do the same thing, not be stressed, and this helped the participants relax, boy from GC School*

5.4. Evaluation of the peer education sessions by participants

Aspects enjoyed⁴

All participants claimed that participating in the peer education training was a great experience for them. They used words such as ‘fantastic’, ‘excellent’, ‘constructive’, ‘amazing’, ‘enlightening’, ‘perfect’, ‘intriguing’, ‘5 stars presentation’ to describe their experience and express their enthusiasm with the peer education trainings. Some considered themselves ‘lucky to have been given this unique opportunity’ to participate in such a training.

The enthusiasm was such that a large share of participants expressed the desire for these trainings to continue next year, so that other students from their school could attend them as well. Expressions like ‘fantastic! we want you to come back’, ‘I had a great time, please come back!’, ‘all our classmates should have participated in this’, ‘I would love to be part of something like this again’ reconfirmed students’ enthusiasm as also the impact these type of trainings have in educating adolescents about issues that are relevant to them.

Truly, most participants found the training relevant to them and to their realities. They acknowledged that the trainings depicted topics that ‘are contemporary and need to be discussed’, portrayed issues that ‘directly affect them’, and incidences that they themselves have experienced and could relate to. Notably, most teenagers mentioned since they hardly get to discuss these issues, the trainings provided them with a unique and an important opportunity to do so.

The participants enjoyed the participatory nature of the peer education training, particularly the ‘exchange of opinions’, the ‘sharing of experiences’ and the ‘discussions which allowed them to look at issues from different angles’. This sharing of experiences seems to have created a bonding experience among classmates, with students claiming to ‘feel like they were talking to friends’.

Knowledge gained

⁴ Words in quotes are actual verbatims of participants

Unmistakably the trainings enhanced young people's awareness about gender-based violence in relationships, by encouraging them to reflect on their behaviors and challenging their perceptions about what is 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' in a relationship. Some participants mentioned that the training helped them realize that they 'themselves can be perpetrators of gender-based violence without being aware of it'. Others reflected on incidences where they 'have experienced verbal and psychological abuse' and identified them as such. Notably, a considerable number mentioned that the trainings helped them feel more empowered and 'confident to protect themselves and their friends', because now they know 'they have options'.

The importance of psychological violence was also noted, with some participants claiming that the trainings helped them understand 'what psychological violence is', and that they are now 'in a better position to identify it', while they also recognized that 'psychological violence is as serious as physical abuse and has severe repercussions'.

With regards to gender roles, young people mentioned that their interactions in the trainings helped them understand what 'each gender expects from each other'. In addition, they realized how they are personally affected by society's expectations to fit a specific 'profile'.

Lastly, but importantly, students mentioned that they learned to 'accept people who behave differently without judging them', understood that they need to 'accept all people as equals', and 'learned that they need to respect other people's rights without allowing society to create barriers'.

Effectiveness of peer education

Young people considered that peer education was 'interesting and effective'. They mentioned that it was easier to learn from peers because they 'speak the same language as you', they 'relate to you', they can understand you better and use 'language and examples that are relevant to your reality'. Participants felt that peer education was effective because it takes place in an informal setting where they are not 'subjected to any authority' or are 'forced' to listen. Consequently, in this informal setting they felt more comfortable to express themselves freely and talk openly about their experiences.

6. Evaluation of the trainings

6.1. Evaluation by the students

6.1.1. Overall feeling of the trainings

Students absolutely enjoyed the trainings and completed very positive and enthusiastic evaluations. Participants mentioned feeling 'interested', 'engaged', 'challenged', 'intrigued', 'enthusiastic', 'happy' and 'enjoying themselves', to describe their experience with the training. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of them (8 in 10) considered that the course completely met their expectations, while an additional 10% claimed that their expectations were exceeded.

Feelings experienced during the training	% mentioning feeling
Interested	77%
Engaged/Involved	60%
Challenged	52%
Enjoyed myself	48%
Intrigued	48%
Enthusiastic	44%
Happy	42%
Relaxed	35%
Surprised	33%
Content	29%
Rushed	17%
Bored	15%
Tired	15%
Hooked	13%
Wanted to run away	10%
Stressed	10%
Low energy	8%
Disappointed	4%
Disinterested	4%
Dissatisfied	2%

Involvement and participation was also high with half the participants (48%) claiming that they participated to a satisfactory degree while an additional 25% mentioned that they felt quite engaged and interested, participating to a large degree.

6.1.2. Most enjoyable aspects of the training

The discussions, the role-play and the creative activity of the posters were singled out as the most enjoyable aspects of the training. Practical exercises were also considered important as they provided them with examples they can use in their everyday lives.

Most enjoyable aspects of the training	
role play	50%
discussions and the opportunity to express our opinion	40%
creative activity / posters	35%
practical and experiential exercises, with good examples to follow	25%
peer training exercise	12%
discussing the scenarios	12%
team work	12%
gender roles and society expectations	10%
fun and enjoyable exercises	10%
interacting with each other in the group	10%
gaining knowledge on gender-based violence	10%
presentation	10%

Focus group discussions provided further insights with regards to what participants enjoyed in the trainings. Participants claimed to have particularly enjoyed the interactive nature of the trainings. For them, this was a unique experience, considering that in the school environment they are hardly provided with the opportunity to express their own ideas during class. Hence, the fact that the peer trainings gave them the room to express their thoughts and opinions in front of their peers was fervently embraced.

- *'It gave us the opportunity to speak, to express our thoughts, our opinions... we hardly get a chance to do that in class', girl from the Grammar School*

- *'it was interactive and we could express our opinions. In class, usually the teachers are too strict with us and ask us to sit down and be quiet', boy from Latsia*
- *'Through the trainings we could exchange opinions with people that we hardly talked to prior to the training and thought that they shared different views', girl from the Grammar School*

In addition the 'all inclusive' approach of the trainings was viewed positively. Participants felt that everyone in the group could participate equally and that there was room for all opinions to be heard, regardless of whether they were conflicting or not.

- *I liked the fact that with your exercises you tried to involve all members in the group, it was all-inclusive. People who liked art were hooked when we did the posters, people who like theater when we did the role play... you addressed a lot of interests', girl from Latsia*

The trainings also provided a comfortable environment where participants could express themselves freely and openly.

- *'we could express ourselves openly, we weren't cautious, we could even use 'swearing' words , we felt comfortable', boy from Latsia*

Quite importantly, all participants considered that the issues presented in the trainings were relevant to them and this helped them open up and engage in the discussion. Young people identified themselves, their friends, their relationships and situations they experience in the role plays and scenarios.

- *' the trainings addressed issues that we are all concerned with, that are 'part of our world', the scenarios, the role play, are all issues we experience, girl from Latsia*

The role play was considered to be the most enjoyable exercise and had the most powerful impact. It was perceived as realistic and relevant and helped young people identify incidences of GBV that they may experience.

- *'What happened in the role play is something that is taking place, regardless of whether it takes place to a small or a large degree, what is sure is the fact that it is happening, boy from GC School*

The gender roles exercises also received a fair share of mentions, with young people claiming that it was the first time they considered society's expectations for women and men in such detail and came to recognize the differences between them. In addition, the fact that they had the opportunity to talk about the 'popular models of attraction' for their age helped them understand how much importance is (wrongly) placed on appearances and how much peer pressure they do experience in 'fitting the box'

Lastly, a considerable share of participants mentioned to have enjoyed making the posters, as this gave them the opportunity to 'express themselves' and create 'something of their own', leaving their 'own stigma'.

6.1.3. Knowledge gained

On average, participants estimated that their knowledge was increased by 80% suggesting that the trainings had considerable impact in enhancing their knowledge on issues related to gender-based violence. For the Grammar school, their small group setting (only 11-14 participants) also seems to have been particularly conducive to their faster and more comprehensive learning.

Overall, participants felt satisfied with the training and considered that with its current structure it is sufficient in conveying the key messages and providing the right level of information. The 'train the trainer' session was also considered adequate in transferring the right level of knowledge and the necessary skills to peer educators. Notably, peer educator's level of knowledge was considered more important than effective facilitation skills. Peer educators perceived that any additional information 'would be too much and it could have become confusing'. They expressed the belief that it was more important for peer educators to 'believe in what they were saying' rather than having perfect skills in training others. If they had an understanding of the concepts themselves they could still effectively pass on the knowledge to their peers, regardless of how refined their facilitation skills were.

In focus group discussions, young people mentioned that the most important knowledge they gained was the ability to identify incidences of GBV as such. They also understood that GBV is a very common phenomenon and that everyone can become of victim of GBV.

- *'In past we used to see these forms of violence and but we didn't understand that it was violence, now we know....'*, girl from Latsia

Moreover, through the ‘taking a stance exercise’ and through the debriefing sessions that followed the role play and the scenarios, young people claimed to have identified various ways they can use to protect themselves from GBV

Quite importantly, young people acknowledged that the trainings helped them to recognize that psychological violence is also important and carries serious repercussions.

- *‘In past we believed that violence involved only physical violence. You taught us that there are many different types of violence, that we may be experiencing or exercising violence on a daily basis, without being aware of it’,* girl from Latsia

- *‘I understood how ‘labeling’, stereotypes, mocking and rumors are forms of violence and how they can hurt people’,* girl from the Grammar School

Lastly, the ‘Gender in a box exercise’ and the discussions on the forms of violence that people outside the box are subjected to, encouraged young people to accept others who are different, without judging, criticizing or excluding them.

6.1.4. Overall evaluation of training logistics

The participants found the course material detailed, thorough and comprehensive. Moreover, they perceived that it was presented in a well-structured and well-organized manner. The theoretical aspect was also considered satisfactory. Considering the extent participants enjoyed the discussions, a considerable share of them (37%) expressed the need for more time being allocated in discussions and experiential exercises. The only improvements requested were improvements to the venue and the training facilities used, suggesting a need for a more frequent use of PowerPoint and audiovisuals.

Evaluation of the course	% of students who agree or agree completely
The course material presented was well-structured and well-organized.	88%
Handouts and the other training materials provided were clear and easy to follow.	88%

The course material presented was detailed, thorough and comprehensive	87%
The theoretical aspect of the course was satisfactory	85%
The workshop was well organized	81%
The course provided enough practical and hands-on experience	79%
The training facilities used (venue, PowerPoint, boards, projector etc) were satisfactory	71%
There was adequate time allocated for discussion / questions	63%
There was adequate time allocated during the practical /experiential exercises	63%

Evaluation of the trainer	% of students who agree or agree completely
The trainer seemed to be well prepared for the course	100%
The trainer had adequate knowledge about the subject	98%
The trainer handled the course with professionalism	96%
The trainer communicated his/her knowledge effectively	94%
The trainer was friendly and approachable	94%
The trainer presented concepts with clear and meaningful examples	92%
The trainer was open to questions and took enough time to adequately respond to each question	90%

6.2. Evaluation by the teachers

Teachers embraced the trainings positively and fervently. The teachers from the GC School and Latsia have been particularly helpful and extremely supportive in the organization of the trainings. They handled a lot of the logics of the trainings (venues, materials, logistics of the peer education sessions etc) and their positive outlook was catalytic in their students' enthusiasm.

They referred to the trainings as a 'most valuable experience' both for the students and themselves. Similarly to the students, they valued the interactive nature of the trainings, which was perceived to have enhanced young people's critical thinking and also encouraged them to speak out their views and opinions.

The focus on relationships (through the role-play) and peer educations were singled out as the most beneficial part of the trainings. The teachers also recognized that the peer trainings have been an empowering experience for their students. Hence, they consider that the next steps of the project need to provide more opportunities for young people to engage in peer education activities, and equivocally agreed that the project definitely needs to continue next year as their students have a lot to gain from it.

7. Impact of the trainings

7.1. Perceptions of participants with regards to the impact of the trainings

Knowledge and awareness raising

The enhancement of knowledge and awareness raising on what constitutes gender-based violence was considered one of the most valuable impacts of the trainings. Young people claimed that they could now identify GBV incidences as such, while in the past they were oblivious to them. Through the trainings they also realized that GBV is a frequent phenomenon and it concerns everyone.

- *I realized that a lot of incidences that we thought 'were natural', that they are abuse. I also realized that violence is more frequent than you think,* boy from the Grammar School
- *'You become more in tune with your environment, you recognize what is going on around you;,'* girl from the Grammar School

Most importantly, young people became aware of incidences of psychological abuse they may experience in their romantic relationships, clearly identifying control, intimidation, isolation and verbal abuse as forms of violence. In addition, young people claimed to have become more alert and more aware to draw healthy boundaries in their relationships. Romanticizing violence and the risks of doing so was also considered to be a very valuable learning

- *'I was shocked when I heard the word 'romanticize violence' because it made me realize a lot things. I realized that romanticizing violence is a*

fact, it happens often. Giving it a definition makes you feel that you can now fight it and prevent it', girl from the Grammar School

Another important understanding was the fact that young people themselves can be perpetrators of GBV with their own behavior. This understanding enabled them to become more sensitized and more conscious of their behaviors, being cautious not to continue perpetuating GBV

- *'I understood how sometimes I exercise abusive behavior without me knowing it', boy from GC School*

Standing up to GBV

Awareness has undoubtedly led to young people's empowerment in standing up to GBV. Young people claimed that after the trainings they felt that they can protect themselves and others against GBV. The fact that they can now identify incidences of abuse makes them feel more confident that they can deal with these situations and prevent them. In addition, the trainings seem to have provided them with an opportunity to explore various options they can use against GBV. Overall, participants claimed to feel 'stronger', 'more confident', 'more assertive', 'more alert' and more 'capable' in standing up for themselves and their friends.

- *'In the past I witnessed these incidences and I thought that they were 'natural', 'normal' and did nothing about them, but now I feel I can react', girl from GC School*
- *'it is empowering to help other people, your friends and family, to stand up to violence.. just with the thought that you can help someone else, you feel strong', boy from Latsia*
- *'In the past when my boyfriend asked me to change my clothes ,I didn't perceive it as abuse... now I tell him I have the right to wear what I want, girl from GC School*
- *'I have a very good friend who is being abused by her boyfriend. I went and talked to her and tried to bring to her awareness what she's experiencing'. girl from Latsia*
- *'I am now more willing to express my opinions to others. Before I was shy', boy from Grammar school*

- *'Now we know that there are options, there are solutions, there are other things we can do', girl from GC School*
- *'In the past we were afraid to act because we didn't want other people to criticize us. Now we feel more free to take action, girl from GC School*
- *'it was the first time we did something about these incidences. We all know about them, but in the past we just remained passive. Now we could do something about it. We helped others become more aware,' boy from the Grammar School*
- *'I know feel that I can stand up to violence. I have the knowledge to identify it and tell a person that they are being abused and that they should get out of this situation. We also have the knowledge to answer back to someone, tell them that they're doing something wrong', girl from Grammar School*
- *I have personally experienced many types of violence. Being a participant in these trainings, talking about my experiences, sometimes not directly but as if someone else had experienced what I experienced, helped me find solutions to my problems, boy from Latsia*
- *'I have no tolerance now. I wouldn't allow anyone to exercise violence on me', girl from Latsia*

The trainings also had a considerable effect on changing perceptions. (shifts in perceptions are analyzed in greater detail in section 7.3 through a comparison of pre and post-training perceptions). Young people themselves also recognize that the way they think and act has changed. They claim to be more sensitive and more sensitized on how they treat other people. In general, they now feel more accepting of people who are different and can show tolerance to others who may exhibit different behaviors. They trust that they would no longer engage in any behaviors that may cause psychological abuse to others, as for instance mocking or creating rumors. Instead, they have learned to respect others for the choices they make.

- *'The trainings helped you to change your way of thinking and also change your behavior... you understand that you have no reason to talk badly or judge others', girl from the Grammar School*
- *'I have learned to mind my own business. in the past I would make offensive comments about people who are different, like men who look 'feminine'. Now*

I don't do it. I now understand that these people have made their own choices and we need to respect them as I expect people to respect my own choices', girl from the Grammar School

- *in the past I criticized women who 'sleep around' but now I realized that I should mind my own business, it was a choice made and I respect it...*girl from the Grammar School
- *'I now understand why my mother has friends who are hippies and wear those strange trousers and are artists, even though they're different than her. I never understood why she hangs out with them'.* girl from the Grammar School

Finally, it appears that the trainings have also been a bonding experience for the students, bringing them together with their classmates. Some participants claimed that it was the first time that they had exchanged ideas and opinions with other students in their class. In some ways, participants understood more things about each other and came closer to their classmates, recognizing that they share many common experiences and similar opinions. The trainings helped them to 'get to know people' and new friendships were born

- *'the trainings brought us closer. Even to people we had never spoken to in the past. People we thought were snobs...people you realize you have a lot in common....you understand their opinions and they understand yours',* girl from the Grammar School

7.2. Perceptions prior to the training

Students' perceptions with regards to gender-based violence were tested before and after the training program, so as the impact of the training sessions could be evaluated. Students completed questionnaires at the beginning of the first session, before the training commenced and completed the same questionnaire once again at the end of session 4, after the last training was completed.

The questionnaire included questions from three thematic areas related to gender-based-violence, namely (i) society's expectations on gender roles and gender stereotypes (ii) popular myths about violence and violent behavior and (iii) adolescent behaviors in romantic relationships. The questions aimed to test beliefs

and perceptions, explore levels of awareness regarding violence and identify what teenagers may consider healthy behavior in romantic relationships.

Evidently, the pre and post questionnaire methodology seems to be successful in identifying shifts in perceptions. As indicated in session 7.3 significant shifts in perceptions were noted, especially on issues that were directly addressed during the course of the trainings. The latter is an important point to note. For the pre and post methodology to be successful, it is necessary that all questions tested in the questionnaire are directly linked to the thematic content of the training and that these are thoroughly addressed through activities and discussions

Perceptions on society’s expectations and stereotypical gender roles

		Agree	Disagree	Neutral
Q1	The upbringing of children should be the primary responsibility of women	29%	54%	18%
Q2	Professional success is more important to men than women	18%	80%	2%
Q3	A man is obliged to financially support his wife and children	45%	38%	18%
Q4	A woman is obliged to take care of the house	18%	63%	20%

To some extent, students still share ‘traditional’ beliefs about the stereotypical roles of women and men. In particular, 1 in 3 students consider that the upbringing of children and taking care of the house need to be the primary responsibilities of women (29% vs. 18% respectively agree with these statements and an additional 20% are neutral). On the contrary, approximately half of the students (45%) consider that men need to be the ‘bread winners’ of the family.

Even though meaningful percentages could not be calculated per school or per gender⁵ in view of their small numbers, some general differences in perceptions were evident across schools and between the two genders. Notably, stereotypical perceptions of the gender roles were more prominent among boys and students from the public school.

⁵ The numbers per school and the numbers of girls and boys are under 30 and thus are too small for percentages to be calculated for these segments or for statistical significance tests to be run among them

Behaviors related to gender stereotypes and gender roles

		Agree	Disagree	Neutral	No answer
Q17	A woman should <i>always</i> consent to her partner's /husband's sexual wishes	9%	80%	11%	
Q19	It is cool for a boy to date more than one girl at the same time	7%	84%	9%	
Q24	It is ok to make offensive sexual comments towards a girl who has had many partners	13%	71%	14%	2%
Q25	It is ok to make fun of a boy/man who appears to be homosexual	5%	89%	4%	2%
Q28	Girls who have sex with their boyfriends have low moral values	-	84%	14%	2%
Q31	If a girl dresses-up in a sexy way she deserves to be called offensive names	7%	73%	16%	4%

Behaviors related to societal expectations of the 'normalized behaviors' of men and women, received a low level of acceptance, probably because these behaviors were also associated to elements of abuse.

There is an interesting paradox to note here, especially with regards to the use of questionnaires in identifying perceptions. When asked to take stance on a questionnaire on behaviors that are connected to traditional gender roles, young people condemn abusive behavior towards people who may not entirely fit the profile that society expects of them (e.g. gay men, promiscuous women). Approximately 70-80% of the students consider that it is not acceptable to mock or be abusive towards a gay person or a promiscuous woman nor did they applaud promiscuous behavior in males. Conversely, a different picture is evident when you hold in depth discussions with them (as for instance at the debriefing sessions following the scenarios and the role play). In these discussions, students' reactions towards people who lie outside the 'box' of the stereotypical gender roles are clearly bound by stereotypes and taboos, suggesting that their opinions do not entirely

divert from what society considers ‘normal’ or ‘expected’. In ‘theory’ (as when filling out a questionnaire for instance) young people claim to know what is ‘right’ and what is ‘wrong’ and understand that behavior related to gender-based violence is unacceptable; in practice, however, they act differently, with behaviors that may be perpetuating GBV or exhibit a certain tolerance to it.

Perceptions regarding popular myths on male and female behavior

		Agree	Disagree	Neutral	No answer
Q5	Boys cannot control their sexual desires	34%	32%	32%	2%
Q12	When a girl says ‘no’ to her partner’s sexual advances this often means ‘yes’	14%	52%	34%	
Q27	It is natural for boys to be more naughty and disobedient than girls	38%	45%	14%	4%
Q29	It is justifiable for a boy to be rude or abrupt towards girls because it’s in his masculine nature to do so	2%	86%	7%	5%
Q30	If a girl agrees to meet her boyfriend somewhere where they can be alone, it means that she wants to have sex with him	5%	80%	13%	2%

For the most part, students’ perceptions are in line with popular ‘myths’ about female and male behavior. More specifically, participants expect boys to be naughtier than girls and believe that boys cannot control their sexual desires. Moreover, around half of them are inclined to believe that ‘when a girl says ‘no’ to her partner’s sexual advances this often means ‘yes’.

General perceptions about violence

		Agree	Disagree	Neutral	No answer
Q10	Girls face more risk of being raped by someone they know than by a complete stranger	29%	23%	46%	2%

Q15	Violence appears mostly in grown-up relationships and rarely in adolescent relationships	29%	59%	13%	
Q16	Violence only involves physical abuse	2%	95%	4%	
Q18	Women who are raped in many cases have provoked it	11%	68%	21%	
Q21	Violence only exists in certain social classes.	5%	88%	7%	
Q26	A person being abused by their partner must definitely have done something to provoke it	13%	70%	16%	2%

Young people are clear that violence does not only include physical violence but also other types of violence (like psychological and sexual abuse). Even though they seemed to be aware of this fact 'theoretically', the discussions during the trainings indicated that young people were not aware of the serious repercussions of psychological abuse. In addition even though in their majority (70%) they recognize that no one can provoke violence, their outlook when conducting various exercises during the training, suggested that were not so sure if this is so.

Clearly, it appears that the trainings have managed to deeply challenge young people's innermost beliefs and perceptions, thus helping them to understand their bias and prejudices better and stir a process of change.

Abusive behaviors in relationships

		Agree	Disagree	Neutral	No answer
Q6	There is nothing wrong with spying on the mobile phone of your partner	16%	61%	23%	
Q7	Repeatedly putting down a person and verbally ridiculing them is a form of violence	93%	4%	4%	
Q8	Constantly telling your partner who they can see and what they should wear are forms of violence	61%	18%	21%	

Q9	If a girl remains with her partner and undergoes his control and violent behavior, it means that she likes that	9%	82%	9%	
Q11	A girl cannot change the violent behavior of her companion with tenderness and patience	38%	34%	29%	
Q13	Mocking doesn't hurt people	2%	98%	0%	
Q14	If you love your partner you should always consent to have sex with him/her even though you may not feel you want to	11%	86%	4%	
Q20	It is ok for a boy to restrict the way his girlfriend dresses if he finds it provocative	25%	39%	36%	
Q22	It is completely justifiable for your partner to hit you if you have been unfaithful to him/her	13%	73%	14%	
Q23	If your partner <i>constantly</i> checks on you (i.e. asking where you are and what you're doing) this proves his/her true love for you	13%	57%	29%	2%
Q32	When a man gets really jealous he is really showing how much he loves his partner	25%	54%	20%	2%

Quite importantly, young people appeared unsure of what constitutes abusive behavior in relationships, with a high share of them being unable to identify various incidences of psychological abuse as such. More specifically, only less than half of participants recognized that control (spying on your partner's mobile, controlling what they can wear and where they can go, constantly checking up on someone) is a form of psychological abuse. Moreover, a considerable share also perceives jealousy as an expression of interest and love.

Conversely, non relationship aspects of violence as for instance mocking, ridiculing, putting down a person and sexual coercion were clearly identified as unacceptable behaviors, probably due to the fact that these behaviors are more widely discussed and thus young people are more aware of them.

7.3. Impact of trainings - Comparative- Pre and Post Perceptions

The following table outlines the differences in perceptions as they stood prior and post the trainings. The percentages indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement according to what was considered 'appropriate' for each statement. Any significant shifts in perceptions are highlighted in grey.

	Question		PRE	POST
Q1	The upbringing of children should be the primary responsibility of women	% disagree	54%	58%
Q2	Professional success is more important to men than women	% disagree	80%	75%
Q3	A man is obliged to financially support his wife and children	% disagree	38%	40%
Q4	A woman is obliged to take care of the house	% disagree	63%	58%
Q5	Boys cannot control their sexual desires	% disagree	32%	64%
Q6	There is nothing wrong with spying on the mobile phone of your partner	% disagree	61%	87%
Q7	Repeatedly putting down a person and verbally ridiculing them is a form of violence	% agree	93%	92%
Q8	Constantly telling your partner who they can see and what they should wear are forms of violence	% agree	61%	79%
Q9	If a girl remains with her partner and undergoes his control and violent behavior, it means that she likes that	% disagree	82%	77%
Q10	Girls face more risk of being raped by someone they know than by a complete stranger	% agree	29%	32%
Q11	A girl cannot change the violent behavior of her companion with tenderness and patience	% agree	38%	32%
Q12	When a girl says 'no' to her partner's sexual advances this often means 'yes'.	% disagree	52%	70%
Q13	Mocking doesn't hurt people	% disagree	98%	92%
Q14	If you love your partner you should always consent to have sex with him/her even though you may not feel you want to	% disagree	86%	89%
Q15	Violence appears mostly in grown-up relationships and rarely in adolescent relationships	% disagree	59%	66%
Q16	Violence only involves physical abuse	% disagree	95%	91%
Q17	A woman should always consent to her partner's	% disagree	80%	89%

	/husband's sexual wishes			
Q18	Women who are raped in many cases have provoked it	% disagree	68%	68%
Q19	It is cool for a boy to date more than one girl at the same time	% disagree	84%	79%
Q20	It is ok for a boy to restrict the way his girlfriend dresses if he finds it provocative	% disagree	39%	66%
Q21	Violence only exists in certain social classes	% disagree	88%	87%
Q22	It is completely justifiable for your partner to hit you if you have been unfaithful to him/her	% disagree	73%	77%
Q23	If your partner constantly checks on you (i.e. asking where you are and what you're doing) this proves his/her true love for you	% disagree	57%	74%
Q24	It is ok to make offensive sexual comments towards a girl who has had many partners	% disagree	71%	81%
Q25	It is ok to make fun of a boy/man who appears to be homosexual	% disagree	89%	94%
Q26	A person being abused by their partner must definitely have done something to provoke it	% disagree	70%	83%
Q27	It is natural for boys to be more naughty and disobedient than girls	% disagree	45%	42%
Q28	Girls who have sex with their boyfriends have low moral values	% disagree	84%	94%
Q29	It is justifiable for a boy to be rude or abrupt towards girls because it's in his masculine nature to do so	% disagree	86%	81%
Q30	If a girl agrees to meet her boyfriend somewhere where they can be alone, it means that she wants to have sex with him	% disagree	80%	80%
Q31	If a girl dresses-up in a sexy way she deserves to be called offensive names	% disagree	73%	85%
Q32	When a man gets really jealous he is really showing how much he loves his partner	% disagree	54%	57%

Summary of changes to young people's perceptions after the trainings

	Question		PRE	POST
Q5	Boys cannot control their sexual desires	% disagree	32%	64%
Q12	When a girl says 'no' to her partner's sexual advances this often means 'yes'.	% disagree	52%	70%
Q26	A person being abused by their partner must definitely have done something to provoke it	% disagree	70%	83%
Q31	If a girl dresses-up in a sexy way she deserves to be called offensive names	% disagree	73%	85%
Q6	There is nothing wrong with spying on the mobile phone of your partner	% disagree	61%	87%
Q20	It is ok for a boy to restrict the way his girlfriend dresses if he finds it provocative	% disagree	39%	66%
Q23	If your partner constantly checks on you (i.e. asking where you are and what you're doing) this proves his/her true love for you	% disagree	57%	74%
Q8	Constantly telling your partner who they can see and what they should wear are forms of violence	% agree	61%	79%

Evidently, the trainings had a strong impact on young people's perceptions in relation to violence in romantic relationships. Young people's awareness on what would constitute an abusive behavior in romantic relationships appears to have increased considerably, with 1 in 5 students (20%) claiming a shift in their original perceptions. Following their participation at the trainings, a considerably higher share of students (an increment of 25% vis-à-vis perceptions prior to the trainings) could now identify control, checking up on someone and restricting your partner's behavior as abusive behaviors. Clearly, it appears that the role-play of the 'Knight in the white horse', which depicted how psychological abuse can be manifested in a romantic relationship, has been particularly successful in conveying the necessary messages to the students and has had a compelling impact on challenging and even changing their perceptions.

Some small shifts in opinions (an increment of 10%) were also observed in terms of some 'popular' myths regarding abusive behavior. Following the emphasis placed in the trainings on the fact that violent behavior cannot be provoked, post training perceptions indicate that 85% of students recognize that victims of violence could not have done something to provoke this behavior. An equal share (with an increase of 10% compared to pre-training perceptions), recognize that women should not be negatively criticized for the way they dress.

Notably, the greatest shift (30%) was observed in relation to the perception that boys cannot control their sexual desires. This shift was clearly driven by participants from the Grammar School, where various discussions were held on this issue during the first session of the training.

Clearly, shifts in perceptions were noted across all issues which received particular emphasis during the trainings, suggesting that the interactive methodology of the trainings did encourage young people to reevaluate their perceptions and behaviors. Conversely, even though particular emphasis was placed on gender roles and society's expectations, perceptions in relation to these did not change much. Obviously, it would take more than a training on GBV to change beliefs that are deeply embedded by social and cultural norms. Finally, perceptions with regards to low tolerance for abusive behaviors were already high prior to the trainings and thus did not experience any changes.

8. Recommendations for future peer education trainings

8.1. Learnings and future improvements to peer education trainings on GBV

Following some difficulties experienced during the set up and implementation of the peer education trainings, the following are some aspects to take into consideration when planning future peer education sessions:

- Adequate preparation and practice prior to the actual peer trainings is deemed necessary. This helps to clarify the responsibilities and involvement of each peer educator and enables the trainers to work well together as a group, avoiding overlaps and repetitions.

- It is also advisable that the peer trainers have the opportunity to practice the actual exercises of the peer training sessions beforehand in front of the facilitators. This way, some final details could be fine-tuned and logistics sorted out prior to the actual trainings, ensuring a good flow of the exercises.
- In addition, adequate hands-on practice in group facilitation skills is important to ensure that peer educators are able to equally involve all members in their group, preventing dominant people from overshadowing the shy members. Practicing specific techniques in energizing the group could ensure that participants of peer trainings are more actively engaged.
- All logistical details with regards to the flow of the trainings need to be clarified in detail. All peer educators need be clear about who does what and what the flow of each exercise is.
- It's best that the number of peer educators per training session is limited to two per exercise. In addition, clear roles and responsibilities for each exercise need to be allocated to each peer trainer, so as to avoid overlaps and unnecessary interferences by other peer trainers. Confusion about which trainer takes the lead for a specific exercise, creates frustration in the group and disrupts the flow of the discussions.
- The teams of peer educators need to maintain a balance between educator's personalities: loud/dynamic trainers need to be paired with more quiet ones. This will enable peer trainers to complement each other and also allow participants to find at least one trainer they can relate to.
- Peer trainers need be able to withhold their own personal perceptions and prejudices. In 'heated' subjects (as for instance the 'provocative' clothes women wear and identifying where healthy boundaries in relationships need to be drawn) some peer educators were geared by their own biases in their responses, thus not conveying clear messages to participants.
- The 'status' exercise is indeed difficult for young people to follow, since societal status does not seem to be directly relevant to them and their reality. Alternatively, the 'Gender in a box' exercise has proved to be quite successful in enhancing young people's perspectives on gender roles and society's expectations. Even in the event that there is pressure for time, a shorter version of this exercise can be used, modified accordingly to be conducted in half an hour instead of 90 minutes (as for instance by using fewer pictures and concentrating only on models of attraction)
- It is important to take into account that peer trainers who expressed enthusiasm and motivation to participate in peer trainings may 'opt out' the last minute once

the enthusiasm subsides and they realize the degree of commitment and responsibility. Hence it is important that facilitators ensure that potential peer trainers understand the level of commitment and that they are ready to undertake the responsibility. In addition, having a pool of 'back-up' trainers may provide a safety net in the event that some of the peer trainers drop out in the nick of time.

8.2. Students' recommendations for further improvements to the training:

- Students from the Grammar School particularly enjoyed their small group setting because it had created an intimate environment for sharing their personal stories and experiences. If possible, future trainings could target smaller groups, with the number of participants being around 14-15
- The use of real-life examples was requested by a high number of participants, from all 3 schools alike. For instance, people who have experienced gender-based violence can be invited to share their story. Young people perceive that real-life examples present a more vivid depiction of reality and have considerable impact in 'touching' participants more deeply
- Along the same lines, other participants mentioned the use of an educational movie on the subject, as it will also have a strong effect in conveying various messages
- Participants expressed the need for addressing how GBV takes place in the school environment, focusing more on bullying and rumors
- Additional exercises on ways to deal with GBV could also be incorporated in the trainings. Young people expressed the need to learn how they can exhibit assertive behavior and strengthen their resiliency if they are abused.
- Trainings could also target the parents. Parents and students can participate in the same training to encourage a dialogue between them in 'a safe environment'. The trainings could explore how parents exercise control and intimidation to their children and how they treat differently their sons from their daughters.
- Notably, a number of the female participants expressed the need for the training being more 'gender balanced', i.e. placing more attention on how men can also

experience GBV. They mentioned that they would have liked the scenarios to further explore how men may also romanticize violence in their relationships and expressed the need for a role play where the victim would have been a boy

- *'We got used to indentifying that violent behavior takes place from a man targeting a women, but it's not always like this, women can exercise psychological violence towards men',* girl from GC School
- *'the trainings were somewhat 'one-sided'... more examples of how women are perpetrators of GBV and not only the victims can be used. This can also help make the trainings more 'balanced' and show also examples of how men can be victims of abuse,* girl from the Grammar School
- Other suggestions concentrated on the training logistics. The GC School participants regarded the two hour duration of the trainings to be too tiring, especially since it was conducted right after class time. Instead, they proposed that training sessions become shorter in duration (1 and half hour long instead of two hours) and more in number (5 sessions instead of 4).
- All the schools were very enthusiastic with the trainings and expressed the need for the program to continue so as they can participate in similar trainings next year.
- Last but not least, taking into account that peer education was a very positive experience for them, the majority of the peer educators expressed the need the for young people their age having more opportunities to become peer educators

8.3. Additional topics in relation to GBV that can be included in future trainings

The following is a list of topics that young people consider relevant to them with regards to GBV and also violence in general, which they would like to see included in future trainings

- Trainings with a higher emphasis on psychological and verbal abuse, also concentrating on the repercussions of these types of violence
- Participants mentioned that they would have liked a more detailed presentation on the causes of violence, i.e. what drives people to exhibit violent behavior. Students from Latsia questioned as to whether upbringing, role models and schooling shape violent behavior.

- Trainings to also address bullying inside and outside the school environment (bullying that takes place across the two genders and within genders). More specifically, incidences of bullying outside the school environment include the psychological abuse and intimidation young people may experience over the internet (e.g. through facebook, chatting, social networks etc). Participants mentioned a variety of incidences they had heard of taking place over the internet which portrayed rumors, intimidation, psychological violence and sexual abuse. Internet bullying is indeed a common threat to young people nowadays and definitely needs to be addressed in future trainings.
- An issue that was particularly important for the students of the public school, is the psychological violence students receive from their teachers. Besides the verbal abuse, intimation and threats, students also mentioned that their teachers seem to have different expectations from boys and girls with regards to how they behave in class (being more tolerant of the 'naughty behavior of boys and stricter towards girls)
- Relationships within the family are also considered 'hot topics' that can be addressed during the trainings. Young people recognized that in some families boys and girls are treated differently by their parents, with the parents being stricter towards girls. Moreover, older brothers also adopt a more controlling behavior towards their sisters, trying to 'preserve their honor'. Scenarios or role-plays outlining the relationship between a father and a daughter or a mother and a son would be useful in outlining these experiences.
 - *'Some the girls in our class cannot go out with us (to a café or bar) because if their parents find out, they'll beat them up'*, boy from Latsia
 - *'My brother took 8 of my skirts and hid them so I wouldn't wear them'*, girl from GC School

Participants proposed to hold joint trainings between themselves and their parents, where they can have the opportunity to generate a dialogue with them and openly express their feelings.