

INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S MEDIA NETWORK (YPMN)

A UNICEF-supported initiative to increase young people's ability to advocate child rights through media activities in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS)

FINAL REPORT

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List of Acronyms

ARAS	Romanian Association against AIDS
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
C4SC	Communication for Social Change
CEE/CIS	Central & Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States
CJC	Community Justice Center
CO	Country Office
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FKR	Foundation for Creative Development (in BiH)
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IREX	International Research & Exchanges Board
KII	Key Informant Interview
KNN	Kabataan News Network
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAGIC	Media Activities and Good Ideas by, with and for Children
MARA	Most-at-Risk-Adolescent
MSI	Media Sustainability Index
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PBS	Public Broadcasting Service
PMP	Performance Management Plans
RKLA	Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda
RO	Regional Office
SP	Strategic Plan
SPIS	Social Protection and Inclusion System for Children in BiH
SWOT	(Analysis of) Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TOC	Theory of change
TOR	Terms Of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
TUMO	Center for Creative Technology
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAC	Violence Against Children
VOY	Voices of Youth
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
YMC	Youth Media Center
YPMN	Young People's Media Network

Executive Summary

Background

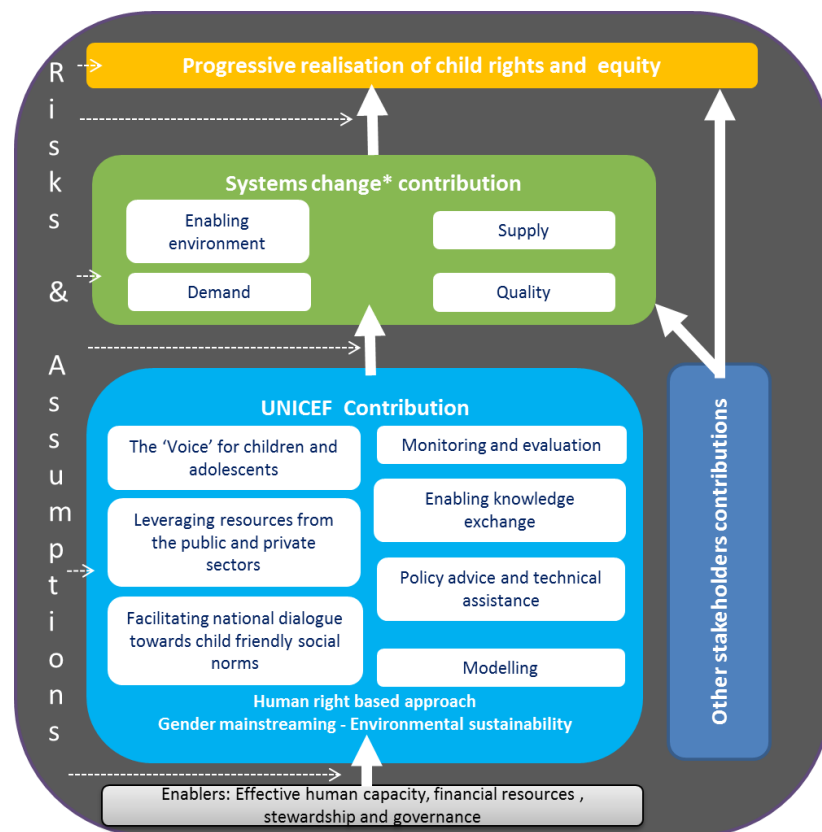
In 2002, UNICEF set out to inspire young people in the Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia to take an active role in the emerging civil society through media-related activities in the Young People's Media Network (YPMN). The **object** of this evaluation is the YPMN. The Initiative aims to increase young people's ability to advocate for child rights through media activities. The key activities are: 1. Development of youth-produced short videos (OneMinutesJr) about issues of concern for them and dissemination of the videos through mass and online media. 2. Support for Youth Reporting/journalism, including how to disseminate interviews of opinion leaders through mass or online media and social media channels. 3. Support for youth advocacy through information dissemination about media training activities. The Initiative's **scope** covers 21 countries and one territory.¹

YPMN is intended to contribute to UNICEF's Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda (RKLA) within which UNICEF articulates its aims with respect to 10 priority results for children² and defines a common theory of change (TOC) associated with these results as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. UNICEF CEE/CIS Generic Theory of Change

¹ Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, The former Yugoslav Republic (TFYR) of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Tajikistan, The Russian Federation, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan; Kosovo under UNSCR 1244

² The RKLA 10 priority results for children are: A child's right to a supportive and caring family environment, A child's right to access to justice, A child's right to early learning, A child's right to inclusive quality education, A child's right to be born free of HIV, A child's right to health, A young child's right to comprehensive well-being, A child's right to social protection, A child's right to protection from the risks of disasters: reducing vulnerability, An adolescent's right to a second chance



YPMN represents a building block in UNICEF's regional TOC – endeavouring to leverage youth voice to influence social norms, attitudes and practices (enabling environment and demand side system factors).

Objective of the Evaluation, Scope, Methodology and Users

UNICEF commissioned this evaluation to take stock and examine what skills, opportunities and other benefits young people and civil society at large have gained and how the Initiative might further develop. Annex 1. Evaluation TOR.

The **evaluation objectives** were to assess the Initiative's performance, identify lessons learned and make recommendations for future communication-related youth participation activities within the framework of the RCLA, the regional TOC and UNICEF core roles.

The **scope of the evaluation** covered the period 2004-2014 with an emphasis on 2012-2014, the period when the RCLA framework came into effect. The evaluation focused on in-depth case studies in Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Romania. Sampling of case study countries was intended to be representative of the region as a whole.

Owing to the absence of data and the lack of response from UNICEF staff in countries not visited by the evaluator, only limited material for the remainder of countries could be collected. This posed challenges in the analysis, triangulation process and in drawing conclusions. However, the evaluation attempted to draw conclusions where possible and to state when it was not possible.

Users of the evaluation include UNICEF programme staff in country, regional and headquarters offices, RCLA reference groups, participating NGO partners, national committees and donors. It will assist them in moving their agenda forward.

Findings

The evaluation found that the YPMN is embedded in the UNICEF TOC and is contributing substantial activities for and by youth advocates. The evaluation has also found that the Initiative is relevant to the long-term strategy for the region since it aligns with the RKLA and the core roles. The RKLA, which began in 2012, identifies as one of UNICEF core roles as advocacy to include the most vulnerable children in development and humanitarian work – by being the voice *for* children. The YPMN, especially the OneMinutesJr initiative, is an effective tool in support of the RKLA through the thematic focus of workshops on realizing children’s rights to a caring family, access to justice, inclusive education, social protection, disaster risk reduction and equal opportunities³ but this needs to be more clearly articulated in the generic regional TOC as promotion of children’s participation (*giving children a voice*).

The evaluation has found that the YPMN has adopted a gender equality approach in selection of participants, demonstrated by the almost 50/50 ratio of boys and girls in training events between 2012 and 2014. Many workshops were held in rural areas of regions where boys would normally have been more visible in public activities such as video workshops.

The YPMN Coordinator reported that the percentage of marginalized children such as children with disabilities, Roma children, and children from rural areas (69 percent) participating in workshops has been in line with UNICEF’s equity approach, underlining the Initiative’s efforts to meet targets⁴.

UNICEF has invested some US\$1m in the YPMN Initiative during its 12-year lifespan,⁵ with the German national committee being a key sponsor. Hundreds of children and adolescents have been trained in video production, shooting over 3,500 films in YPMN workshops.⁶

Major **findings** of the evaluation include:

- **Relevance:**
 - YPMN/OneMinutesJr is a relevant tool in support of **RKLA**
 - YPMN has high relevance for DRR work with governments, NGOs and schools
 - Local replication confirms YPMN OneMinutesJr relevance
 - High percentage of marginalized children participating in YPMN workshops
 - Youth Reporting, although in line with advocacy goals, is not relevant in present form.
 - The absence of YPMN objectives makes the systematic measurement of contributions of the initiative to the RKLA and TOC and therefore its relevance difficult.
- **Efficiency**
 - High Staff Quality - Coordinator reaches trainees in familiar language
 - YPMN not linked to formal M&E process
 - Trainees not screened for particular advocacy talent
 - Training lacks module on advocacy and its applications, e.g. with authorities
 - Local YPMN sustainability can be attained
- **Effectiveness/Impact**

³ Detailed under chapter Findings

⁴ Coordinator in email to evaluator

⁵ The Regional Office Folder 4. Key Documents (Work plans & Budget, Expenditures)

⁶ <http://www.theOneMinutesjr.org/>

Videos contribute to changing environments in CEE/CIS countries by causing authorities to offer municipal reform, achieving more receptiveness from officialdom

YPMN training empowers adolescents to become change agents

YPMN has mixed effect on country strategies ranging from almost total absence to a varying degrees of inclusion in UNICEF operations

Youth reporting training gives advocacy ideas to participants and supports Fourth Estate⁷, but doubts exist about concept

Child Rights and Media module creates ethical balance to sensationalization of child welfare issues in the media

Initiative strengthens self-efficacy of workshop participants

- **Sustainability**

Resources insufficient for YPMN expansion/sustainability

Local YPMN sustainability dependent on COs and NGO support

OneMinutesJr videos support fundraising and outreach

Youthful Mailing List is forecast to be self-sustaining

YPMN re-branding needed, with emphasis on OneMinutesJr in global strategy

Alternative revenue generation is possible

Main Conclusions

YPMN performance in relevance, effectiveness, and impact is generally positive. UNICEF Regional and country offices and YPMN management have successfully organized workshops and training sessions and have broadly aligned the Initiative to refocus on the most vulnerable children and a changing media landscape. The Initiative has disseminated outputs (videos, interviews with policymakers, information on media capacity building activities) through social media platforms. Posting via multiple email addresses, using a state-of-the-art social media management tool and other modern techniques have been employed to disseminate YPMN information products through platforms such as YouTube, Twitter and Facebook⁸.

The efficiency and sustainability of YPMN require major improvement. Stakeholders see the Initiative in danger of failing if it does not become a global crosscutting programme, if it cannot establish clear objectives and strategy, and if it does not attract more support from UNICEF regional and country offices.⁹ NGO partners must have sustained multiyear engagement from UNICEF country offices in training and follow-up. YPMN needs rebranding to emphasize OneMinutesJr as a signature activity and the nascent M&E facility has to be developed into a full-fledged quality control mechanism.

Recommendations

1. To increase relevance, YPMN shift focus to OneMinutesJr, clearly demarcating it as a UNICEF advocacy tool to be integrated into UNICEF country programmes. Distribution should emphasize the online platform options most used by youth.
2. To improve efficiency, YPMN be upgraded to full program status and develop vision, mission, and clear objectives and corresponding strategy, operations, and budget. OneMinutesJr should adopt results-based management, including full-fledged M&E that tracks training follow-up.

⁷ Adding media as Fourth Estate to the Legislative, Executive and Judicial branches of Government thus making clear its almost constitutional place in democracies

⁸ Tables in Annex

⁹ Scoping interview with former UNICEF CEE/CIS manager

3. UNICEF facilitates the progress of OneMinutesJr by developing resources, and revisiting staffing structure and funding. New branding gives the Initiative more weight and strengthens its role within UNICEF, assisted by high-caliber internal and external marketing and promotion.
4. While shifting focus to OneMinutesJr, YPMN is maintained as supporting basis for CO, local youth media, alumni groups and NGOs to empower young people for advocacy.
5. OneMinutesJr training policy reform incorporates innovative teaching methods; new subjects, including multimedia, ICT and other specialist topics; plus competitive equipment enabling mobile reporting and social network integration. Trainees are to be screened to satisfy UNICEF criteria for advocacy and support of most vulnerable; regional training is to focus on cluster strategy. Workshop results must be communicated to public and officials for greater impact.
6. UNICEF RO and CO integrate OneMinutesJr activities into all programme and fundraising efforts to improve outreach and to achieve social norms change through deeper cooperation with civil society and government. Membership scheme to be developed as a possible way to attract partnership and revenue generation through NGO and private sector funding, which could be part of an exit strategy to make the network self-sufficient.

1 Object of the Evaluation

1.1 Background and Context

Social, economic and political background

The Polish Center for Social and Economic Research (CASE)¹⁰ groups the countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) into three distinct categories: countries that democratized their political systems in the early 1990s and maintained democratic regimes up to the present (a group that includes countries that joined the European Union); countries of the Western Balkans that substantially improved their performance after resolving ethnic and territorial conflicts and overthrowing authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes; and most CIS countries which, after short periods of political freedom and democracy in the early 1990s, reverted to authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes.

Most countries in the region have experienced almost a decade of double-digit economic growth. However, as many as 160 million people in the CEE/CIS region are considered vulnerable because they live on less than five dollars per day. Over one million children are currently deprived of parental care and live in different forms of family substitute care, with some 600,000 of them growing up in institutions. The region has high rates of suicide and unemployment among young people. The highest rate of growth of HIV/AIDS in the world is in CEE/CIS, which is now also home to 3.7 million people who inject drugs, representing

¹⁰ <http://www.case-research.eu/en>

one quarter of the world's total. For many affected children and families, HIV has become synonymous with a life of stigma and exclusion.¹¹

As in other parts of the world, adolescents and youth in CEE/CIS are a diverse group, with differing interests and perceptions on how best to influence policy decisions that impact their lives. The issues faced by adolescents in this region are daunting, and the resources available to assist them generally few. In most countries of the region, families and society in general place value on authoritarian, top-down approaches with little input from younger members of society. This attitude is particularly true with respect to under-privileged children in CEE/CIS, including the socially excluded (e.g. Roma children, street children), those affected by HIV and AIDS, and those abandoned in institutions or lacking reliable access to ICTs.

A [2001 study for UNICEF by Intermedia](#)¹² showed that young people in CEE/CIS felt limited in their right to express themselves through the media in their respective countries. Youth media projects were isolated, poorly funded and technically challenged. Young people did not feel that their ideas and opinions were voiced through media outlets. When the media does address this age group, it typically stereotypes young people in overly positive or negative ways — either as trendsetters and high-achievers or as problems and victims.

On the other hand, the societal, economic and political transformations in the former Soviet Union and in the ex-Yugoslavia in the early 2000s created opportunities for young people to participate in the media with the rise of new newspapers, TV and other media outlets – even if these opportunities were sporadic and confined mainly to large cities. Interest was high among young people in communicating through various media channels with other young people in their own countries, in neighbouring countries or in Western countries. Therefore, the creation and maintenance of a youth media network would help build the capacity of young people to advocate through the media for their issues using their own perspectives, the 2001 study noted.

1.2 Young People's Media Network

Following the direction suggested in the 2001 Intermedia study, UNICEF began in 2002 to support efforts to give young people a voice in the region by means of the umbrella initiative Young People's Media Network (YPMN). With a small staff, the YPMN set out in 2002 to inspire young people in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia to take an active role in the emerging civil society in the region. The founding aim was not to start a big organization but to further develop existing youth networking efforts.¹³ The YPMN is the object of this evaluation.

The YPMN aims to increase young people's advocacy of child rights through media activities and is focused on three main activities:

1. The 'OneMinutesJr' (one-minute videos made by youth) video workshops that build video production and advocacy skills for adolescents and youth. These video workshops are organized by UNICEF with the YPMN under the supervision of the UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office (RO). The theme, venue, dates and logistics of a workshop are coordinated jointly by all three stakeholders. One workshop usually takes five days. The YPMN coordinator, international and national filmmakers engage the youth participants in

¹¹ http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/media_15360.html

¹² Young people and the media in Central & Eastern Europe and the CIS and Baltic States accessed on 5 March 2014. <http://www.africmil.org/publications/Young%20People%20and%20Media%20in%20Central%20&%20Eastern%20Europe,%20the%20CIS%20&%20Baltic%20States.pdf>

¹³ Interview protocol with former senior CEE/CIS management staff

discussions on how to conceptualize story ideas, how to distill these into a 60-second story board and film script, and on filming, editing techniques and post production. The participants also engage in discussion on how to use the resulting videos, which number about 20 per workshop, to advocate on issues that matter to them. The films are shown at local advocacy meetings, in schools, at film festivals and also on national television. All videos are made available online shortly after the workshops.

2. The Youth Reporting activity under the YPMN takes place primarily at UNICEF conferences or at events co-organized by UNICEF. Before and during the events, the YPMN trains young participants in reporting with a focus on interview techniques. This activity adds a youth voice to the conferences and make sure there are questions asked from a young person's perspective. It also closes the gap between the "experts" on the one side and the children on the other. Using social media (Facebook, Twitter, Slideshare, etc.), the young reporters make their material available to everybody online within days, giving a whole new dimension to a child-rights based approach to media.

The youth participants from both the OneMinutesJr workshops and the Youth Reporting activity, selected by the UNICEF CO in cooperation with local NGOs and/or schools, acquire skills in both the theory and practice of visual filmmaking or video interviewing, production and dissemination. International filmmakers also hold a series of training of trainers (TOT) sessions to strengthen national civil society as well as adult filmmakers to train the youth advocates.

3. Other activities under the YPMN umbrella include the Youthful Mailing List (an email/online information service on upcoming media and youth participation opportunities and events), an online archive, the YPMN blog at <http://ypmn.blogspot.com>, Facebook pages, a YouTube Channel and a Twitter account, all of which add value to the information hub.

The YPMN Coordinator, based in Germany, has been drawing on contributions from international partners, local UNICEF offices and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs)¹⁴. He holds a university diploma in journalism and is a Russian speaker. He has been managing YPMN since its inception almost singlehandedly and reports to the UNICEF CEE/CIS RO's communication division.

According to available data, UNICEF has allocated a little over US\$1m to the YPMN Initiative during its 13-year lifespan. The German national committee has been a key sponsor.

1.3 Programme Context and Theory of Change

Throughout its implementation, YPMN has been informed by key global and national policies and strategies, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), particularly articles 12, 13 and 17 (the right to information, communication and participation) and General Comment #12 (the right of the child to be heard); the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as well as youth policies and strategies current in countries of the Region. YPMN initiatives have also been developed in line with Global UNICEF strategies, including the UNICEF Medium-Term Strategic Plans for 2002-2005 and 2006-2013; the UNICEF Global Gender Policy 2010 and, currently, the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2014-2017.

¹⁴ Sandberg Institute, OneMinutesJr Foundation, Amsterdam *et al* according to 2004-2014 CEE/CIS Work Plans

The framework for the YPMN is currently being realigned within the overall CEE/CIS Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda or RKLA, a regional response to UNICEF's global focus on equity. The RKLA, in essence, is the overarching framework to address 10 priority challenges across the region, galvanize horizontal cooperation and mutual learning, and document impact level results for children in multiple countries.¹⁵ As envisioned within the RKLA, adolescent and youth participation should cut across all the priority areas identified. KLA 10 on adolescents explicitly articulates several key goals which are:

- to support realization of the rights of all children during their second decade of life and to give a second chance to those who are most vulnerable and in need of support,
- to generate knowledge and work collectively on sustainable activities that promote equity, emphasize adolescent participation and have value for cross-country and cross-regional sharing of lessons learned and good practice.

Key objectives include:

- to develop and strengthen youth policies,
- to increase access among marginalized, vulnerable and most-at-risk adolescents to youth-friendly health and social services, and
- to strengthen young people's engagement, participation and leadership in issues of concern to them.

In the region, UNICEF support to youth engagement overall remains underfunded, sporadic and ad hoc. Therefore, the assumption based on recent UNICEF experience with YPMN, is that better integration, coordination and strategic positioning of YPMN Initiative within the 10-point RKLA can strengthen future results for adolescents boys and girls/young people in in matters affecting their lives.

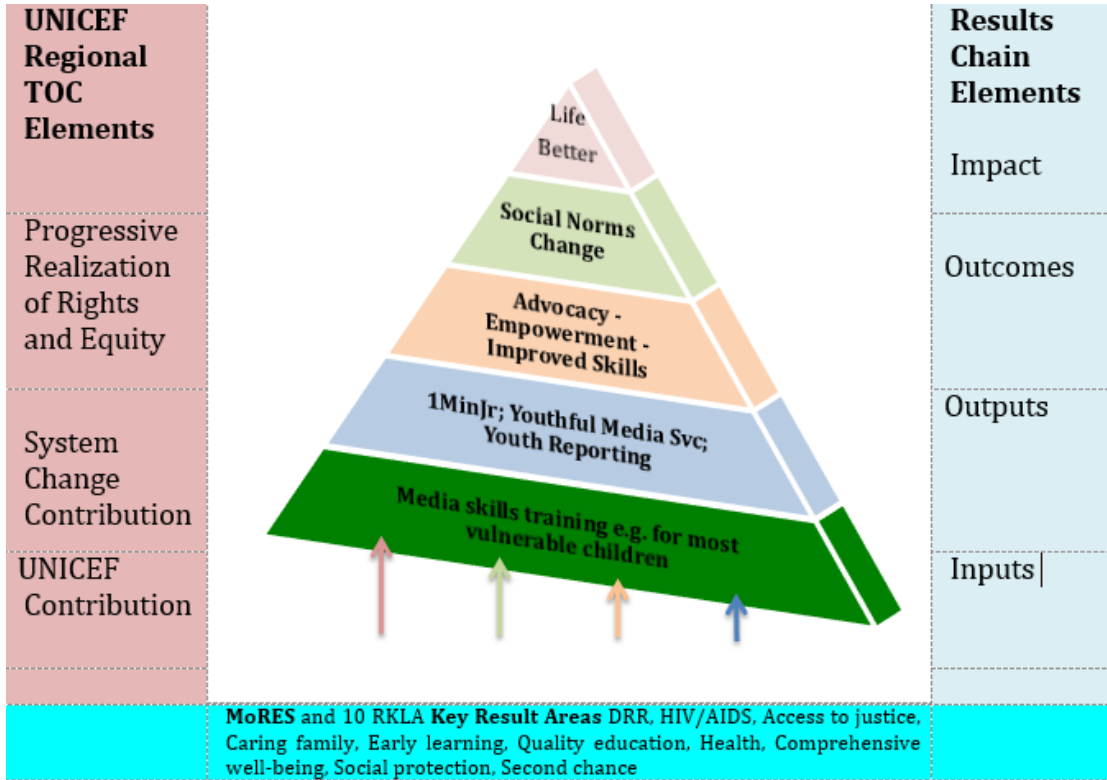
The YPMN Initiative is a way of increasing adolescent and youth advocacy through a communication for social change (C4SC) approach – globally defined by UNICEF as “... a social process based on dialogue using a broad range of tools and methods. C4SC is about seeking change at different levels, including listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating and learning for sustained and meaningful change”. C4SC principles are equity focused and begin from the human-rights based approach to programming, particularly with respect rights to information, communication and participation and the right to be heard.

Programme Logic and Theory of Change

The evolution of the YPMN has been “organic” with a broad set of objectives and parameters loosely guiding its development. UNICEF has been able to experiment with new ideas and respond to demand, ensuring that YPMN activities are largely needs-driven. However, the Initiative never developed a logic model and performance indicators, nor did it collect baseline data at the outset. Therefore, for the purposes of the evaluation, the evaluator developed a basic logic model for the YPMN (Figure 1).

Figure 2: YPMN Logic Model

¹⁵ The ten RKLA priorities are 1. A child's right to health: 'A promise renewed'; 2. A child's right to a supportive and caring family environment; 3. A child's right to access to justice; 4. A child's right to early learning; 5. A child's right to an inclusive quality education; 6. A child's right to be born free of HIV; 7. A young child's right to comprehensive well-being; 8. A child's right to social protection; 9. A child's right to protection from the risks of disasters: reducing vulnerability; and 10. An adolescent's right to a second decade, a second chance.



The work carried out under YPMN Initiative has been based on an emerging regional ‘theory of change’ (TOC), according to which building knowledge (familiarization and understanding of new concepts), skills, networking, self-efficacy (self-confidence, self-esteem, self-respect) of adolescents and young people will increase their intention to advocate and will ultimately contribute to empowering them to act for change on issues affecting their lives. Behaviour change and social theories that underlie this TOC include: 1) Social-cognitive theory, which suggests that increased self-efficacy is a predictor of intention and behaviour that can positively affect a person’s persistence when faced with a difficult situation; 2) the “Stages of Change” (or Transtheoretical) model, which describes several stages on the path to behaviour change (pre-contemplative, contemplative, etc.) and which has been interpreted by some to include a final stage, “advocacy,” which follows sustained behaviour change among those who are strongly convinced of the benefits of that change; and 3) the Theory of Innovations, which describes how innovations are communicated by and among members of a social system. “Early adopters” who are respected within their social networks may be more successful in spreading innovations and may thus become “change agents” within those networks.

UNICEF believes that its core roles in the region can contribute to the realization of the rights of children. The core roles are:

- A ‘Voice’ for children and adolescents
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Policy advice and technical assistance
- Leveraging resources from the public and private sectors
- Facilitating national dialogue toward child friendly social norms
- Enabling knowledge exchange
- Modeling/piloting

The knowledge, skills and network building supported through YPMN Initiative includes training young people in media skills, giving them the opportunity to make their voices heard, raising the visibility of key youth issues and forging stronger links between and among youth, and with new, strategic partners within their countries and across the region. Thus, the goal is that through sustained engagement, young advocates for adolescent and youth rights will become empowered and take an active role in social change in partnership with a variety of stakeholders, including government, civil society and others and through a range of media-related activities.

This study evaluates how UNICEF core roles may have contributed to changes in the national, regional, and local systems prevailing in YPMN countries and how, in turn, these changes in the systems may have impacted children. UNICEF sees core roles as TOC building blocks and aims to contribute to system change through them. The evaluator examines whether activities under the YPMN fit these core roles and how they could assist in a possible refining of UNICEF’s definition of the core roles, particularly the core roles of voice for children and the linkage between voice and advocacy and policy work.

1.4 Objectives of the YPMN

Since its inception the Initiative’s objectives have included:

- Promote participation of young people in line with the CRC;
- Empower young people through technical support, triggering their advocacy for their rights through media and public events; and
- Serve as a clearinghouse for youth information.

1.5 Scope of the YPMN

The YPMN Initiative covers all 21 countries and one territory: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Tajikistan, The Russian Federation, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan; Kosovo under UNSCR 1244. However, as the Initiative is highly dependent upon UNICEF in country offices (COs), it is noted that the organization of workshops and participation of young people has varied among the countries (see Annex).

1.6 Stakeholders

Table 1: YPMN Stakeholders

Key Actors	Chief Task
Regional Office (RO)	Together with the YPMN coordinator, develops the overall strategy for the Initiative and sets the guiding principles for the work of the YPMN. The office also prepares regional donor proposals and coordinates the communication plans for youth advocacy regional events , which influences the direction of the work done under the YPMN umbrella.
The German national committee	The main donor for YPMN since 2006. The national committee has funded proposals for YPMN submitted by the UNICEF CEE/CIS RO and provided feedback on the video outputs. The YPMN has organized OneMinutesJr workshops in Germany for the German national committee's Youth Ambassador initiative on themes with CEE/CIS regional linkages.
Country Offices (CO)	Develop the local strategy for media-related youth advocacy work and organize crosscutting public events to highlight the CO's programmatic work . Each office works closely with the RO and YPMN to ensure synergy in funding and reaching advocacy goals and national media engagement.
YPMN Management	Coordinates the Initiative with the CO under the supervision of the RO. This includes planning the OneMinutesJr workshop and Youth Reporting themes, selection of participants, selection of training location, workshop management, consultation, selection of international and national filmmakers, preparing agenda, supporting production and post-production, archiving and online dissemination.
Local NGOs	Implement the workshops with the YPMN management under direct supervision of the CO. Also conduct advocacy with media partners and disseminate videos. With the CO and YPMN, some NGOs undergo a training of trainers and then train other youth participants independently (without YPMN support). The NGOs also follow up with capacity building of youth advocates after the OneMinutesJr or Youth Reporting workshops. The NGOs also help translate some postings in the email lists or on Facebook. They have a clear role in the sustainability of the Initiative.
Local and national authorities	Support the Initiative by including youth voice in local decision making. They also give logistic support and public support for the youth advocates . Local and national officials are present at the final presentation of the youth-produced videos so they directly interact with the local UNICEF Country Office, the participating NGOs and the child participants. This moral and public support extends to supporting the voices of children when making policy changes that realize the rights of children.
Child/youth advocates	The main actors in YPMN efforts to support the participation of children in the media in accordance with the CRC. They develop skills – both technical as well as

	creative thinking – during the events and are encouraged to continue their advocacy and spread their activism to their peers.
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1.7 YPMN Output

The YPMN Initiative has provided UNICEF with an invaluable opportunity to connect with children throughout the region in three ways: by stimulating content creation, disseminating that content, and supporting youth media networking through the OneMinutesJr videos, Youth Reporting and the Information Exchange.

Table 2: YPMN Output

	Activities	Outputs	Number of Youth Involved	Reach*
1	OneMinutesJr Workshops	3,500 videos	3,500	2,534 likes on YPMN FB; 110,000 page views 500,000 fans on UNICEF CEE/CIS Social Media Channels
2	Youth reporting	80 videos	50 participants	500,000 through UNICEF CEE/CIS Social Media Channels
3	Information Exchange, email lists, FB	4807 posts	759 subscribers	791 likes on FB

* Via all media forms, including social media

1.8 Implementation Status

UNICEF has contributed close to US\$1m to the YPMN Initiative since 2002. In its 13-year life, the YPMN Initiative has been guided by several different programming frameworks in the region¹⁶. The most recent are the 2012 Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda (RKLA) and the Global Strategic Plan 2014-2017. These documents stipulate new advocacy priorities, emphasizing the needs of the most vulnerable children – including those of Roma and street children – and stress the requirement for monitoring and evaluating the Initiative’s performance in order to demonstrate impact.

The German firm Youth Media Consulting Schuepp GBr has been coordinating YPMN activities and was under contract with the RO until July 2015.

2 Evaluation Purpose, Objectives, Scope and Users

After more than ten years of implementation, the YPMN Initiative was due to be evaluated by an external, independent party to examine how it has worked toward its objectives and risen to new challenges, and to reflect on how the YPMN might further develop. The landscape is now considerably different than it was in 2002. NGO partners have changed. The online and social media landscape has become more interactive, especially with the

¹⁶ Evolution of program frameworks are covered in a Time Line (Annex 11 of this report).

profusion of social media platforms such as Twitter, Youtube and Facebook.

A 2005 evaluation of the Initiative by the British Broadcasting Service World Service Trust¹⁷ (BBC WST) over the period 2002-2004 found that some 200 adolescent boys and girls and youth were trained through the YPMN in advocacy skills building. Hundreds more benefited from networking opportunities. The evaluation recommended forging closer relationships with local media organizations, training local trainers and improving the dissemination of outputs to reach a wider range of stakeholders.

The current evaluation is necessary since many stakeholders, including donors and UNICEF management and programme staff in country, regional and headquarters offices, expect the evaluation results will assist them in moving the UNICEF regional agenda and global communication strategy forward – for children and by children themselves.

Purpose of the evaluation: The 2014 evaluation's purpose was to assess the soundness of the initiative's strategies and its sustainability. Although there are linkages to wider adolescent and youth programming in relation to participation, this evaluation did not assess those aspects. The evaluation limited itself to how media and communication activities by and for young people, coordinated by the UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office, are improving the capacity of young people to act as advocates on issues affecting them. The evaluation also assessed the effects of that advocacy on audiences reached by young people, including local authorities, decision makers and community leaders. The evaluation examined how youth were selected for participation in the interventions and analyzed who benefited and who did not. The evaluation findings will contribute to the UNICEF Monitoring Results for Equity Systems (MoRES)¹⁸ and aid the agency in examining carefully how UNICEF interventions reduce (or exacerbate) equity gaps.

The YPMN evaluation's **objectives** were to:

- Assess the Initiative's performance in line with the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The assessment considered the changing situation, needs, opportunities for engagement at country and regional level over the 2004-2014 period (with emphasis on 2012-2014), as well as the UNICEF national committees' work on advocacy on child rights, including the equity refocus;
- Draw and document lessons learned on what has worked and how; and
- Make recommendations for future communication-related youth participation activities, taking into account the RKLA, the rapidly changing media environment, and the long-term viability and potential areas for further strengthening the initiative.

The evaluation's **scope:** The period covered by this evaluation was 2004-2014, with emphasis on 2012-2014 when the YPMN was realigned under the RKLA framework. It further focused geographically by conducting in-depth case studies on Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Romania. The evaluator also sought to obtain information from the other countries and one territory covered by YPMN (listed under section 1.5).

¹⁷ BBC World Service Trust: External Evaluation of UNICEF's Young People's Media Network; undertaken on behalf of the UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS & Baltic States, 2005

¹⁸ MoRES is a conceptual framework for effective planning, programming, implementation, monitoring and managing results. It reaffirms the commitment to use of data for improved outcomes for the most disadvantaged children and addresses the need for intermediate process/outcome measures between routine monitoring of inputs, outputs and high-level outcomes every three to five years.

Users of the evaluation include UNICEF programme staff in country, regional and headquarters offices, RCLA reference groups, participating NGO partners, national committees and donors. The evaluation will assist users in identifying inputs that can move their respective agenda forward.

3 Evaluation Approach and Methodology

The evaluation has applied the five OECD-DAC¹⁹ evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, (emerging) impacts, and sustainability to answer the evaluation questions²⁰ as per the evaluation matrix (attached in Annex).

The evaluator has examined, *inter alia*:

- How well YPMN meets the needs of the target groups and civil society at large (**relevance**);
- How capable it is of producing results, including social capital, through the use of result-based planning and programming, monitoring and evaluating; how it measures progress toward defined outcomes (including documenting success/impact); and the competent employment of resources (management, funding, professional training) to maximize output (**effectiveness and efficiency**);
- To what extent the YPMN influenced areas such as law reform and even systems (**impact**);
- How viable YPMN is with respect to such criteria as organizational and economic aspects (**sustainability**).

The evaluator also added several questions to deepen analysis of certain issues. For example, under the criterion efficiency he suggested the following additional questions:

- How has the Initiative changed since the 2005 evaluation, and to what extent were these changes driven by lessons learned?
- Is the division of responsibilities between the YPMN Coordinator and UNICEF RO/countries clear and appropriate?

To ensure impartiality and triangulation of information, the methodology relied on a cross-section of information sources and used mixed methods (quantitative, qualitative, and participatory).

3.1 Data Collection and Analysis Methods

3.1.1 Data Gathering

Ex ante: data and documents prepared before project implementation such as feasibility studies, fund application forms, financing decisions, cost benefit analyses, etc. Ex post: data and documents elaborated during the operational phase.

3.1.2 Data Collection Instruments

Desk study

Literature/data, contacts produced by the initiative or other sources (including the 2005 evaluation), surveys, interview protocols, donor and UNICEF reports as listed in the inception report; protocols of on-site and phone or on-line interviews with over 100 stakeholders, including local NGO members, UNICEF staff, YPMN Coordinator, partner staff, other donors, and media representatives (to gain insights into the concept, management,

¹⁹ Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

²⁰ The evaluation questions are grouped according to the DAC evaluation criteria as defined in the UNICEF guidance on equity-focused evaluations, 2011.

and country contexts of YPMN). During his desk study the evaluator worked through many documents made available by the UNICEF RO in Geneva via an online file-sharing facility.

Questionnaires

The evaluator distributed online questionnaires to the country communication officers, select advisors/programme specialists and past and current YPMN training participants.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

This tool of qualitative research proved suitable to people who could not articulate their thoughts easily and provided power in numbers, especially for marginalized children and youth. In less structured FGDs, participants were encouraged to talk to each other instead of answering the moderator's questions. A total of 24 FGDs were conducted, with each session having up to 20 participants. Targets included training participants and NGOs specializing in media monitoring/literacy.

Key Informant Interviews (KII)

KII were a significant data source in this evaluation and provided insight and explanation. The breadth of the 34 interviews was wide: RO and national UNICEF staff, YPMN participants, international trainers, national trainers, local NGOs, local authorities, media partners, independent journalists, university lecturers, members of parliament and officials of ministries were among those interviewed. Their subject experience, context knowledge and institutional memory provided a wealth of intelligence as noted in the country reports (see Annex 1).

Observation

The evaluator made maximum use of first-hand observation during his field visits where he attended YPMN workshops in Armenia (Dilijan) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kupres) and classroom meetings with trainees in various countries (e.g. Romania, Moldova) and was privileged to listen to local UNICEF staff, partner NGOs, journalists, civil society leaders, government and parliament members.

Case studies

Where possible, case studies were conducted to collect and comprehend information at in-depth level.

Various

There was no need for employing remote evaluation methods in the countries visited because the evaluator was taken to several places outside capital cities (in Kyrgyzstan, Romania, Armenia and Moldova)

Validation and Corroboration

- At the beginning of each field visit, the evaluator briefed the local UNICEF office about his mission and enquired about the local use of YPMN, the existence of documentation (programme and financial). He presented initial findings to the country office focal points at debriefing sessions.
- Circulation of draft reports via the RO in Geneva.
- Comparison of information from different sources, including YPMN trainees, Coordinator, RO UNICEF, interviewees, research results (source triangulation).
- Triangulation of information from interviews with those from documentation.

3.2 Sampling Methods

The UNICEF RO selection of the five countries visited was designed to reflect geographical sub-regions, the different stages of YPMN in the various countries, and to illustrate a variety of strategic choices made by offices within the YPMN initiative to maximize results from their youth advocacy and the NGO partners they work with.

Armenia, a country in the troubled South Caucasus sub-region, conducted Justice for Children and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) workshops, which made it interesting to examine from the RKLA perspective. Other highlights in Armenia included a former trainee turned trainer and an exemplary NGO choice (Pokolenie Insan).²¹

The evaluator suggested **Georgia**, mainly for two reasons. One was the reportedly diversified and successful (high impact) YPMN work in the country. Secondly, Georgia had prominently featured in the BBC evaluation so that YPMN's lack of data at base, mid and end line could be compensated to a certain extent by a field visit that created an opportunity for benchmarking results.

Bosnia and Herzegovina represented a Balkan country where an active CO has organized all workshops since 2010 and has mainstreamed youth participation in programming.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, arguably the most democratic of all Central Asian countries, the evaluator was able to gauge YPMN results against the challenging environment for child/youth participation. Youth reporting activity was another topic for the evaluation.

In **Moldova**, where children are often left behind by parents who earn a living in far-flung places, the evaluator could assess how YPMN treated deep-rooted problems of migration, parental care, juvenile justice, most-at-risk adolescents and children with disabilities.

Romania is an EU member country whose national UNICEF representation voiced interest in working more with youth. In three workshops child rights and poverty were addressed.

Each of the countries selected represented a regional 'cluster' of countries sharing common traits (e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina represented the Balkans). The evaluator used this "cluster categorization" of countries to highlight relevant crosscutting elements or deficiencies.

3.3 Human Rights, Gender and Equity

These issues were addressed in the evaluation matrix, in questionnaires, and also raised in KIIs and FGDs. However, systematic results reporting proved impossible owing to YPMN's lack of monitoring on these topics (see limitations below). Nonetheless, some evidence on the inclusion of human rights, gender and equity in YPMN programming is presented in the findings section.

3.4 Limitations

Several factors significantly undermined the comprehensiveness and accuracy of parts of the evaluation. These include the absence of formal goal setting in YPMN's initial implementation, a lack of performance appraisal and staff development/training follow-up mechanism, ex-ante documentation gaps, and difficulties in locating former YPMN trainees. There was little, if any, YPMN documentation available at UNICEF country offices visited. The basic financial information for the lifespan of the Initiative made available to the

²¹ More sampling details in the Annex table on YPMN activities

evaluator prevented efficiency comparisons between the YPMN and possible similar regional undertakings.

As noted in section 1.3, the YPMN initiative evolved in an “organic” way, without a logic model, and implemented activities that were largely needs-driven. An evaluability assessment by UNICEF RO concluded that, despite some data gaps, there were enough reliable qualitative disaggregated data available to conduct this evaluation. The TOR stated that any limitations in the data collection process would need to be mitigated by the evaluator.

In order to address this limitation, the evaluator based his findings on the RO documentation available, surveys (e.g. Media Sustainability Index from the International Research and Exchanges Board, or IREX), material from the UNICEF file-sharing web platform, UNICEF in-country debriefings, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. These sources were supplemented by information from the sample country offices, Internet research and observation. Thus, this evaluation relied to a large extent on qualitative methods and data.

Questionnaires

Data collection and analysis also included statistical analysis of feedback from English-language questionnaires to 52 UNICEF country staff (COs, C4SCs and assistants), meetings with beneficiaries, and user groups (e.g. journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Moldova who scrutinized YPMN-initiated mainstream media advocacy), OneMinutesJr video screenings, and analysis of YPMN’s contribution to the RCLA.

The evaluator’s research shows that 20 percent of the people who were sent a questionnaire responded to the survey. Reminder messages to non-respondents went unanswered. Since the response rate from the participants’ survey (in English and Russian) was lower still, the results from this survey were considered unreliable and were not used.²²

UNICEF CO Staff

Apart from lacking dedicated local financial data for YPMN, most UNICEF staff contacted had not heard of YPMN as a brand (many, however, recognized its OneMinutesJr component). Nor does YPMN appear in any annual reports for the CEE/CIS region in the sample checked by the evaluator.²³

The evaluator’s efforts at outreach to UNICEF staff proved extremely difficult. Only a few countries took part in a questionnaire exercise on YPMN²⁴, emails remained unanswered, and the overwhelming majority of country folders in the file-sharing web platform were left empty – despite the fact that the RO had asked for local feedback on YPMN.

Risks

The scoping interviews conducted with YPMN management, RO, the German national committee and former senior UNICEF staff²⁵ during preparation of the evaluation’s inception report highlighted possible risks affecting the TOC building blocks for the YPMN. These risks included the resources allocated to the YPMN, its geographical and programme scope, dependence on levels of local effort, and political development in the region. Despite

²² Out of 900 participant questionnaire requests in Russian, roughly one third bounced (email address no longer valid), two respondents communicated their absence from base and one asked for the English version. The remaining questionnaires (using names and email addresses from the magic media list provided by the YPMN Coordinator) remained unanswered even after many weeks.

²³ http://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/index_73646.html

²⁴ Questionnaire results documented in Annex

²⁵ See list of interviewees in Annex

information bottlenecks, the evaluator was able address these risks and produce results regarding “the long-term viability and potential areas for further strengthening of the initiative”²⁶.

No Systematic Monitoring of Human Rights, Gender and Equity Issues

Without disaggregated data for the entire duration of the YPMN Initiative it was difficult to uncover patterns, trends and other important information on such issues as human rights, gender, special education or disability, socio-economic status, mobility (of excluded children), language, and ethnicity. The evaluator had to rely on the YPMN Coordinator’s data covering 2012-2014 (discussed under findings).

3.5 Evaluation Standards and Ethical Considerations

Ethical dimensions were taken into account by the evaluator, especially when approaching themes such as justice for children, HIV/AIDS, family separation, street children, children with disabilities and most vulnerable children. Before conducting interviews and focus group discussions, the evaluator consulted children and families and ensured their informed consent. The evaluator protected the anonymity and confidentiality of individuals and observed ethical guidelines as set out by United Nations (UN) Evaluation Group in its standards and norms²⁷. The national consultants assisting with translation were all experienced in working with the target groups.

Participating in a YPMN workshop had an ethical dimension. The OneMinutesJr workshop is a personal story-telling initiative that may deal with sensitive topics. The stories are based on real episodes in the lives of children. While the trainers and facilitators encourage the participants to tell their stories truthfully, they also ensure that children know there is no pressure to disclose anything they do not want to share.

Participation in Youth Reporting also followed interagency minimum standards for consulting with children.²⁸ Child protection was deemed highly important throughout both the OneMinutesJr workshops and in Youth reporting. Whenever the identity of children had to be protected, this safeguard was given the highest priority. In cases of doubt, the trainers and facilitator rely on UNICEF staff, child protection officers or psychologists from the partner NGOs and follow their advice.

Although ethics were not a focal point of the evaluation, several stakeholders raised the subject. In Georgia, participants in a focus group discussion heard that YPMN had provided the groundwork for responsible media action so that “some of us managed to implement significant professional media standards in reporting about children by having their faces covered to prevent compromising their identity.”

3.6 Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholders have participated in the evaluation process from the very beginning by contributing to the evaluation design, accompanying the evaluator field visits, consulting on findings and commenting on the evaluation inception and final reports. The process has included the UNICEF RO, YPMN management, NGOs, participating children and adolescents (through on-site workshop visits and interviews), plus the sample COs through briefings and debriefings during each field visit. In addition, key materials have been posted in a web file sharing folder for easy access by the YPMN/RKLA reference group.

²⁶ TOR

²⁷ http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards/index.jsp?doc_cat_source_id=4
<http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards/index.jsp>

<http://www.unevaluation.org/ethicalguidelines>

²⁸ http://www.unicef.org/adolescence/files/SAF_resources_childrenadvocates.pdf

4 Findings

4.1 Relevance

- Key Relevance Findings
 - Most stakeholders agree that the YPMN OneMinutesJr product is highly relevant to advocacy of reform
 - YPMN has high relevance for DRR work with governments, NGOs and schools
 - Local replication confirms the relevance of YPMN's OneMinutesJr
 - High percentage of marginalized children participate in YPMN workshops
 - Youth Reporting, although in line with advocacy goals, is not relevant in its present form
 - YPMN is not relevant as a local fundraising tool
 - The absence of YPMN objectives makes the documentation of systematic measurement of contributions of the initiative (particularly its relevance) to the RKLA and TOC difficult

Overview: Most stakeholders interviewed by the evaluator agree that the YPMN and its key products have proved highly relevant to the priorities and needs of adolescent boys and girls in the region. By introducing networking as early as 2002, YPMN has been building valuable social capital throughout its existence. Stakeholders saw YPMN as relevant to the RKLA since it is regarded as a component of the RKLA's TOC. However, while an overwhelming number of UNICEF stakeholders told the evaluator that YPMN was relevant to their country programmes, some voiced reservations. Some respondents consider that the relevance of YPMN is fading and is in need of rejuvenating.

Reactions to the Youth Reporting component are not universally favourable (further discussed in other sections). Although generally appraised positively as an advocacy element and one supporting media literacy and the Fourth Estate²⁹ idea, several stakeholders criticize its present form (primarily covering conferences) as boring and unattractive and go so far as to suggest dropping it. They argue that this component is a way for UNICEF to promote its agenda rather than teach media skills. In addition, trainees were disappointed that training did not put them in touch with professional reporters, thus failing to make the intended connection with mainstream media. The evaluator also noted a request to add a brief business module, including marketing, copyright and revenue generation to Youth Reporting.

The use of training on Violence against Children (VAC) and DRR demonstrate the new dedicated RKLA approach in action, whereby videos are used by UNICEF for outreach and for pilots in school education on DRR. Officialdom could be influenced by former YPMN trainees who acted as opinion leaders, for example in Moldova where they had become change agents in civil society. The Initiative was seen as relevant to UNICEF national committees' work on advocacy on child rights. However, according to the RO list of all YPMN activities, Croatia did not take part in any of interventions of this nature. In the sections below, the evaluator examines outputs and outcomes by way of **country case studies** he undertook in the sample countries visited.

²⁹ Adding media as Fourth Estate to the Legislative, Executive and Judicial branches of Government thus making clear its almost constitutional place in democracies

1- To what degree have the YPMN Initiative objectives been relevant to the priorities and needs of adolescent boys and girls and youth, particularly the most vulnerable groups of children in CEE/CIS?

Overall, stakeholders confirmed that the Initiative had been relevant to the priorities and needs of the target audience, but some spoke of declining relevance. The Moldova UNICEF team stressed that the YPMN initiative had been firmly embedded in the youth media strategy and since 2012-2013 has been contributing to translating the RKLA into reality and to the core roles central to UNICEF's sustainable youth engagement and support for the realization of child rights.

OneMinutesJr has turned out to be a good "antenna" for capturing the real issues that concern young people. Children and youth from different regions put distinct topics on their workshop agendas. Central Asian participants made drugs their priority. In the Balkans, the suicide of young people repeatedly featured as the main issue.

However, UNICEF representatives and other stakeholders such as the Moldova Youth Media Centre expressed doubt on lasting YPMN relevance. In this view, work was needed to refresh YPMN's relevance in light of the rapidly changing media landscape and the interests of children and adolescents in this new landscape. Some briefing participants said YPMN had begun to lose relevance and was not sufficiently youth-driven. Multimedia training was now of the essence, including more use of Instagram, YouTube, blogging and the uploading of comments to retain and increase interest in what was called a "fading initiative".

A staff member in the UNICEF country office for Kyrgyzstan said children with disabilities were involved in training sessions, but that it was vital for these children to participate more extensively to secure inclusiveness. In fact, this individual said the country level youth project had been closed in 2004 since UNICEF management thought it was not sufficiently targeting the most vulnerable children and that YPMN represented English (mailing list), high-tech cameras and other elements that were **not relevant** to children at the periphery who mostly spoke non-English local language and lacked IT equipment and Internet access. This person also admitted that YPMN played a limited role in UNICEF's current Kyrgyzstan programme but was willing to look afresh at YPMN to see how it could complement their present youth strategy. Although YPMN had had lost some of its relevance, it was regarded as potentially useful for OneMinutesJr Training of Trainers (TOT) and to strengthen programme work under the RKLA 10-point agenda.

The relevance of YPMN was raised in scoping interviews with former RO staff, the German national committee staff. One individual said the core of YPMN's objective – training children in media skills and literacy to enable reform and improve their plight through effective advocacy of their rights – is extremely relevant, i.e. In Cologne, the evaluator was told that the German national committee's contribution of over half a million US\$ to YPMN was owing to the high relevance of the Initiative. One RO staff member said that YPMN since 2012 had strong relevance for DRR work with governments, NGOs and schools through OneMinutesJr videos that illustrated RKLA key messages like children's contributions to emergency drills and disaster prevention in awareness-raising campaigns and efforts to improve structures in emergencies (earthquakes, mudslides, fires etc.). Another informant added that the OneMinutesJr videos illustrated important topics such as protection against violence, victims of violence or divorce proceedings, and juvenile justice offenders.³⁰

Independent journalists in **Sarajevo** told the evaluator that because the YPMN films addressed salient problems, including violence against children, DRR, and health and social

³⁰ Scoping interviews

inclusion, these activities were highly **relevant** to work for and with youth. Use by the eFM student radio's website of citizen journalism with the help of OneMinutesJr videos proved relevant in shifting focus back to victims of a local flood after mainstream media had dropped them from their reporting agenda. In addition, the country's most popular web portal (Klix.ba) was allocating time to OneMinutesJr footage.

At first glance, YPMN Youth Reporting training appears to be in line with UNICEF's global communication principle *communicate to advocate*. But questions were asked about the relevance of the training since it contains a potential risk of overly close relations between leaders and youth "reporters". Stakeholders argue that whereas reporters should keep their distance from officials, the Youth Reporting model invites the opposite outcome. These stakeholders see a basic flaw in the activity's concept, which, according to YPMN management, was originally planned as a Russian-language TV magazine.³¹ Stakeholders from the Youth Media Center (YMC) expressed doubts about whether 'youth reporting' is the right description of this YPMN exercise. In contrast, a participant from Moldova said Youth Reporting training "broke down barriers between ministers and us". This individual considers UNICEF to be pursuing two objectives simultaneously: leadership training and advocacy skills via the use of media. But YMC believes that training on encouraging citizen journalism as a tool for advocacy is more relevant than Youth Reporting. (In citing citizen journalism, the stakeholder was referring to an alternative and activist form of news coverage outside mainstream media at a grassroots level.) The Moldova trainee agreed that there is a danger of indoctrination and that this kind of Youth Reporting training could turn some young reporters into politicians' mouthpieces.

2- To what degree does the YPMN Initiative remain relevant to the recently developed UNICEF 10-point RKLA?

YPMN has been relevant to the RKLA as since it is a building block of the overall regional TOC, which in turn supports the UNICEF global Strategic Plan (SP) and its cross-cutting strategies, including the human rights-based approach to cooperation and gender equality, results-based management and the generation and use of knowledge.

YPMN activities in Moldova regularly include vulnerable youth and are thus relevant to several of the RKLA's 10 result areas (equal opportunities, inclusion and second chances). On gender, the evaluator noticed an unintended girl-bias in YPMN activities as girls were clearly in the majority of participants in the workshops. Children with disabilities who attended a YPMN workshop were able to recall child-rights themes such as education and inclusion.

A senior UNICEF official in Armenia said YPMN is contributing to RKLA and core roles, especially in the areas of juvenile justice, disaster risk reduction, inclusion of children with disabilities and giving children a voice. Although YPMN videos had been used in campaigns and pilot training, there was no systematic approach in usage of the clips to support UNICEF strategy. A logical link to advocacy was lacking. Clearly, the integration of footage in the organization's outreach efforts could have been more effective.

2013 activities on violence against children and disaster risk reduction are evidence of how the outputs are relevant to the new dedicated RKLA approach, in which videos are part and parcel of UNICEF Georgia campaigns and are used in pilots such as school education on DRR.

³¹ The idea was to train youth as reporters for a web TV format. The resulting pilot project with 25 participants in 2010 in Kyiv did not become a sustainable activity owing to staffing shortages. The activity was changed into Youth Reporting, with participants chiefly interviewing officials at conferences.

The table below details RKLA themes covered in OneMinutesJr workshops in the region.

Table 3: RKLA and YPMN OneMinutesJr Workshops (2012-2014)

Date	Country / City	Topic	RKLA
2012 (9 workshops)			
March	Azerbaijan / Baku	Juvenile justice	#2, #3, #10
March	Montenegro / Kolasin	Child poverty	#5, #8
April	Armenia / Yerevan	Juvenile justice	#2, #3, #10
April	Kyrgyzstan / Bishkek	Juvenile justice	#2, #3, #10
May	Romania / Bucharest	Child poverty	#2, #5, #8, #10
June	Tajikistan / Dushanbe	Juvenile justice	#2, #3, #10
Sept.	Kazakhstan / Öskemen	DRR & environment	#9
Sept.	Moldova / Calarasi	Children with disabilities	#2, #5, #8
Octobe	Ukraine / Odessa	Street children / poverty	#2, #3, #8, #10
2013 (9 workshops)			
Feb	Armenia / Gyumri	DRR	#5, #9
March	Ukraine / Melitopol	Juvenile Justice	#2, #3, #10
March	Ukraine / Kharkiv	Juvenile Justice	#2, #3, #10
May	Georgia / Tbilisi	Violence against children	#3, #8, #10
May	Georgia / Tbilisi	DRR	#9
June	Montenegro / Cetinje	Families / Fostering	#2
Sept.	Montenegro / Kotor	DRR	#5, #9
Oct.	Pristina / Kosovo under UNSCR 1244	Post 2015 agenda	#10
Nov.	Kyrgyzstan / Batken	DRR	#5, #9
2014			
Feb.	Kyrgyzstan / Bishkek	Violence in schools	#3, #8, #10
March	Kyrgyzstan / Karakol	Water & sanitation	#1, #5
April	Germany / Recklinghausen*	Refugees / migration	#3, #5, #8
April	Turkey / Kahramanmaras	#ChildrenofSyria	#3, #5, #8
May	Moldova / Balti	MARA (most-at-risk adolescents)	#10
July	Ukraine / Lviv	IDPs / Refugees	#3, #5, #8
July	Uzbekistan / Tashkent	Children from institutions CRC@25	#2, #5, #8, #10
Sept.	Germany / Herne**	Migration / Social inclusion	#5, #10
Sept.	Armenia / Dilijan	Children with disabilities CRC@25	#5, #8
Oct.	Ukraine / Lviv	Children with disabilities	#5, #8
Oct.	Ukraine / Kovel	Juvenile Justice	#2, #3, #10
Oct.	Ukraine / Odessa	HIV/AIDS, street children	#2, #3, #8, #10

Source: YPMN Coordinator.

Notes: OneMinutesJr workshops held by NGOs and **not** involving international trainers are not included for lack of country data.

* Workshop in cooperation with the UNICEF German national committee. Participants were child refugees from Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Syria, Afghanistan.

** Workshop in cooperation with the UNICEF German national committee. Participants were teenagers with “migration background” (1st and 2nd generation migrants from Turkey, Kosovo under UNSCR 1244, Tunisia)

3- To what extent has the YPMN Initiative been relevant to the changing context between 2004 and 2014 in CEE/CIS?

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) represents the **Balkans cluster**. Key informants noted the particular relevance and potential to bring about change of YPMN's contributions with respect to the eFM radio and web portal Cross Radio in Sarajevo (more details are provided under Impact).

South Caucasus cluster: In 2004-2005, YPMN supplemented the Kids' Crossroad programme (Menk Enk – a joint project, implemented by Internews organizations in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) with OneMinutesJr video-training workshops. About 18 videos produced during the workshop were shown on the "Our Express" TV show on the Georgian public broadcaster and on TV in Armenia and Azerbaijan. In all, 75 episodes were filmed under this South-Caucasus joint venture that lasted until 2010 with initial UNICEF and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funding and, later, a contribution from the UK.

A senior UNICEF management official in **Romania** said the organization's new country strategy would engage more with children, youth and adolescent via social networking in order to create a mass movement for youngsters. YPMN was regarded as highly relevant and UNICEF Romania wanted to use the Initiative for a planned online platform as part of its outreach policy and efforts to train children to become civil society advocates.

The regional aspect of YPMN later shifted to a national or sub-regional focus, according to a former RO manager. While the regional aspect had been relevant at the start, it was pushed to the background and had somehow become irrelevant.³²

4- To what extent has the YPMN Initiative been relevant to the UNICEF national committees' work on advocacy on child rights with equity for the period 2006-2014?

In several industrialized countries, UNICEF national committees raise funds from the private sector and promote children's rights to ensure visibility for threatened children. Because of YPMN's high relevance to the German national committee, this NGO has been the Initiative's biggest funder for years. The Cologne-based organization uses YPMN products, mainly OneMinutesJr videos, on three different levels: programme, communication and fundraising. The clips contain strong messages illustrating topics such as poverty alleviation, migration and water and sanitation. They are highly appealing to donors, politicians, and other lobbies. The OneMinutesJr brand has an excellent reputation for development work owing to its engaging content, and being evidence-based and result-oriented, according to German national committee management. The German national committee singles out a particularly relevant clip on Roma children, which they use in fundraising. In one minute, this type of story can move people to tears and move issues closer to solutions. People interviewed from the German national committee said this powerful tool could further build on its rich experience, should continue globally, and that staffing resources should reflect this intent to expand. The national committee management stressed its readiness to further contribute to the Initiative in order to help children advocate on their own issues and achieve change by stimulating civil society, governments and other decision-making institutions.

³² Scoping interviews

4.2 Efficiency

- **Key Efficiency Findings**

- High Staff Quality: Coordinator speaks Russian, reaches trainees in language close to them
- YPMN has no formal M&E process
- YPMN training/products are competitive
- Trainees' are not screened for particular advocacy talent (RKLA priority)
- Training lacks module on advocacy and its applications with authorities
- Local YPMN sustainability is lacking
- Interviewees criticize training selection as opaque

Overview: YPMN's efficiency warrants improvement in several areas. Monitoring and other institutional arrangements have proved inappropriate and inefficient. The Initiative has greatly served the equity agenda by including marginalized children in its training and significantly narrowing the gender gap in its selection of participants. However, funding has been identified as only one problem that has made it impossible for UNICEF to maintain valuable regional activities like the Crossroads TV show in South Caucasus. People interviewed pointed out the need to add more quality rather than quantity, to meet content goals for themes such as DRR, and to strengthen management organization and processes based on professional practices such as establishing objectives and implementing consistent monitoring and evaluation. Stakeholders identified insufficient CO support resulting in missing strategic partnerships with expert NGOs as a key reason for the lack of local YPMN sustainability. The evaluator agrees with the views of CEE/CIS RO staff that increasing the efficiency of the Initiative means transforming YPMN into a full-fledged programme with its own objectives, budget and management responsibility.

In contrast to regular UNICEF programmes and projects, the YPMN Initiative has no stated objectives but is governed instead by RO CEE/CIS Work Plan targets. Conceived of as a simple, user-friendly youth information exchange, YPMN provoked early internal criticism for favouring quantity over quality. Although qualitative elements have been added, especially under RKLA, RO staff view results-based reporting as unsatisfactory. (Informants from CEE/CIS RO and most of the field offices visited said that result-based planning and programming, monitoring and evaluating had been tackled under the RKLA objectives but results were only now coming on stream.) Overall budget documentation made available to the evaluator is sketchy at best. A lack of funding has resulted in the closing of some regional activities.

Efficiency lessons have yet to be learned from the YPMN Youth Reporting activity. One of the reasons for this component being in jeopardy has been the absence of an effective M&E mechanism that would have ensured proper oversight from the outset (see below). Critics of the concept argue that if UNICEF views Youth Reporting as an advocacy tool it should be treated as such rather than as independent, objective journalism.

The cost of the Youth Reporting component (included in Table xx below) makes it less competitive than YPMN elements such as the OneMinutesJr videos, whose cost compares favourably to production offered by the market. Nonetheless, even the cost of Youth Reporting output has been calculated as beating market rates. COs should be aware of this beneficial factor when considering integrating YPMN output into their strategies.

1- Did the initiative use resources (funds, expertise, time) in the most economical manner to achieve the results?

- Proportion of overhead cost compared to programme delivery

Table 4: Breakdown of project budget for 01/2013 – 12/2014, including German national committee and CEE/CIS Regional Office

ITEM	TOTAL COST (in USD)	Cost for five workshops per year - in USD)	% of annual costs
PERSONNEL COSTS			
YPMN Coordination	158,940.40		
SUB-TOTAL PERSONNEL COST	158,940.40	79.47	42
OFFICE EXPENSES (HARDWARE)			
Video equipment	1,324.50		
Digital still camera	264.90		
Tripods	198.68		
Computer laptop	1,986.75		
External harddrives	397.35		
SUB-TOTAL OFFICE EXPENSES (HARDWARE)	4,172.18	2.09	1
OFFICE COSTS (recurring costs)			
Office rent*	0.00		
Communications	1,589.40		
Stationary (Paper, etc.)	635.76		
Other office supplies (printer cartridges, etc)	635.76		
DVDs, CD-roms, mini-DVs	635.76		
Postage/stamps	317.88		
Repairs and maintenance	662.25		
SUB-TOTAL OFFICE COSTS	4,476.82	2.238	1
TRAVEL COSTS COORDINATOR			
Air tickets	15,894.04		
Terminal expenses	2,670.20		
Daily Subsistence Allowance (average)	31,788.08		
SUB-TOTAL TRAVEL COSTS	50,352.32	25.176	1
CONFERENCES / WORKSHOPS			
OneMinutesJr workshops in CEE/CIS	105,960.26		
OneMinutesJr workshops in Germany	19,867.55		
SUB-TOTAL CONFERENCES / SEMINARS	125,827.81	62.913	33
TOTAL PROJECT COST (without recovery cost)	343,769.54		
Recovery Cost (7%)	24,063.86755		
TOTAL PROJECT COST	367,833.404	188.42	
Coordinator 42% Office expenses 1%; Office Cost (Recurring) 1 %; Travel for Coordinator 13%; OneMinutesJr workshops 33%			

In the table above, the third column lists the costs for five workshops per year.³³ Although overheads are minimal, the budget does not support a sustainable YPMN effort because almost all expenditures are allocated to the OneMinutesJr section. This allocation leaves little room for expansion elsewhere (e.g. information exchange and Youth Reporting in the region and in each country). Since some two thirds of the total cost is allocated to the Coordinator's role in capacity building, additional funds would have to be made available for local follow-up and other programming.

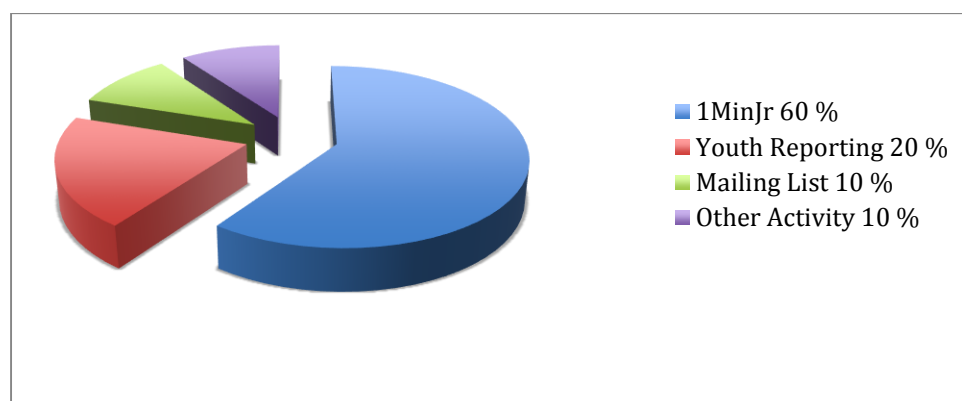
³³ YPMN Europe & Central Asia: Youth participation and new media in the CEE/CIS region; Draft Project budget 01/2013 – 12/2014, including Nat Com/RO CEE/CIS break-down

Other efficiency examples³⁴ include:

Table 5: Cost Comparison of YPMN Activities

Activities	Cost per YPMN output (USD)	Comparison Cost of Similar Output outside YPMN (USD)	
OneMinutesJr video	645	5,000	1-min PSA produced by private sector
Youth Reporting video	1,839	3,000	Producing 3-min interview + 1-day workshop
Mail List posts	1,226	4,000	30 days of social media management
Participants			
OneMinutesJr	648	1,000	Cost of training one child in a 5-day video workshop by private sector
Youth Reporting	2,940	3,000	Cost per person for media training, including use of social media
Mail list subscribers	1.6	5.3	Cost of 30-day social media management/subscriber
OneMinutesJr Workshop (per 5 days)	7,400	10,000	Cost of USAID-funded workshop

Figure 3: Distribution of YPMN Activities



- Reach

While the evaluator did not see any systematic records of YPMN reach in mainstream media, online dissemination is well documented (see 1.7, YPMN Output and Annex), with almost 5,000 news items posted, attracting some 3,300 Facebook likes and triggering over 110,000 page views since the start of the Initiative.

- Key staff speaks Russian

³⁴ Calculation (based on two-year budget and estimated YPMN work distribution) in Annex

The YPMN Coordinator speaks German, Russian and English and has, therefore, access to the majority of his trainees. This effective communication is an invaluable YPMN asset.

- Timely availability of staff, funds

There has been neither enough funding nor sufficient support from local UNICEF staff or NGOs to create local YPMN sustainability. In Georgia, the evaluator was told that although their film contributions won prizes, OneMinutesJr/YPMN never had the funds to help develop proper youth studios, partly because youth media support was not a focus there. The Kids' Crossroad show created with the support of Internews for the three South Caucasian countries was carried by the Imedi TV channel and later by PBS, but ended for lack of funding.

2- To what extent do different groups (including gender, and marginalized groups) benefit from the YPMN initiative?

Successful efforts were made to increase training participation by the most vulnerable with significant results for marginalized children and participants with disabilities. Table 6 below lists YPMN workshop participants for 2012-2014. YPMN has contributed to narrowing the gender gap in its selection of participants, demonstrated by the almost 50/50 ratio of boys and girls in the 30 video workshops between 2012 and 2014. The key reason why the ratio slightly favours boys (56 percent) is because of several boys-only workshops under the Juvenile Justice series and just one girls-only workshop. The high number of marginalized children at the workshops (69 percent) is in line with UNICEF's equity approach. According to the Coordinator, YPMN is working to further increase the participation of children with disabilities. The evaluator witnessed a workshop in Armenia where almost half of participants were children with disabilities. In Moldova, he met 20 participants with disabilities who attended YPMN training.

Table 6: Gender distribution and most vulnerable workshop participants 2012-2014

#	Country	City	Participants	Boys	Girls	Children with Disabilities	Other Marginalized	Year
1	Azerbaijan	Baku	12	8	4	1	12	2012
2	Montenegro	Kolasin	20	8	12	2	12	2012
3	Armenia	Yerevan	16	13	3	2	12	2012
4	Kyrgyzstan	Bishkek	20	20	0	0	20	2012
5	Romania	Bucharest	12	5	7	0	10	2012
6	Tajikistan	Dushanbe	12	12	0	0	12	2012
7	Kazakhstan	Ust-Kamenogorsk	16	8	8	0	4	2012
8	Moldova	Calarasi	15	6	9	15	15	2012
9	Ukraine	Odessa	12	8	4	0	12	2012
10	Armenia	Gyumri	15	8	7	2	5	2013
11	Ukraine	Melitopol	15	0	15	0	15	2013
12	Ukraine	Kharkiv	15	15	0	0	15	2013
13	Georgia	Tbilisi	19	6	13	0	0	2013
14	Georgia	Tbilisi	16	8	8	0	0	2013

15	Montenegro	Cetinje	20	7	13	2	14	2013
16	Montenegro	Kotor	20	5	15	2	2	2013
17	Kosovo under UNSCR 1244	Pristina	13	5	8	0	3	2013
18	Kyrgyzstan	Batken	20	11	9	0	21	2013
19	Kyrgyzstan	Bishkek	20	12	8	0	0	2014
20	Kyrgyzstan	Karakol	20	6	14	2	12	2014
21	Germany	Recklinghausen	7	6	1	2	7	2014
22	Turkey	Kahramanmaraş	15	9	6	0	15	2014
23	Moldova	Balti	13	9	4	0	13	2014
24	Ukraine	Lviv	15	10	5	0	12	2014
25	Uzbekistan	Tashkent	14	6	8	0	14	2014
26	Germany	Herne	10	1	9	2	10	2014
27	Armenia	Dilijan	22	12	10	11	11	2014
28	Ukraine	Kovel	24	24	0	0	24	2014
29	Ukraine	Lviv	10	8	2	7	7	2014
30	Ukraine	Odessa	18	9	9	0	18	2014
Total			476	265	211	50	327	
%				55.67	44.33	10.50	68.70	

Source: YPMN Coordinator

There has been significant change in the selection of topics and locations for the OneMinutesJr workshops over the years. While the initiative has included the most vulnerable since its inception, in recent years it was able to respond under RKLA to increasing requests from COs to reach out to remote areas, to the economically disadvantaged, and to children who do not normally have this kind of opportunity. Workshops were organized in villages with limited power supply, in penitentiaries and in homes for children with disabilities. According to YPMN management, these efforts were challenging and rewarding, but the possibilities for networking are limited and it is sometimes impossible to keep in touch with participants. It is extremely difficult to reach participants of a workshop in a youth penitentiary in Ukraine or those who attended a DRR workshop in Batken, Kyrgyzstan, which are places without access to email or social media.

So while the YPMN could serve the equity agenda through workshops, there was a risk that it might not be able to fully live up to its own expectations of connecting young media makers in these cases. Extra efforts had to be made by the YPMN and UNICEF or other donors to ensure equity, sustainability and continuous networking. According to YPMN management, “when you reach out to the hard to reach, you have to recognize the challenges of keeping the two-way communication traffic in place in a sustainable manner.”

Communication managers in the YPMN sample countries accord gender issues a significant role, as shown in the survey.³⁵ However, gender integration is focused more on participation of girls than on the choice of topics. In some workshops, girls were in the clear

majority. According to YMC in Moldova, local NGOs that replicated OneMinutesJr workshops counted a growing number of girls as well, and the same was true for Youth Reporting participants. The evaluator recorded no particular information about gender issues in the rollout of YPMN activities.

3- To what extent has monitoring and other institutional arrangements been appropriate and efficient?

The inception report cautioned that the evaluation would face challenges owing to the absence of formal goal setting and performance appraisal mechanisms for the YPMN. Field visits did not help narrow the information gap since there was an almost complete lack of professional YPMN documentation in the country offices.

YPMN financial documents that were received from CEE/CIS RO and the CO in Bucharest are presented in the Tables 7 and 8 below.

Table 7: Expenditure for YPMN Romania, 2012-2014

No	Activity	Details	Costs covered by RO in USD	Costs covered by CO in USD
1	OneMinutesJr 2012	Catering	1,702.00	
		Transport	654.00	
		Translator		400
2	Youth reporting	Istanbul conference 2013		
		NEETs conference March 2014		220
		Total	2,356.00	620
TOTAL			2,976.00	

Table 8: Regional Expenditure for YPMN, 2005-2014

	Dates	Months	Grant	Budget (US \$)	Expenditures
2005	April - December	8	Annual record deleted	31,405	Annual record deleted
2006	July - December	6	SI/2006/005-1	28,150	Annual record deleted
2007	May - December	8	SI/2006/005-1	26,000	Annual record deleted 220,846.70
2008	Jan- December	12	SI/2008/0037	50,000	47,728.73
2009	Jan- December	12	SI/2008/0037	150,000	145,275.38
2010	Jan- December	12	SI/2008/0037	100,000	97,779.84
2011	Jan- December	12	SI/2010/0073-00	75,000	66,342.43
2012	Jan- December	12	SI/2010/0073-00	100,000	97,779.84
2013	Jan- December	12	SC/2012/00399	120,000	55,149.00
2013	Jan- December	12	SI/2010/0073-00		74,264.00
2014	Jan-December	12	SI/2010/0073-00	100,000	
TOTAL MONTHS		118		780,555	584,319.22

* The RO has a record of 2006-2008 expenditure 220,846.70

YPMN reporting requirements do not go much beyond annual and bi-annual donor reports. A Work Plan and Budget review³⁶ shows the development of YPMN goals and expected outcomes over the years and the addition of elements such as the 10 RCLA result

³⁶ Evaluator's review in Annex

areas. Some outcome statements remain vague:

- “maximize young people’s video blogs through website”;
- “discuss further cooperation and other ideas for youth participation”; and
- “support further Digital Citizenship and Online Safety work in Montenegro and Armenia”.

The numbers of planned workshops and targeted trainees were listed, but the evaluator did not find conclusive evidence confirming implementation of these targets. While former CEE/CIS managers have criticized the Initiative’s quantitative bias,³⁷ donor reports record figures only vaguely, noting that around 200 young people benefited from the Initiative directly through OneMinutesJr workshops and an additional 60 young people directly benefited from other project-related training (e.g. Berlin conference, Istanbul events). The 2013-2014 donor report stated “UNICEF national committees and COs had made use of the OneMinutesJr videos in 2013-2014 in their advocacy and media outreach efforts, especially in connection with campaigns and launches.”

Representatives of the UNICEF CEE/CIS RO and field offices told the evaluator that along with result-based management under the new RKLA, professional training was required to maximize output and actual analysis of output, i.e. the quality of OneMinutesJr videos, Youth reporting and online information services. Capturing results from workshops in blogs was insufficient and could only be explained by a lack of YPMN human resources.

4- How has the programme changed over its life span (e.g. since the BBC evaluation)? To what extent were these changes driven by lessons learned?

One of the significant changes in the YPMN Initiative concerns its most important activity. With the implementation of the RKLA gathering steam, the production experience gained through OneMinutesJr videos is leading to capacity building of youth to exercise their own voice on issues of relevance to them. In countries like Romania, Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, they are using videos as tools for social change and advocacy. However, several stakeholders have encouraged YPMN management to allow even more room for teaching advocacy and follow-up so that workshop participants are better equipped to apply advocacy skills in their own environments.

In another success story, YPMN has managed to diversify output delivery by changing the face of its **online communication** without neglecting traditional delivery. While the 2005 BBC evaluation had lamented YPMN’s “too great a reliance” on the Internet (leading to frustration because of lack of Internet access in some countries, coupled with poor command of English and information favouring the relatively privileged), Internet penetration and access have since significantly improved and facilitated YPMN online expansion.

While email lists are one way of sending messages, the addition of Twitter and Facebook has stimulated demand. The data collected from the YPMN Facebook page shows that the number of follower, likes and shares are increasing. Information output via the Yahoo user group, however, has consistently shrunk with weeks going by without messages posted.³⁸

Although YPMN management suggests there is still much untapped potential, the move toward social media has been made. But the current management structure stifles further innovation and only the efficient use of tools such as posting via multiple email addresses and www.hootsuite.com makes it possible for the YPMN coordinator to get things done

³⁷ Scoping interviews

³⁸ Graphs see Annex

despite the limited time, funding, and staff. Two senior UNICEF managers agreed on the competency of the current YPMN Coordinator. While one said he had kept YPMN together over the years, the other remarked that it was a case of great one-person management but that UNICEF definitely needed a broader approach.³⁹

However, one UNICEF manager criticized the quality of YPMN output saying the DRR unit had spent some US\$60,000 on video workshops and that the output quality was only now improving. Initially, DRR had only been able to find some 50 percent of the OneMinutesJr videos produced for his unit of adequate quality; the result was now over 70 percent. DRR had been using roughly one third of the clips owing to uneven quality. “Sometimes the subject matter is not properly covered, or a video tackles pollution, not a disaster in the DRR sense. In other instances there are technical problems like disturbing background noise.” In the view of this manager, videos were “expensive”.

Stakeholders say the current management structure demands that YPMN, UNICEF COs and the RO work hand-in-hand on social media, the place where more active young people can be reached and turned into advocates. Input and output are not the problem, but reaching the right people and working with them sustainably on advocacy and outreach are a challenge, according to the Coordinator. In many countries, this outreach is done via local languages, which poses limitations for the YPMN. The YPMN could supply the network with input, but follow up is needed by young people, the COs and other stakeholders to address a central risk for the YPMN – its remoteness when not supported on the ground.

While UNICEF/YPMN have implemented some of the 2005 BBC evaluation recommendations, key suggestions on **external and internal consolidation** of the Initiative have yet to be addressed. With few exceptions, YPMN has not developed cohesive partnerships between youth organisations with an interest in media activities and UNICEF, where UNICEF would play the role of facilitator with an international brand that ensures a strong and credible network profile.

The proposed shift of focus to **local sustainability** is far from accomplished. It would require consolidating links with local organisations and spreading a network beyond traditional youth centres and clubs to journalism faculties at universities and adult media centres. Nonetheless, one such step has been taken in the case of Moldova’s Youth Media Center.

5- Is the division of responsibilities between YPMN Coordinator and UNICEF RO/COs clear and appropriate?

The division of responsibilities between the YPMN Coordinator and UNICEF RO/countries is clear, but not necessarily appropriate. Once the Coordinator has devised a multi-year vision for the programme with subsequent objectives, reporting lines need to reflect YPMN management’s incorporation in CEE/CIS-wide budget, planning and programme delivery issues. However, this incorporation can only be accomplished if the Coordinator has more resources – whether in the form of an assistant or direct access to local UNICEF, or institutionalized NGO assistance, or both. The status quo has proved inefficient because the Coordinator has little influence over local UNICEF/NGO support, resulting in delivery gaps.⁴⁰

³⁹ Scoping interviews

⁴⁰ Graph in Annex

4.3 Effectiveness

Key Effectiveness Findings

- YPMN achievements validate theory of change
- **OneMinutesJr** contribute to changing environments in CEE/CIS by causing authorities to open up and offer municipal reform; improves receptiveness from officialdom
- YPMN training empowers adolescents to become change agents
- YPMN effect on country strategies and inclusion in UNICEF operations ranges from almost total absence (Croatia) to more (Moldova) or less (Kyrgyzstan)
- **Youth reporting** training gives advocacy ideas to participants and supports media as a democratizing force, but doubts exist about the exercise
- Teaching **Child Rights and Media** creates ethical balance to sensational treatment by media of issues relating to children

Overview: The effectiveness of YPMN validates key building blocks in the underlying theory of change. However, the concept only works if the COs cooperate closely with the YPMN, especially after the input/output step (e.g. workshops and videos that are the basis of the TOC). While there is success in one-off trainings and training-of-trainer sessions, follow-up work needs to be done by the COs or local NGOs entrusted with this task.

The effectiveness of Youth Reporting was illustrated, but just as its relevance has been questioned, its effectiveness is also criticized. The Child Rights and Media component of YPMN also proved effective, notably at Bucharest University. The evaluator's CO survey reveals that content, choice of topics and the personalities of trainers are key reasons for YPMN accomplishments.⁴¹ The survey results agree with the evaluator's finding that funding levels stifle progress and sustainability.

1- To what extent was the underlying theory of change valid? To what extent did the expected results chain occur as planned?

There is some evidence that YPMN outputs led to outcomes of increased knowledge and skills of youth participants, and in turn to altered outlooks among these young people. An example is YPMN support provided in 2006 to establishing the Animation and TV Graphic Design Studio for Schoolchildren in Yerevan. The studio made a direct contribution to production of the Kids' Crossroads TV show. Internews conducted special training courses in computer graphics and design, and non-linear editing for ten schoolchildren (aged 13-17) so they could take part in producing the broadcast. By the end of the course, the young people from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia were familiar with all stages of short video production: idea generation, concept design, creating storyboards, participating in filming, editing, post-production, and applying visual effects. They produced short animated cartoons, promos and public service announcements for Kids Crossroads, addressing environmental, human rights and peacebuilding issues. These two years were decisive for some of these participants. Many continued their education in graphic design and animation. The most important achievement was their changed world outlook: they started to see beyond the superficial.

In his film "Wood tile floor" from the Dilijan workshop (<http://youtu.be/HfwpTSWjRF4>), Vachagan (15), a boy with a walking disability, relates how loose wooden tiles in his classroom are a daily nuisance and a real danger to his health. Without the workshop, he would not have brought it up. Now the problem is documented in form of a OneMinutesJr video that UNICEF staff ensure is picked up by local broadcast, print and online media.

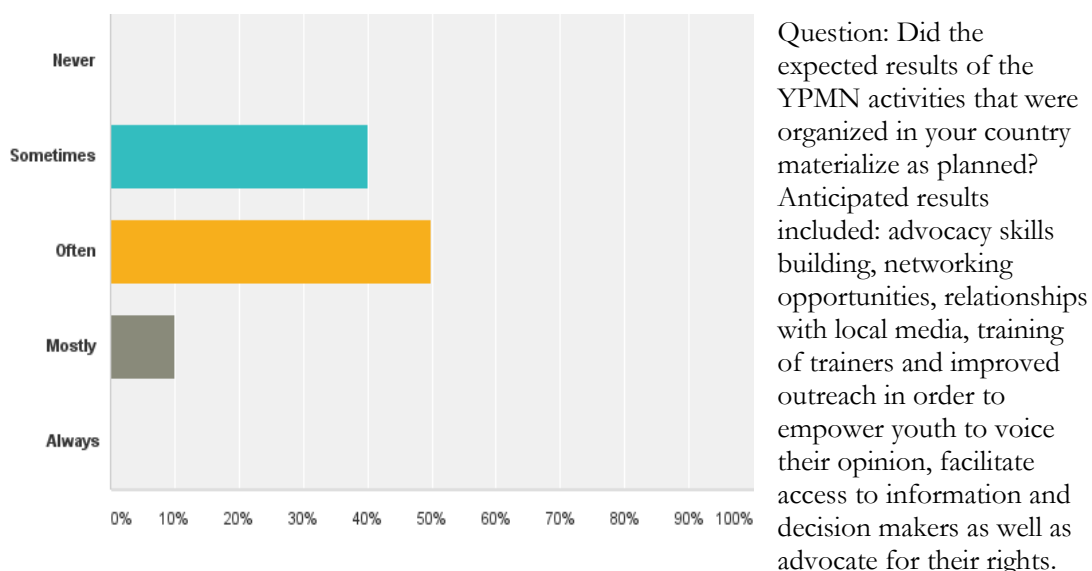
⁴¹ See Annex

In a OneMinutesJr workshop in Armenia, the CO brought business people and decision-makers from the local community together with the trainees in cooperation with local NGOs. This meeting put youth at the same table with people who can change their lives. It took them from their homes and schools and empowered them to be advocates for their own rights. When they can find a way to move from awareness of a problem to its solution (such as making school floors safe for everyone to walk on), then the top of the TOC pyramid has been reached.

YPMN was considered to have influenced the context for reform in CEE/CIS. People interviewed said OneMinutesJr had contributed to changing environments in the CEE/CIS countries since public viewing of videos led authorities to be more open and engage in change such as municipal reform.

The survey results below present data that suggests that in more than half of cases, the expected YPMN results materialize as planned.⁴²

Figure 4: Survey on YPMN Results



2- To what degree has the YPMN Initiative contributed to remove bottlenecks hampering the participation, expression, voice, access to information, services and opportunities for active engagement and advocacy by adolescent boys and girls and youth, particularly the most vulnerable?

In the absence of detailed quantitative documentation, qualitative evidence may serve to illustrate another success story. From 2011-2013, UNICEF supported Project Harmony International in promoting alternative justice models through Armenian Community Justice Centers (CJC), raising community awareness about juvenile justice issues. A five-day training session with 16 teenagers was organized in April 2012 in Yerevan as part of the OneMinutesJr initiative. Their aim was to create movies about their experiences of conflict with the law. A UNICEF CO staff member said video messages on legislative reform, support for children in prison, torture, and ill-treatment empowered children and contributed to their resilience. Advocacy was organized around the videos at conferences and opened the

⁴² Details in Annex

eyes of policy makers.⁴³ This dialogue removed obstacles to active engagement and put the issue of juvenile justice on the public agenda.

On the basis of the YPMN training, the ten CJs developed media projects, including blogs by formerly unstable children. The media work helped cement the CJC concept in the law apparatus and society, and police officers were trained to assist in reintegrating of the former perpetrators of (minor) crimes. This action followed a shocking survey of law violations against children in police custody. Ensuing conversations around the videos and presentations led to a law reform drive in Parliament.

A focus group discussion among 20 children with disabilities in Romania revealed a desire to learn more from UNICEF **about advocacy** and attract media attention to their needs. In the opinion of Romanian participants in the Turkey Youth Reporting workshop, the video activities and resulting films are highly relevant for advocacy but **more emphasis should be put in the training on advocacy** objectives and not just on awareness raising.

In Banja Luka, the mother of a child with Down Syndrome established a Down Syndrome coordination group within an NGO Children's Education Center. She said her daughter's participation in the YPMN OneMinutesJr workshop opened new horizons to her. The NGO collected funds to acquire cameras for children with disabilities so they can continue their film work.

The Faculty of Journalism at Bucharest University commended YPMN for supporting its mandatory **Child Rights and Media course** for master students. According to a faculty member, the university is attempting to restore an ethical balance by teaching this subject to the future thought leaders in the media industry. The idea is to counter pressure on news teams in cash-strapped media outlets to increase their audience by perpetuating stereotypes in sensationalized stories about children. UNICEF-supported journalism education in Romania and 10 other countries in the region aims to encourage journalism students to always interview children on matters concerning them instead of just adults. Would-be journalists are trained to treat children with respect so their needs and views are properly represented in news coverage.

In **Croatia**, UNICEF management told the evaluator there was no direct link between YPMN and objectives in their country strategy. According to the informant, Croatia had "more than 50 years of tradition in producing children's media by children." In Croatia, state funding supported production by children's film-making groups of high quality films, leaving little need for UNICEF's involvement apart from promoting what was already produced. UNICEF did this through a Children's Rights Festival. In a recent edition of the Festival, Croatia included OneMinutesJr videos in cooperation with UNICEF and NGOs in BiH.

3- What have been the chief factors responsible for the achievement or failure of the YPMN Initiative objectives?

In the absence of clear YPMN objectives, this question is difficult to answer. However, the evaluator's CO survey⁴⁴ reveals that almost three quarter of respondents regard individuals such as trainers to be the key reason for YPMN accomplishments. But 90 percent of respondents consider YPMN's success to be a factor of its content and choice of topics. Seventy percent recognize the selection of participants as a strong factor.

⁴³ Scoping interviews

⁴⁴ See Annex

The survey results agree with the evaluator's finding that funding levels stifle progress and sustainability. While 40 percent of respondents give funding as one of six reasons for YPMN achievements, 70 percent identify funding as a chief factor responsible for shortcomings or weaknesses in achieving YPMN objectives. The Coordinator's draft YPMN project budget for 2013-2014 allocates two thirds of total costs to his salary and to travel for OneMinutesJr, leaving little for expenditure elsewhere (see also section on Efficiency).

Opinions on the theory of change were largely negative. Half of respondents think the TOC negatively influences the Initiative, and only ten percent believe the concept contributes to its accomplishments. During field visits, the evaluator gained the impression that few had really familiarized themselves with the TOC, which raises questions about their effective use of the TOC to contribute to fulfilling core roles and the RKLA through the YPMN.

Few respondents knew about the Youthful Mailing List or Youth Reporting. Students and their teacher at the Romanian Ferdinand School did not remember any references in their OneMinutesJr training to YPMN's other activities, including the mailing list and Youth Reporting. The evaluator noted this lack of internal marketing on other occasions.

On the issue of candidate selection for YPMN activities, students said it should be more transparent, managed less by teachers and should focus more on screening promising talent if advocacy objectives are to be achieved. The YMC NGO in Moldova criticized YPMN training as outdated in terms of content and equipment (e.g. there are no smartphones for shooting). Others suggested there should be modules for advocacy and social marketing for NGOs (within Youth Reporting). In addition, apart from the training blogs, there do not appear to be YPMN training reports that formally record the event and make recommendations on talent and further tutoring. The training agenda⁴⁵ should contain specific references to the 10 RKLA result areas and learning targets.

One Youth Reporting participant appreciated the combination of two objectives in training: working directly with prominent officials and learning how to manage the public agenda of NGOs. A former member of parliament who took part in Youth Reporting training said it supported media as a force for building democracy.

Media coverage of YPMN: Owing to a lack of M&E, evidence of media coverage of YPMN is sketchy at best. However, there is irregular coverage of OneMinutesJr workshops in the mainstream media. But a strategy of linking training output and advocacy is lacking in the field. Field trip reports do mention several ground-breaking instances where YPMN films triggered public debate on topics such as inclusion, sanitation and juvenile justice. Youth Reporting, blogging and YPMN's online activity keeps the interested public informed about the Initiative's activities and outcomes, especially the daily blogs during OneMinutesJr workshops. Unfortunately, the blogs receive few comments. YPMN management believe that the online presence and archive function are more in demand. For instance, the OneMinutesJr videos produced in Dilijan in September 2014 counted 1,782 views by mid-November 2014, with 22 minutes viewing time.

Selected YPMN Statistics

- Total impressions of online news and social networks: see annexed graphs
- YPMN delivery platforms: The YPMN email news service, the "youthful media list", together with its global offspring, the Voices of Youth (VOY) and a list from MAGIC (Media Activities and Good Ideas by, with and for Children) grew from 20 people in 2002 to over 340 people in about 40 countries by late 2003 and to more than 2000 users or contributors as of July 2014 (donor report).

⁴⁵ Generic_OneMinutesJr_workshop_agenda.pdf

<http://ypmn.blogspot.com/> with archive features and its own RSS feed for news aggregation.

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/youthful-media/info>

<https://www.facebook.com/unicef.ypmn>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/UNICEFOneMinutesjr>

<http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/kids.html> *et al*

- Replication of YPMN output: NGOs FKG, Genesis, Association for Cultural and Media Decontamination (Bosnia and Herzegovina BiH), Signis, FONPC, Aliat (Romania), YMC (Moldova), Pokolenie Insan, League of Child Rights Protection, Association of Health Promotion (Kyrgyzstan), ADC Studio, Pioneer Film, Movement of Accessible Environment Forever (Georgia); Media Initiatives Center (MIC), formerly Internews Media Support, Manana Center, Bridge of Hope, TUMO, PH International (Armenia)
- Training sessions organized: # not available
- All training participants: # not available
- Trainers involved in international workshops: Coordinator plus one or two national/regional/international co-trainers
- Videos produced since start of YPMN: over 3500 (OneMinutesJunior website)
- Promotional events organized: # not available
- Films screened at various events (in region, internationally): # not available
- Attendees at festivals: # not available

The YPMN has undoubtedly been most effective⁴⁶ when given strategic and substantive support from the RO and COs. The series of OneMinutesJr workshops on juvenile justice under the RO, with support from the EC, and the series on disaster risk reduction are examples of successful programmatic support. Where the input is higher, the output is bigger and more targeted, leading to stronger outcomes, larger impact and greater chances for sustainable results. “When we work with 100 young people in penitentiaries in the region, we directly influence 100 lives and can choose from 100 videos on Juvenile justice, making sure that we have quality outcomes with the potential to have a higher impact rather than a lower number of outputs. We can also compare country programmes internally, turning the YPMN into an evaluation tool for UNICEF programmes as a side effect.”

4- To what extent could elements of the YPMN Initiative support the achievement of RKLA results in future, particularly for the most vulnerable?

The evaluator agrees with people interviewed who said UNICEF should continue developing the approach of using OneMinutesJr in support of the RKLA by following up with organizations such as media clubs (using YPMN alumni networks), possibly located in UNICEF youth centers. This would be a win-win solution. UNICEF could benefit from youth interest in technology, which would bring them to the centers. Children could build their media skills, become more involved in advocacy, and help UNICEF support changes in the system that could reduce equity gaps and child rights violations. A range of topics such as health and juvenile justice, child poverty, DRR and the environment, children with disabilities, street children and poverty, violence against children, families and fostering, violence in schools, water and sanitation, refugees and migration, and HIV/AIDS – to name a few – fit the RKLA 10-point agenda and merit follow up and expansion.

The evaluation found that YPMN is particularly relevant to RKLA to the extent it contributed to a regional response to UNICEF’s global refocus on equity, complementing the C4SC approach to programming. This contribution is exemplified by Youth Reporting conducted at local (Chisinau), regional (Sarajevo), and international (Istanbul) advocacy events on

⁴⁶ YPMN Coordinator to evaluator

various action-plan priorities and on cross-cutting issues such as the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The contribution is also evident in the OneMinutesJr-supported Cross Road show in the southern Caucasus and in countless news items on the Youthful Mailing List.

In a similar vein, NGOs such as YMC in Moldova, the Foundation for Creative Development (FKR) and Genesis in BiH have proved to be valuable YPMN partners owing to their monitoring of youth developments and employing OneMinutesJr training to help the most vulnerable advocate for themselves. These examples constitute valuable elements of the YPMN Initiative that could support the achievement of RKLA results in future, particularly for the most vulnerable.

The evaluator believes UNICEF should be encouraged to continue along the lines of its Bishkek operation, which had the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) in the United States broadcast 20 videos from workshops in 2014 on violence against children and on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). A UNICEF staff member deplored the lack of follow-up to the workshops and advocated for more engagement of UNICEF staff in Bishkek to promote YPMN work and motivate NGOs to more fully exploit the videos.

Two other examples of model YPMN intervention that merit further development are juvenile justice videos produced in Kyrgyzstan and Armenia. In Bishkek, they were filmed with the help of the NGO Pokolenie Insan and were used by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and police, particularly as part of crime prevention. The deputy prosecutor in Tokmok would like to use the videos for training at the police academy. According to OSCE, juvenile crime is on the retreat locally, and measures such as the videos may have contributed to this trend by helping to forge a closer relationship between law enforcement and youth. Also in Armenia, the partnership with law enforcement has advanced from a successful pilot to a project awaiting longer-term government support. Sources there report statistics indicating a drop in the number of juvenile delinquents in places where OneMinutesJr videos were shown.

A view expressed in a focus group discussion in Moldova is that UNICEF must make better use of the powerful visual messages in YPMN videos in its overall **strategy** on child rights promotion. Videos are seen to be treated as stand-alone products rather than augmenting UNICEF strategy. In this view, more structure and coordination in applying YPMN work is essential to making UNICEF's voice even stronger. The OneMinutesJr videos must be better used to support the theory of change. In Romania, the SIGNIS NGO voiced frustration at UNICEF's failure to use the hundreds of OneMinutesJr videos they shot.

5- To what extent did gender issues play a role in the roll-out of the initiative (selection of adolescent boys and girls, choice of topics, facilitation of the workshops, etc.)?

This issue is addressed in section 4.2.2- *To what extent do different groups (including gender, and marginalized groups) benefit from the YPMN initiative?*

6- How have UNICEF country offices capitalized, if at all, on YPMN activities to enhance the effectiveness of their other work?

Assistance from national UNICEF offices to YPMN activities is crucial to its contribution to the theory of change. While YPMN training and resulting products such as OneMinutesJr videos are the basis of the TOC pyramid, a recent OneMinutesJr screening in Dilijan (Armenia) where the evaluator attended a workshop hinted at a next step. Visitors from the local community, including business people and decision-makers, were impressed by the training results. But YPMN's success in empowering young people, raising awareness about

child rights among decision makers and the general public, and contributing to positive change for the children will happen only if the COs cooperate closely with the YPMN after the input/output stage to carry efforts to the next level in the TOC pyramid.⁴⁷

According to YPMN management, this cooperative approach has succeeded in achieving the types of change represented by the top levels of the TOC pyramid. Examples where YPMN's efforts have made tangible contributions can be seen in OneMinutesJr videos about wash basins in Kyrgyzstan, and in three communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina – shelter and jobs provided in Vrnograc, the stray dog hazard in Derventa, and school surveillance in Glamocani.

The 2005 BBC evaluation listed Georgia as one of YPMN's leading standard-bearers, largely due to the proactive approach adopted by the local UNICEF office. The UNICEF team in Tbilisi developed strong links with local Youth Palaces and Centres. But perhaps the success of YPMN in Georgia owed as much to the extraordinary drive and creative flair of the children themselves – one of whom took top prize at the 2003 OneMinutesJr awards. Ten years on, YPMN, thanks to its principal training activities, has strengthened UNICEF work in Georgia, according to UNICEF Georgia and local YPMN stakeholders. The Initiative contributed to laying a foundation for stimulating and shifting mindsets in civil society mindsets. This change can be traced to key events such as YPMN media skills and advocacy training in Tbilisi, international award ceremonies highlighting Georgian YPMN achievements and ground-breaking conferences. Although the Georgian UNICEF office pointed to efforts to balance gender participation they said this had not led to gender topics being especially evident in YPMN products. As noted earlier in the report, regional crosscutting efforts like the three-country (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan) Cross Road TV show have ceased existing for lack of funding.

Evidence is mixed about YPMN's effect on UNICEF country strategies, ranging from almost total absence in Croatia to strong inclusion in UNICEF operations in **Moldova** and limited inclusion in **Kyrgyzstan**. UNICEF in Chisinau said YPMN was firmly embedded in its youth media strategy and since 2012-2013 had been contributing to the RKLA priorities as well as UNICEF's core roles. However, the Kyrgyzstan CO pointed to YPMN's limited role in UNICEF Kyrgyzstan's programme work. (This individual did see a potential role for YPMN in complementing their youth strategy, including children with disabilities in peace building efforts.) A country office staff member noted that the Youthful Mailing List was particularly useful, but also remarked that YPMN had lost some of its attraction in the past ten years. Other people called on UNICEF to strengthen its outreach through more screenings of OneMinutesJr clips.

In **Romania**, the Signis NGO proposed that UNICEF adopt a strategy to avoid placing videos in the category of "random activity," which UNICEF senior management sought to abandon since it fostered an image of an emergency organization that had nothing to do with the real UNICEF. Romania's National Authority for Protection of Child Rights and Adoption proposed to integrate the OneMinutesJr videos in campaigns aimed at increasing youth participation and attracting youth to become stakeholders. It suggested a **partnership** between UNICEF's YPMN OneMinutesJr activity and high school student councils advocating for youth participation in decision-making.

Participants in Bucharest agreed that UNICEF Romania has considerable potential for more strategic use of YPMN activities and products supported by UNICEF country staff. The potential is seen in more efficient and effective training intake and exploiting the YPMN alumni database as the basis for a youth media network. Such a development would benefit

⁴⁷ TOC logic model in Chapter 2

implementation of the **RKLA** and **core roles** in Romania, particularly since UNICEF Romania has expressed interest in employing YPMN for its work with children and adolescents.

The **Armenia** UNICEF chief considered YPMN to have contributed to the RKLA and core roles, especially in areas of juvenile justice, disaster risk reduction, and inclusion of children with disabilities. Although YPMN videos had been used in campaigns and pilot training, there was no systematic approach to usage of the clips to support UNICEF strategy. There was scope for better deployment of footage in the outreach since the videos left a strong impression on viewers. Officers interviewed at the NGO Harmony also encouraged UNICEF to use more OneMinutesJr videos in its outreach. They pointed to the videos' contribution to a draft probation law that had been influenced by strong video messages and the presence of their creators during deliberations on the subject.

In the BiH media strategy for the upcoming programme cycle YPMN is not used as a stand-alone activity. Rather, all its elements are embedded across the programme as part of communication for development. Even at present, YPMN is integrated in its entire programme outreach with its videos featuring on all levels. YPMN video interventions were noted under the **RKLA** areas of health, social inclusion, and DRR. A DRR manager said the videos were "excellent tools" to get messages across to governments and other official bodies on how to involve children in a participatory way in disaster relief and prevention. Armenia, Georgia, and Kazakhstan were among successful examples where young people had the opportunity to express their views and ideas on DRR in videos.⁴⁸

The UNICEF Regional Office Youth media specialists in the CEE/CIS are trained as future trainers, e.g. OneMinutesJr facilitators in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Is this a model and is it applied elsewhere?

Applying UNICEF's core role **voice of children**, BiH began to pioneer the spread of video production for advocacy. A training of trainers drive in 2011 resulted in hundreds of films being made and disseminated. Instrumental in this work were UNICEF communication staff and two NGOs – GENESIS and FKR. Three advocacy examples document encouraging results:

- The entire Vrnograc village was so moved by a video on two homeless boys that the eldest was given a job and his younger brother provided with shelter.
- In Derventa, the deputy mayor promised a OneMinutesJr reporter on-camera to act against the hazard of stray dogs, and the promise was kept.
- Sixteen-year old Silvana Stojcic in Glamocani employed her advocacy skills developed during her first OneMinutesJr workshop in 2011 to get a surveillance system installed to help curb schoolyard violence.

GENESIS representatives said that in 2014 they devoted all their twelve OneMinutesJr workshops to social inclusion, thereby strengthening the social protection and inclusion system for children (SPIS) in BiH. In order to accelerate advocacy efforts, the NGO plans to consider tailoring the OneMinutesJr and other YPMN workshop intakes, spending more time to screen nominees for their advocacy talent.

The involvement of UNICEF BiH staff on the ground is exemplary and should be copied by colleagues across the region in order to implement the theory of change.

⁴⁸ idem

How can the decline in YPMN message delivery/exchange on Yahoo! be stopped and the YPMN appeal on other social platforms be improved? (Cross-country)

One of YPMN's key successes has been to diversify information delivery by changing the face of its **online communication**, without neglecting traditional delivery, through use of Twitter and Facebook. But the Yahoo user group is largely moribund (see Efficiency section for details).

Has Youth Reporting (youth advocates act as reporters in key national and international conferences on child rights) training connected with mainstream media, forging closer relationships? (Kyrgyzstan, Armenia)

In Yerevan, Youth Reporting participants appreciated being confronted with reality in terms of their working environment. They saw professional reporters covering the same event, and could compare their techniques, methods and style to their own work. But they were not impressed by the work ethics of their "grown-up" colleagues. They were disappointed that the training provided no opportunity to exchange views with these colleagues.

In Bishkek, the director of Kloop.kg (a leading Kyrgyz Internet portal for civil society), who ten years earlier had supported Youth Reporting as head of the local CNN-sponsored Child Media Center, said several of the 2004 YPMN workshop participants had assumed managerial positions in local media outlets. YPMN activities had turned out to be a first-class platform for professional development. However, other people interviewed in Romania and Moldova, among other places, cautioned that YPMN Youth Reporting invites coziness between reporters and sources and did not fit beneath the YPMN advocacy umbrella.

Branding

In its 12 years of existence YPMN has failed to become a UNICEF household name. Rather, its OneMinutesJr offspring has developed into a well-known brand appreciated across the board. In almost all countries visited, even senior management could hardly remember having heard of YPMN as a brand name. Debriefing participants agreed that internal and external marketing had to change. One step that could help would be to mention the OneMinutesJr brand in the UNICEF country reports. YPMN management said that due to its special status as a UNICEF initiative, the YPMN's main focus had always been on supporting the organization's goals. It was launched as a network supporting existing local initiatives, brands, and organizations. Therefore, the YPMN never became a "household name."

The evaluation could be an opportunity for shifting focus from YPMN to its former offspring, the OneMinutesJr. UNICEF could focus on the sustainability of OneMinutesJr and maintain the YPMN in some form as a supporting basis for cooperating with local youth media groups and NGOs to empower young people. A former senior RO manager told the evaluator that brand results required significant accompanying actions. These included monitoring and contributing to UNICEF's shifting communication model by switching from primarily informing to inspiring by telling compelling stories. It meant not merely disseminating information but communicating to advocate, drive change, and move people to act. It also required a shift from focusing on print to fully developing print, digital, online and broadcasting.

4.4 Impact

• Key Impact Findings

- YPMN empowered trainees to become civil society advocates and opinion leaders
- OneMinutesJr videos empowered children to tell their story
- The Initiative contributed to laying the foundation for changing mind-sets
- Official tells UNICEF to record YPMN success stories as evidence of development
- Stakeholders record initial contribution to emerging social norm changes
- Russian President and Moldova Prime Minister react to YPMN work

Overview: The evaluation has identified a number of remarkable YPMN success stories that demonstrate YPMN's contribution to strengthening self-efficacy, triggering public debate, and beginning to change social norms. It has happened by putting the issue of the most vulnerable on the public agenda, driving the inclusion process, and causing change through its OneMinutesJr videos and other training. Striking examples include installation of wash basins in schools after airing of clips, the provision of a horse carriage for a boy dependent on a walker, and the closure of a penitentiary for boys after screening of OneMinutesJr films.

In documenting YPMN contributions and emerging impact, the evaluator noted several YPMN training activities that inspired tangible **advocacy**. These include a Romanian participant who devises **youth and Roma strategies** to aligning her country's policy with EU rules, and a wheelchair-using Georgian representative of children with disabilities who uses her new media skills to **push negotiations** with authorities on improving bus transport in Tbilisi.

Some evidence exists that **opinion leaders** emerged from training under YPMN. While system change may not yet be part of YPMN impact in Georgia, evidence from stakeholders shows a contribution to **emerging social norm changes**.

With the help of YPMN, **networks** have been created and strengthened such as the Sarajevo-based Cross Radio's Duga show, which is dedicated to children with mental disabilities. In the South Caucasus YPMN has supported the Internews NGO in giving children a voice on the Kids' Crossroad TV show "Our Express" and on the TeenTV website in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. Evidence of some YPMN influence is seen in changes to the website of the Armenian Ministry of Education that reflect a change of attitude regarding youth in the DRR emergency process.

4.4.1 Participants

1- To what extent have the participants (boys and girls) working on media projects experienced growth in self-efficacy, strengthened their capacity to be active citizens or in their leadership skills within the community?

Although there are no precise numbers on OneMinutesJr participants who have become youth leaders, nor of civil society initiatives started by ex-trainees, the evaluator was briefed during field visits about numerous examples that illustrate the Initiative's considerable impact on self-efficacy, capacity building and leadership.

Self-efficacy: Seventeen-year old Sabahudin from Sarajevo came to a OneMinutesJr workshop and shared a fictional story about a young orphan boy who had terrible experiences with accidents and death in his family. Although fictional, the story had a true core. Sabahudin confided that his parents had favoured his sister and neglected him, something he had never shared with his family or friends. Through the openness of the

trainers and the approach of OneMinutesJr, which encourages individual perspectives, Sabahudin felt empowered to tell his own true story. He took home his film⁴⁹ and said "of course I am going to show it to my parents, too. That's where the change has to happen. This was only the first step."

One of the best-known OneMinutesJr videos is *Moscow Train*, produced by Tudor Culeanu in 2009 in Moldova. On the side of a Chisinau-Moscow train the protagonist scrawls in large chalk letters: "Mama, come back home!" The film addresses Moldova's 'parent drain,' which leaves thousands of children behind while their parents work abroad. It is an especially relevant YPMN intervention, addressing the needs and priorities of children, and giving them a voice. Five years after making the film, 19-year old Tudor told the evaluator in fluent English that he gained hope and strength from producing the video and speaking out about a child's right to a family. Tudor has grown from deprived boy into a young man with a clear vision of his future. Sadly, neither his mother nor his father returned home. The YPMN Coordinator, and Tudor's trainer, said that behaviour change might take a whole generation, "but as long as it's successful, the input from UNICEF and the YPMN is crucial."⁵⁰

A OneMinutesJr clip in Moldova depicts the daily plight of a schoolboy with disabilities who makes his way home negotiating a rough road with a walker. Broadcasting of the clip triggered a public debate on social inclusion.

Strengthened capacity to be active citizens/leadership skills: The evaluator saw evidence in the field⁵¹ that YPMN has equipped many young people with media skills and empowered its training participants to become active civil society advocates and opinion leaders. In the words of former trainees in Tbilisi, the Initiative has created the "first Georgian generation of human rights/child rights defenders." Former YPMN participants are now self-confident members of civil society and count among their ranks a women's rights lawyer, a legal counsel at the Ministry of Finance, a World Bank specialist, a PR agency associate, and senior journalists in private and public television.

Participants in a focus group discussion proudly explained that "YPMN laid the groundwork for our follow-up civil society work and empowered us to implement action. We successfully thwarted plans to convert the Youth Palace into a commercial enterprise. UNICEF sensitized us on critical societal issues and we knew there was someone covering our backs. We are grown-up members of society thanks to YPMN and what it stands for – equipping youth with the right tools to raise awareness and influence others to make a better Georgia. On the practical side, some of us managed to implement professional media standards in reporting about children by having their faces covered to prevent compromising their identity."

2- Have participants experienced increased access to various opportunities, or increased ability to negotiate issues with peers and adults?

Interviews and focus group discussions indicate that the Initiative was instrumental in contributing to laying the foundation for stimulating civil society and changing attitudes (described in section 4.3, Effectiveness). One wheelchair-using youth leader is using her newly acquired writing, video, and media skills in a campaign by her NGO to pressure the public transportation department to improve bus transport for people with disabilities in Tbilisi. Her awareness raising and advocacy aim to sensitize the public about a lack of

⁴⁹ <http://youtu.be/pVlyXjnP24E>

⁵⁰ http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/media_26879.html

⁵¹ Field reports in Annex

statistics on people with disabilities and press the municipality to overcome the two-year impasse in negotiations with her NGO and a coalition of partners.

Another encouraging YPMN activity was the 2013 YPMN Youth Reporting training in Turkey. It equipped a Romanian participant with new advocacy ideas that she uses in an NGO project to devise youth strategies for aligning Romanian public policy with EU rules. She addresses strategy with respect to Roma people, which she maintains must shift toward empowering and integrating Roma as a resource for society. Her outreach work has been made more effective through blogging and publishing videos on YouTube. Equipped with new skills, she began a project with the NGO Together for Community Development that involves support for Roma in three outlying communities. She also applies her new advocacy ideas in cooperation with the Roma Association against AIDS.

3- Have former participants embarked on active community or political work such as student councils?

Although the number of citizens **and opinion leaders** trained under YPMN has not been established, the evaluator found evidence of their existence in almost every country visited. The Deputy Speaker of Moldova's Parliament recommended that UNICEF record YPMN success stories as proof of development and counted among them many village councillors and other young leaders who she knew had participated in YPMN training.

4- To what extent have the participants (boys and girls) in UNICEF-sponsored regional advocacy events perceived that their voices were taken into account and influenced the outcomes of such events?

Six former participants in YPMN activities in Moldova said the OneMinutesJr videos they collaborated on were effective platforms for strong messages that can inspire social movements to pressure a government for change. YPMN products such as OneMinutesJr videos were used to advocate for the rights of the most vulnerable children and adolescents and ensure that their concerns were heard. The CO in Moldova said the six young people were inspired by YPMN to act as change agents and had developed into opinion leaders in the country.

At the Dorinta day care center for children with disabilities near Chisinau, 20 children and their parents agreed that the videos had contributed to a changed environment. Inclusion was better, and after they shared their videos some classmates were even proud of them. Videos helped improve understanding of children with disabilities, several of whom described in glowing terms how much they looked forward to going to school and being with their friends in class. The videos contributed to overcoming indifference in their environment and improving their status within the school and society.

5- To what extent, as a result of participation, were they able to create/ strengthen networks, plan how to engage with other groups of young people and keep other young people informed of ongoing activities in their own countries?

The YPMN network community has been active in the CEE/CIS countries and beyond, as the evaluator learned during field visits. Networking is seen among individuals such as the participant in an Istanbul Youth Reporting event, a 25-year old youth leader in Chisinau, who related how she networks several times per week with "her" Istanbul group. Networking is also practiced in institutions like eFM radio and its web portal in Sarajevo. It organized the network *Cross Radio* among eleven CEE/CIS student radio stations, which over nine years has broadcast 1,500 reports and interviews with an emphasis on citizen reporting. Their Duga radio show was dedicated to children with mental disabilities.

According to eFM, its Cross Radio developed into one of the largest information and culture radio networks in the Balkans and contributed to changing society in the region.

Ad Hoc Activism is the informal media literacy education curriculum developed by staff of the Association for Cultural and Media Decontamination in cooperation with its eFM Student Radio. The curriculum encourages participants to observe, criticize and change society. During workshops, participants are trained to use video and audio recorders to create scripts for short feature and documentary videos. Then, assisted by experts, they independently shoot and edit their video and radio stories.

A network of children from schools throughout Georgia has been established to promote the exchange of ideas and good practices in disaster risk reduction and environment protection. In this pilot project, OneMinutesJr videos on DRR are presented in schools during coordination meetings on DRR education.⁵²

YPMN is teaming up with other players to add content to existing networks rather than building such networks from scratch. YPMN is partnering with the global youth media network Kabataan News Network (KNN) and the global youth media *Wadada news*⁵³ under the Dutch Free Press Unlimited⁵⁴ by sharing OneMinutesJr videos with them for broadcast and outreach. YPMN will cooperate with KNN in one or more CEE/CIS countries to ensure that the skills of children and teenagers trained by YPMN can further amplify their voices in their countries and beyond.

The Georgian ADC Studio maintains ties with the International Disability Alliance and is particularly interested in familiarizing its students with media literacy, operating on the assumption that only if they are critical media consumers can they influence media content.

UNICEF BiH is keen to expand its media work for children into a local network (possibly using the YPMN alumni database) that could sustain commercial activities. The GENESIS NGO could implement such a scheme owing to its experience as a top NGO and its successful YPMN involvement. Efforts are under way to create regional network synergy through cooperation with Serbia, Croatia and Montenegro.

6- To what extent have subscribers/ followers of the information service used the information to take part in youth media advocacy activities (other than the OneMinutesJr activities) or tried to obtain funding for other youth media projects?

YPMN has never recorded numbers on civil society projects inspired by the Initiative. Nor is there a list of organizations that used YPMN information services for their activities. One CO officer reported actively using the Youthful Mailing List. But that list did not elicit many comments, probably because it is an information service that users take for granted without seeing need to provide feedback. Only a handful of informants mentioned the YPMN information service at all. The one-third bounce rate to the evaluator's questionnaire suggests many email addresses are out of date.

However, the YPMN says the information service subscribers and followers proved to be a good base for recruiting workshop participants, especially for the OneMinutesJr project. Many participants from workshops received information about the events from the YPMN and the Youthful Mailing List. Together with local UNICEF offices and ECF contacts in community and arts centres throughout the region, the YPMN has developed a good base

⁵² http://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/index_73646.htmlhttp://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Georgia_COAR_2013.pdf

⁵³ (<http://www.kidsnewsnetwork.org>)

⁵⁴ (<https://www.freepressunlimited.org/en>)

for further networking.

Some people interviewed spoke of plans to set up NGOs.⁵⁵ An individual in Armenia asked UNICEF for material support and training follow-up to deepen skills and broaden their knowledge of human rights and other topics, including freedom of speech, poverty reduction, empowering civil society, fighting social inertia, and youth employment. Some informants are interested in how an NGO could help better equip educational institutions with media technology such as reporting, studio and editing facilities.

4.4.2 Local and National Authorities and Community Stakeholders

1- How did youth media activities or advocacy processes influence local and national authorities and the wider community to listen more attentively to youth voices?

While system change may not yet be achieved through YPMN, stakeholders provide some evidence of an early contribution to emerging social norms change. This contribution includes debate in YPMN workshops and in civil society on former taboos such as youth prostitution and trafficking, youth unemployment, sexual education, abortion, minority religions, drugs and sexuality minorities. This change must be seen against the backdrop of often highly orthodox countries whose clergy has attacked gay and lesbian groups. Moldova's Deputy Speaker of Parliament said YPMN videos were helping change Soviet-legacy mindsets and build a model society based on activity, creativity, initiative and participation.

UNICEF representatives in Georgia expressed uncertainty as to whether any social norms change can be attributed to YPMN or whether the initiative contributed to such change. Social norms change is a relatively new concept for UNICEF Georgia and its interventions in this regard were limited. For example, one individual commented that the violence against children campaign in Georgia "is far from reaching the stage when we can talk about social norms change. In the evaluation, I think we have to be careful when referring to social norms change."⁵⁶

Several examples of YPMN interventions that could be considered contributions to social norms change were highlighted in the effectiveness section. These include OneMinutesJr juvenile justice videos in Kyrgyzstan used in crime prevention efforts, the contribution of a OneMinutesJr video to a draft probation law in Armenia, and how an Armenian NGO used YPMN training to help children raise awareness about violations against children in police custody and spark a law reform drive in Parliament.

According to the ADC Studio in Tbilisi, owing to the response to its OneMinutesJr video productions and the advocacy pressure that followed, **the Georgian government put line items into the budget benefiting the education of socially unprotected children.**

2- Did such stakeholders do anything differently as a result of exposure to YPMN-inspired youth advocacy?

A Ministry of Education representative in Yerevan recounted in an interview how OneMinutesJr activities and non-formal education from youth influenced the Ministry's attitude about including youth in the DRR emergency process. According to this source, the state now values student contributions and participation in disaster policy. This individual

⁵⁵ Field report e.g. on Georgia, Romania refer

⁵⁶ Georgia country report

called the new government attitude the “we now care” approach. The Ministry’s homepage was refashioned accordingly with links to relevant websites. This person described advocacy on three levels:

1. Workshop participants who made short DRR films mainly came from earthquake-affected areas of Armenia and shared lessons learned with peers when back home, which had a significant multiplier effect.
2. The Ministry homepage now advertises DRR cooperation with UNICEF/YPMN and the security and relief services.
3. YPMN videos illustrate the official emergency manual. Workshop outputs and outcomes also include teaching aids.

Examples provided in the effectiveness section of this report show that stakeholders such as local and national authorities as well as the wider community have begun reacting positively when exposed to YPMN-inspired youth advocacy.

4.5 Sustainability

• Key Findings Sustainability

- Local YPMN sustainability impossible without more CO and NGO support
- Re-branding within global strategy necessary
- OneMinutesJr videos underused in fundraising and outreach
- Resources insufficient for YPMN expansion/sustainability
- Training reform needed; to include ICT/Multimedia, integration of Youth Reporting
- Youthful Mailing List seen as sustainable entity

Overview: Findings with respect to sustainability show there is significant scope for improvement. Stakeholders see the Initiative in danger of failing if it cannot improve on resources and medium-term strategy,⁵⁷ and attract more support from UNICEF regional and country offices. NGO partners need sustained multiyear engagement from UNICEF country offices for training and follow-up. Re-branding is needed in internal and external marketing. The Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Weaknesses (SWOT) outline below built on views expressed in scoping interviews with RO, CO and YPMN management as well as in documents, KIIs and FGDs during field visits. The finding drawn from the SWOT is that sustainability is hampered by weaknesses such as absence of vision, budget and M&E, unclear goals for core elements like Youth Reporting and advocacy training. Threats are evident in the organizational set-up of YPMN, insufficient funding and outdated training methods and materials. On the other hand, strengths lie in successful delivery of its core product, staff quality, a shift from analogue to digital delivery, local sustainability through strategic partnerships as well as opportunities for alternative revenue generation.

Figure 5: Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Weaknesses

⁵⁷ Scoping interview with former UNICEF CEE/CIS manager

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful History • 1Minjr, Youthful Mailing list • Substantial Network • Influencing Norm Changes • Supporting Most Vulnerable • Closing Equity Gap • Supporting RKLA • Building Bloc of TOC • Forum for Advocacy • YPMN supports Media Literacy, 4th Estate • Staff Quality (eg Russian-speakers) • Lean Management • Productivity • Social Media Shift • YPMN Messenger Authorities – Youths • Partner Loyalty 	<p>S</p>	<p>W</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Alumni Networks/Data Base • Vision, strategy • Operational, Financial Planning • Staffing Level • Reporting • M&E • Brand • Local UNICEF Support • Budget • Divide Strategy/Standalone Videos • Advocacy Aspect in Training • Training Format • Youth Reporting • Regional Outreach • Success Evidence • Pre-Training Advocacy Talent Screening • Scope of Training Topics
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Sustainability through NGOs • Videos Support Fundraising (<i>Easyjet</i>) • Influencing Law Drafting • Videos Part of UNICEF Outreach • YPMN Embedded in Larger Media Project • Youthful Mailing List Self-sustained • Vision, Strategy • Re-branding within Global Strategy • Internal/External (Social) Marketing • Strategic Partnership(s) • Specific Advocacy Training • YPMN Re-packaging • Participation of Disabled • Alternative Revenue Generation • Partner Loyalty • ICT/Multimedia Skills Training 			<p>O</p>

1- What are the chief factors (coordination, strategic alignment with regional priorities, partnerships, continued funding and support to the wider youth engagement) responsible for YPMN's sustainability?

According to most sources interviewed, dedicated management, well-attended workshops, training and successful products led by its OneMinutesJr videos have allowed YPMN to provide UNICEF and the targeted children 12 years of excellent service. However, people interviewed raised issues about sustainability in a range of areas.

Coordination

While commending YPMN's overall success and the quality of its staff, the Initiative's organizational sustainability could be improved by better integrating YPMN core products into local UNICEF programmes and fundraising policies. This action would advance key strategic UNICEF elements, including the theory of change and building blocks such as the RKLA.

In advancing the organization's outreach by illustrating goals through powerful visual tools, YPMN might even become indispensable. The Armenian CO said they were planning to revamp UNICEF's media strategy in Armenia and employ more YPMN activities in the 2015 cycle. The CO agreed with UNICEF senior management that more should be done to use OneMinutesJr footage in advocacy and outreach campaigns, and possibly in fundraising, to realize a better return on the OneMinutesJr investment. Another UNICEF manager said that random use of videos had to be converted into a strategic approach. An NGO leader in Romania expressed frustration that the NGO's videos had been all but ignored by UNICEF.

Advocacy is not only a pillar of the RKLA but also a major contributor to YPMN sustainability. The evaluator's research confirmed a finding of the 2005 BBC evaluation suggesting that "training activities should be aimed at children with an interest in advocacy rather than at would-be journalists." Only a tiny minority of the YPMN workshop participants queried in the 2014 evaluation expressed the wish to become reporters.

The evaluator's interviews underline several factors that must be addressed in order to accomplish sustainability:

- YPMN must develop a vision, clear objectives, a medium term strategy, operations and financial plans for its programme with sustainability in mind. In line with the strategic plan, it eventually must adopt results-based management.⁵⁸
- Assess the current organizational set-up, particularly whether the network should be converted into a membership-based organizational structure that generates income.
- A revenue plan incorporating UNICEF funding and potential external funding sources to be identified, including cooperation with research institutions/universities, media and ICT companies, Internet/telecom service providers and the like.
- Better funding and additional staff (beyond the current a one-person staff structure) in order to rejuvenate training and output.

⁵⁸ UNICEF Global Strategic Plan (SP)

- A dedicated M&E mechanism and professional reporting. The annual donor report is insufficient. M&E can help prevent developments like the evolution of Youth Reporting from TV magazine into its present form.
- Local UNICEF support with the assistance of NGOs. Although NGOs have been brought more into play following the BBC evaluation's recommendation, there is insufficient funding and interest from UNICEF for sustainable, institutionalized NGO contribution to follow-up of training by the international YPMN team. One stakeholder said YPMN parachutes in and leaves us high and dry with our aspirations. Others suggest that YPMN focus on TOT and leave OneMinutesJr production entirely to NGOs as was done successfully in various countries (e.g. Signis in Romania, YMC in Moldova, and Pokolenie Insan in Kyrgyzstan). YPMN staff could advise local UNICEF management on programme integration, planning and related budget matters.
- Greater support to YPMN alumni networks affiliated to UNICEF youth centres in remote areas would increase stakeholder loyalty and permit UNICEF to make more use of its formidable YPMN database.
- Enhanced development of YPMN success stories on its interventions, which one NGO noted would help UNICEF build on its accomplishments in cooperation with governments.
- A re-branding of YPMN and use of internal and external marketing to boost acceptance and support.
- Reform of YPMN training to enhance its attractiveness, in particular with a view to generating revenue. Several aspects came under scrutiny:
 - In line with the RKLA, revisiting the advocacy concept. This could be done either through a special module in the OneMinutesJr workshops or by aligning Youth Reporting with OneMinutesJr training, thereby killing two birds with one stone. This step would remove the controversial 'youth reporting' label, but keep it alive in different form. Office holders and NGO representatives could be invited to workshops for interviewing, but also to illuminate specific RKLA result areas.
 - YPMN's current poor fit with UNICEF and the need to embed it in a larger media project, perhaps resembling the CNN iReport format. This project would need sufficient funding to encompass studio development, media literacy, media outreach to children in schools, and university media courses. The videos would play a crucial part but the mailing list should stand on its own feet and be run by itself. The Manana NGO in Tbilisi advised YPMN to engage more in media literacy training to enable deeper building democracy.
- Outdated YPMN video training, which should now include smartphones and take more account of social networking realities. It should become part of the Voice of Youth effort, more modern, user-friendly and attractive (updating the current black background of the OneMinutesJr website).

Strategic alignment with regional priorities

Regional networking has failed in several youth media undertakings, including in the South Caucasus (Kids' Crossroad broadcast packages exchange between Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) and in Sarajevo with the eFM *Cross Radio* project for the Balkans. Stakeholders

called upon YPMN to examine options for assistance in boosting its own programmatic and material sustainability. Stakeholders mentioned media literacy, citizen reporting (distinct from Youth Reporting), and social marketing trainings as potential regional activities for YPMN.

Partnerships

Almost all YPMN partners expressed the wish to continue cooperation with YPMN, so long as the Initiative refreshes its relevance via training reform. Such reform, according to several UNICEF offices, should replace sophisticated cameras and tripods with mobile reporting for social networks using smartphones – even if production quality had to suffer in order to quickly put across a message. By integrating mobile reporting in the education cycle, innovative and competitive techniques would be added to the goals of opening minds and building traditional media skills.

Stakeholders also recommended peer-to-peer training by local talent rather than foreign trainers who did not always speak their language (even Russian speakers are considered insufficient), and more emphasis on social networks such as Instagram’s multimedia approach. More blogging training and uploading of comments were requested to boost participation.

Funding

Internews in Georgia described UNICEF’s approach with YPMN and its video products as artificial and superficial and thus not sustainable. It said that messages do not reach citizens, that promotion is essential to grab public attention, and that politicians must see the videos if they are to change their attitudes to vulnerable children. “To accomplish this more training is needed and funding. You cannot expect street children to come up with a sustainability plan and we cannot guarantee a continuation of our work for their benefit without funds.” Similarly, ADC Studio in Romania said it has an unstable relationship with UNICEF because of the scarcity of its funding.

Therefore, fundraising initiatives are of the essence, inside and outside UNICEF. Some proposed that inclusion of smartphones as a new tool for social network reporting and advocacy training would lead to access to funding from sources such as the telecommunication industry. Georgia UNICEF says YPMN never had enough funds to help develop youth studios and equipment partly because young media support was not a major focus – although this is now changing.

The key YPMN donor – the German national committee – holds out hope for improved funding. A manager there said OneMinutesJr was a powerful tool, could build on its rich experience and “must continue on a broader basis.” In this view, UNICEF should exploit the hands-on OneMinutesJr potential globally and reflect this effort in its staffing. The manager said the German national committee is ready to contribute.⁵⁹

Another person interviewed said UNICEF had not sufficiently capitalized on YPMN output, especially the videos. Each year it had been difficult to ensure funding for the project. A sound strategy was missing – one that could be replicated for YPMN on a global level. A former communication manager added: “YPMN will only be sustainable when it adopts a structured approach, goes global, becomes strategy-based and develops a vision. If it develops a strategy it will sustain; if it remains ad hoc it will die.” A “corporate identity” that

⁵⁹ Scoping interviews

incorporates brand awareness and better funding, organization and staffing would push the Initiative forward.⁶⁰

Support to wider youth engagement

In Moldova, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament recommended that UNICEF to record its YPMN success stories as evidence of development. Other stakeholders suggested YPMN should create a “Speak up” portal where youth could upload footage on issues critical to them. YPMN was also urged to canvass youth about what they want to discuss and prioritize training accordingly. Another proposal was for UNICEF to organize a ‘cool’ festival that would anchor YPMN firmly in youth culture. Yet another idea was to recruit a celebrity who would allow use of their name on the Youthful Mailing List or contribute a regular column to boost circulation.

2- What are the emerging issues around youth participation that need to be considered to ensure that YPMN Initiative can remain sustainable and relevant to UNICEF country office programmes and the RKLA framework?

By contributing to reducing equity gaps YPMN, maintains its relevance to UNICEF country office programmes and the RKLA, and to the most vulnerable. By improving its offer of innovative online and mobile content, distribution platforms, and advanced social networking, YPMN will promote advocacy as one of the chief sustainability factors. However, YPMN must also consider that despite enormous advances in its footprint’s Internet penetration there are still many stakeholders left without online or mobile access owing to delivery problems or financial constraints. In order to lessen its dependency on Internet distribution, YPMN could forge links with broadcast media via the European Broadcasting Union or Asian Broadcasting Union or renew its efforts to interest local PBS outlets in its training and services.

YPMN should also address emerging issues like youth **employability, livelihoods, and entrepreneurship**⁶¹ that feature high on donor mapping since these activities support young people’s participation in the labor market. Youth and adolescents have also been identified as both targets for, and drivers of, **HIV/AIDS** prevention. Some institutions are beginning to see HIV/AIDS in the context of broader concerns about **healthy lifestyles** for and among youth. Youth **participation** can be used to interest them in national or regional political milestones such as EU elections. Young people are demonstrating interest in the question of **climate change**, whether through their virtual social networking or through other activities of a peer-to-peer voluntary nature.

The impact of the **information and communications technologies (ICT)** boom on the way young people participate in social interaction and in the civic life of their countries has not yet been fully understood.

⁶⁰ idem

⁶¹ <http://www.youthpolicy.org/mappings/donors/themes/emerging/>

5 Conclusions

The conclusions below were reached after consultations with stakeholders in briefings and debriefings during field visits and in exchanges with UNICEF RO and YPMN management.

Relevance

YPMN has been found to be largely relevant to its stakeholders. The evaluation has established that most YPMN stakeholders think the Initiative has been relevant in terms of themes and fast-changing online dissemination platforms by some of the 4,000 children who have participated. It is important to note that one of the YPMN elements, Youth Reporting, has been perceived as irrelevant by its young participants because of its perceived flawed concept. The youth reporters noted that they had become too close to government officials and had difficulty in remaining objective in their interaction. An overwhelming majority of the initiative's trainees did not want to become journalists. YPMN management has said that in hindsight it would have been better to invest in training of trainers for the OneMinutesJr workshops, rather than continue with Youth reporting. Stakeholders also noted that YPMN remained relevant after the shift to the Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda. Videos addressed issues such as the social inclusion of children with disabilities, education, health, and drug prevention. The Initiative was also seen to be relevant to the region's changing context and to the work of the main funder, the German national committee, on advocacy for child rights and equity. The YPMN, though, was not known well enough as a brand compared to OneMinutesJr and was not well integrated within UNICEF as an advocacy and fundraising tool.

Overall, YPMN has been found to be largely relevant to its stakeholders and vis a vis alignment with UNICEF's global and regional strategies and priorities but its linkages to the generic regional TOC needs careful reconceptualization.

Efficiency

The evaluation has found that YPMN implementation invites major efficiency improvements. This is partly because the YPMN has been run with an overly lean staffing structure and low overhead. Relying on the CO's goodwill has proved insufficient, particularly in applying the new management tools of RKLA and TOC. The resource allocation did not allow for development of strategies, proper M&E, or a professional training cycle. There was insufficient time for thorough preparation of training with the COs, selection and screening of participants, training reports, or talent appraisals, let alone for follow-up. There was also no time for production of teaching aids that could have been used in TOT.

Despite its limited work force, YPMN has managed to efficiently disseminate its output by employing efficient techniques and tools such as posting via multiple email addresses and using a social media management tool to satisfy a growing demand for YPMN's information⁶². This strategy confirms the correctness of the decision to put greater emphasis on the Internet and social networking. The evaluation found that all three activities costs compared favourably to private-sector market production costs, although Youth Reporting was more expensive and less competitive than the OneMinutesJr workshops and the information exchange. The division of responsibility between the YPMN coordinator and UNICEF RO/CO was clear but not necessarily appropriate, resulting in inefficiencies, missed opportunities and lack of synergies.

⁶² Tables in Annex

Effectiveness/Impact

The YPMN's OneMinutesJr and Youth Reporting components rated well effectiveness and impact. The information exchange component was viewed as the least effective and impactful. YPMN videos are considered to express the voice and perspectives of children on a range of issues, including poverty, violence, health hazards, and disasters. The RO and COs have showcased YPMN videos and the issues they raise at roundtables, conferences, civil society events, government offices, and lobby organizations. Selected TOT activities have triggered OneMinutesJr replication with various degrees of success in a number of YPMN countries, but follow-up of the Initiative's output was inadequate. The Youthful Mailing List appeared to be known only to a handful of stakeholders in the field, lessening its effectiveness and impact. Users, however, praised its relevance and noted the possibility of the mailing list surviving as a commercial service.

With respect to YPMN's impact, stakeholders in some countries argued that as some of the social norms campaigns and OneMinutesJr activities were started in 2012 onwards (example ending violence against children and inclusion of children with disabilities), it was too early to identify tangible system changes that would lead to a sustainable realization of child rights. However, YPMN video output like *Moscow Train* and other examples strengthened the self-efficacy of OneMinutesJr participants. The videos triggered public debate, began changing norms and put the most vulnerable on the public agenda, driving the inclusion process and causing local change. These videos proved to be an effective delivery platform for strong messages that inspire social movements to put pressure for change on governments. Some former YPMN trainees now work as local councilors aiming to improve living conditions for peers.

Sustainability

In its current form, the YPMN Initiative is not sustainable since it has not addressed key issues. The absence of objectives, strategy and measurable medium and long-term targets has meant that YPMN could not specify accurate resources requirements for staffing, organizational structure, equipment and budget that would sustain the initiative. Instead of focusing on its recognized strength, namely the OneMinutesJr output, YPMN has invested in marginally useful activities that are partly based on flawed ideas.

Local sustainability has not materialized because NGO partners have not been accorded sustained multiyear engagement by YPMN management and COs in TOT and training follow-up. YPMN risks further failure if it cannot convince UNICEF to use its videos as indispensable elements of programme, communication and fundraising strategies at all levels of operation. The present in-house and external marketing and promotion leave a lot of room for development. The present YPMN concept of developing a network did not appear to be a convincing incentive for partners that could sustain the network. No mapping of global marketing opportunities that would include major players such as Sony, Google, Microsoft and Bertelsmann has been undertaken, owing perhaps to YPMN staffing and resourcing constraints.

6 Lessons Learned

Resilience

YPMN has delivered key outputs and outcomes under the theory of change and has adapted to several different programming frameworks, the latest of which has been realignment under RKLA. One of YPMN's most significant achievements was its diversification into Internet delivery and social networking. With its decision to go digital, YPMN management seized on opportunities that new technology has offered and avoided the possible pitfalls of relying only on traditional dissemination channels.

Youthful Mailing List

The Youthful Mailing List has been the longest running YPMN product. UNICEF CO representatives suggest it has the potential of sustainability as an independent entity, an idea that should be given a chance. It was perhaps only a lack of YPMN resources that prevented this news service from going commercial. The dialogue element was neglected, with subscriber comments and contributions notable by their absence. Much of the dialogue initiated by YPMN takes place offline, with the result that valuable issue-driven debate and opinion-sharing are lost to the wider YPMN community. The airing of opinions is such an integral part of YPMN's mission that ways should be investigated to bring this interaction into a wider arena.

Strategy/Management/Communication

Delivering YPMN for over a decade as a mere Initiative has proved inefficient and unsustainable, and left it poorly documented. For these reasons, a future OneMinutesJr entity would likely be better structured and managed as a full-fledged stand-alone project with a detailed budget and clear objectives, expectations for outcomes and impact, a performance management plan, and a sustainability plan. More promising local sustainability results of the Initiative may have been achieved if relevant efforts by CO staff had been tied to annual performance appraisals.

In order to produce sustainable results staffing resources must be sufficient to adequately address the demands of the Initiative. It is essential to assign full responsibility and decision-making authority for programme implementation to the Initiative's management, in conjunction with the RO.

Scope

The scope of the Initiative has been too ambitious and, therefore, should be reduced from the current 21 countries and one territory. The large volume of workshops delivered should be cut to a manageable number, especially given the prospect of limited ongoing funding. UNICEF may consider limiting the Initiative's activities to those COs that have shown dedication in advancing YPMN. If other COs follow the example of their more active colleagues, geographic scope could be revisited.

Use of YPMN Products

YPMN was never fully utilized in UNICEF programme delivery, outreach and fundraising efforts, although the OneMinutesJr videos could have been valuable helping achieving better results. This approach could still be feasible if UNICEF vigorously promoted OneMinutesJr products in internal marketing and employed their strong images at every strategy and output level to underpin UNICEF's message. Such an approach could also help avoid waste of funds and the frustration of local NGOs, who, after undergoing TOT and replicating the YPMN video effort, too often see their work gather dust on UNICEF shelves. UNICEF could also follow the advice of government representatives to capitalize on the treasure trove of videos for education and outreach.

Planning

Owing to the absence of objectives, long-term strategy and performance monitoring, planning has been identified as a weak point, particularly evident in the Youth Reporting activity. An effective M&E mechanism would have ensured proper goals and oversight of this component.

7 Recommendations

The evaluator makes the following recommendations for execution by various managers:

Relevance

1- To increase relevance, YPMN shift focus to OneMinutesJr, clearly demarcating it as a UNICEF advocacy tool to be integrated into UNICEF country programmes. Distribution should emphasize the online platform options most used by youth.

- RO: decide on signature shift and advocacy priority
- Donor: agrees with and supports emphasis on OneMinutesJr
- CO: make OneMinutesJr a key component of local UNICEF programmes and outreach strategy with dedicated staff
- OneMinutesJr management: develop operational plan for OneMinutesJr to become signature element; assess online/social network platforms to identify best delivery platform

Efficiency

2- To improve efficiency, YPMN be upgraded to full programme status and develop vision, mission, and clear objectives and corresponding strategy, operations, and budget. OneMinutesJr should adopt results-based management, including full-fledged M&E that tracks training follow-up.

3- UNICEF facilitates the progress of OneMinutesJr by developing resources, and revisiting staffing structure and funding. New branding gives the Initiative more weight and strengthens its role within UNICEF, assisted by high-caliber internal and external marketing and promotion.

- RO: devise clear and appropriate objectives, detailed budget for OneMinutesJr/YPMN and revisit resources, marketing and promotion; introduce full-fledged M&E mechanism for OneMinutesJr including formal goal setting, performance appraisal and staff development/training follow-up; OneMinutesJr is embedded and appraised as stand-alone entity within performance management plan
- CO: develop indicators for measuring OneMinutesJr performance within country
- OneMinutesJr management: develops vision, mission and change strategy for OneMinutesJr; develops quantitative and qualitative PMP indicators (programme and staff) in close liaison with RO/CO
- Alumni contribute through participation in a survey on such questions as training topics, manual development, advocacy skills improvement, and monitoring.

Effectiveness/Impact

4- While shifting focus to OneMinutesJr, YPMN is maintained as supporting basis for CO, local youth media, alumni groups and NGOs to empower young people for advocacy.

5- OneMinutesJr training policy reform incorporates innovative teaching methods; new subjects, including multimedia, ICT and other specialist topics; plus competitive equipment enabling mobile reporting and social network integration. Trainees are to be screened to satisfy UNICEF criteria for advocacy and support of most vulnerable; regional training is to focus on cluster strategy. Workshop results must be communicated to public and officials for greater impact.

- RO: guides COs on innovative outreach approach including alumni, NGOs, training focus

- CO: devises new longer-term partnership with NGO sector, alumni; professional training procedure established for hubs; ensures workshop results are communicated in core events and covered by mainstream media
- OneMinutesJr management: tailors workshops in line with new policy and liaises with CO; reduces number of workshops and focuses on innovative and competitive training; rolls out new training policy, helps prepare attractive workshop media events
- NGOs and former participants: support CO and OneMinutesJr management in new training approach and ensures that efforts are grounded in civil society context and youth perspectives.

Sustainability

6- UNICEF RO and CO integrate OneMinutesJr output into all programme and fundraising activities to improve outreach and to achieve social norms change through deeper cooperation with civil society and government. Membership scheme to be developed as a possible way to attract partnership and revenue generation through NGO and private sector funding, which could be part of an exit strategy to make the network self-sufficient.

- RO: establish appropriate new procedures for sustainability
- CO: tackle OneMinutesJr sustainability by engaging local youth media and NGO partnerships; devise OneMinutesJr contribution to programme and fundraising efforts (e.g. detailed “sales” forecast with potential targets) and establish dedicated monitoring of success stories in line with RKLA needs; weave OneMinutesJr into country strategy; establish alumni networks and strategic partnerships aiming at OneMinutesJr’s local sustainability
- OneMinutesJr management: support RO and CO with own ideas; help develop membership scheme and funding concept for private sector.

8. Annex

(Separate document)