

REPORT ON TRAINEES' NEEDS' ANALYSIS AND PROFILING

WP3 – D3.1



Gender Equality and Antidiscrimination for Roma

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PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

This report aims to represent the training needs of the professionals called to participate in the formation activities of the GEAR Project on issues related to girls' rights and well-being and gender equality. The goal is to highlight, for each area covered by the course, the aspects that trainees wish to further deepen and the skills they want to strengthen, based on their daily work experience.

The analysis of respondents' needs on the general training topics proposed in the project aims to achieve two key objectives:

- **To identify interests and needs in terms of knowledge and skills to be acquired:** determine what the interviewees want to deepen about girls' discrimination in education, skill development, training, health and nutrition, and other social issues.
- **To develop targeted interventions:** use the analysis to design training programs that address identified needs and create tailored materials and resources that the professionals can use to better support girls - especially Roma girls - in their communities.

The method of detection was a questionnaire with closed-ended questions with the possibility to add items and needs through open-ended questions, where the trainees could express opinions or highlight further needs regarding their training requirements. Data collection was organised in the form of both face-to-face interviews and CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing), also according to the needs and availability of the interviewees. After an initial section geared toward collecting socio-anagraphic data, the survey proposed 11 macro-themes about which respondents could declare themselves interested in learning more. The 11 proposed macro-themes are:

1. **Equal Access**
2. **Skills development and training**
3. **Health and nutrition**
4. **Policy and advocacy**
5. **Community involvement**
6. **Media and communication**
7. **Financial inclusion**
8. **Economic exploitation of child labor**
9. **Girls' participation in social and political life**
10. **Strengthen the role of familiar responsibility in improving the status of girls**
11. **Contrast to violence and abuse against girls**

A total of 76 professionals involved in different fields of activity took part in the survey, either operating within the organizations participating in the project or belonging to third-party structures (50%). The characteristics of the participants thus reflect the structures they refer to, which all belong to the field of social inclusion of disadvantaged groups, minority rights or deal with gender equality issues. Women represent a large majority in all survey countries with an overall value of more than 76% of the total respondents.

Regarding age groups, the data instead show a more equal distribution as attested by the share of operators up to 45 years of age, 59.2% of the total. Interventions for the inclusion and accompaniment of disadvantaged people represent activities that often require a fair degree of seniority to be addressed effectively and in a balanced way. The clear presence of over-45s, at 40.8%, confirms that in the social professions age is frequently an important factor in being able to operate effectively.

Data on participants' qualifications and occupational profiles clearly reveal high occupational heterogeneity in the group of respondents. Addressing the complexity of actions to be put in place to foster the inclusion of disadvantaged groups and combat the discrimination experienced by girls also requires a strong interdisciplinary approach. It involves ensuring a comprehensive support system that addresses the multiple challenges faced by girls, promoting their rights and ensuring their well-being and development. In the case of the GEAR Project, these challenges are made even more problematic by the fact that the activities focus on a population group -such as the Roma- that is itself characterized by a high degree of exclusion and discrimination. It was possible to group the survey participants into six main professional groups. The analysis of the distribution of respondents according to occupational profiles and qualifications shows that 36.8% are engaged in Education and training, which therefore absorbs the highest portion of participants. The area of Management and planning is associated with a significant share of personnel, accounting for 18.4% of the total. Other specialized areas such as Communication (7.9%), Social assistance (7.9%), Mediation (6.6%) and Psychological support (3.9%) together concentrate 26,3% of professionals. In addition, other mixed areas of expertise collectively account for 18,4% of the total in the four countries, reflecting the variety that characterizes the spectrum of professional backgrounds intercepted by the GEAR team.

Main Findings

Considering the various aspects that the trainees intend to further deepen and the skills they want to strengthen, the in-depth exploration of knowledge tools useful for improving training is highlighted by a large majority of respondents (82.9%). This theme is also associated with the topic of equal access, particularly in relation to education, which is also highlighted as a possible area of focus by a very significant portion of respondents, amounting to over 70%. The participants in the survey (characterized by a significant share of educators) also highlighted interest in specific training areas to be explored in greater depth within the education macro-theme, such as ways to guarantee girls equal opportunities in the development of skills and professional training, encouraging at the same time their participation in traditionally male-dominated sectors. In the realm of learning, a significant portion of respondents indicates the need to delve deeper into themes such as, gender-sensitive teaching methods, awareness about unconscious biases, and girls-only programs

The second area of study indicated by the interviewees for the training activities concerns gender violence and in particular the fight against violence and abuse against girls. This general theme is indicated as being to be explored in depth through dedicated training by 80% of training participants. Many interviewees also highlighted the need to acquire more skills regarding specific issues related to this macro-theme, such as: prevention programs, victim support services, data collection for prevention activities and cooperation strategies between NGOs and community organizations.

Given the wide range of professional backgrounds of the respondents, the requests for more in-depth coverage of the topics encompassed several additional aspects. In order of relevance, the theme of strengthening community involvement strategies emerges prominently. This type of intervention is considered crucial by more than 75% of respondents, many of whom also consider it essential to involve parents and communities in promoting gender equality and addressing cultural and social norms that contribute to discrimination against girls in Roma groups. Associated with the issue of community involvement is the area of tools to strengthen the role of family responsibility in improving the status of girls. In the context of the project's activities, this theme takes on

particular importance considering that in the culture of the Roma populations the reference community is strictly the family, even if the family and the extended community often overlap.

Among the additional themes to be brought to attention, there is a wide base of interested participants highlighting issues related to the economic autonomy of women and girls and the tools to support their independence. This also includes a focus on the labor dimension, particularly on combating forms of child labor exploitation and female labor exploitation. Regarding the sphere of economic autonomy for individual growth, many participants also highlighted the necessity of acquiring greater knowledge about direct financial support tools and the creation of entrepreneurial opportunities. In the case of the fight against labor exploitation, the most important subtopic for the interviewees turned out to be the involvement of communities in addressing the root causes of child labor. This intervention dimensions involve a plurality of actors, including institutions to ensure - for example - scholarships and grants and/or financial instrument like Microcredit and Revolving Funds

The theme of girls' participation in social and political life also emerges with a good level of interest, with respondents placing particular importance on supporting girl-led initiatives and designing inclusive educational curricula including topics related to civic education, leadership and the role of female politicians in history.

Topics related to combating discriminatory practices and promoting gender equality through media and communication initiatives also garnered considerable attention among participants in the training initiatives. Over 60% of practitioners showed explicit interest in delving into aspects such as positive representation of girls and women in the media, as well as media literacy programs to help girls critically evaluate and respond to media messages that may perpetuate discrimination.

The macro-theme of policy and advocacy was considered important by approximately 5 out of 10 interviewees, especially the development of gender-sensitive policies in education/training and the labor market.

Finally, issues related to health & nutrition have been considered fundamental areas of focus by just over half of the interviewees, who highlighted the value of learning more about how to conduct awareness campaigns to educate communities about the needs of girls.

1. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Tab.1: Distribution of respondents by country, v.a & v.%

| Country | Participants | v.% |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Belgium | 19 | 25.0 |
| Bulgaria | 14 | 18.4 |
| Italy | 18 | 23.7 |
| Romania | 25 | 32.9 |
| Total | 76 | 100.0 |

The socio-demographic data collected provide an overview of the country distribution of participants to the survey. Romania has the highest number of respondents with 32.9%. This is followed by Belgium with 25.0% and Italy with 23.7%. This distribution reveals significant participation from various countries, suggesting a diverse pool of perspectives and experiences represented within the survey.

Tab.2: Distribution of respondents by organization, v.a., v.%

| Organization | v.a. | v.% |
|------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Arci Solidarietà | 13 | 17.1 |
| APEL | 11 | 14.5 |
| CSCD | 2 | 2.6 |
| IC | 13 | 17.1 |
| Other | 37 | 48.7 |
| Total | 76 | 100.0 |

The distribution of respondents in relation to organizations reveals that both IC and Arci Solidarietà each represent 17.1% of the total, followed by APEL with 14.5%. An interesting observation is the mention of various other organizations by many respondents, indicating a concerted effort to broaden the scope and engagement across different territories and countries.

Tab.3: Distribution of respondents by gender, v.%

| Country / Gender | Females v.% | Males v.% | Prefers not to specify v.% | Total |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Belgium | 63.2 | 31.6 | 5.3 | 100.0 |
| Bulgaria | 85.7 | 14.3 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Italy | 94.4 | 5.6 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Romania | 68.0 | 32.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 76.3 | 22.4 | 1.3 | 100.0 |

Concerning the distribution of participants by gender, it is worth noting that the predominant majority of respondents identify as female, comprising 76.3% of the total, while male participants constitute 22.4%. Delving deeper into the breakdown by country, intriguing variations are

observable. For instance, Italy exhibits the highest proportion of female respondents at 94.4%, followed closely by Bulgaria with 85.7%. Conversely, Belgium and Romania display a comparatively higher percentage of male respondents, standing at 31.6% and 32.0% respectively. Only a single participant opted not to specify their gender.

Tab.4: Distribution of respondents by age, v.%

| Country / Age | 18-25 v.% | 26-35 v.% | 36-45 v.% | 46-55 v.% | over 55 v.% | Total v.% |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Belgium | 0.0 | 10.5 | 42.1 | 10.5 | 36.8 | 100.0 |
| Bulgaria | 0.0 | 28.6 | 50.0 | 21.4 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Italy | 0.0 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 27.8 | 5.6 | 100.0 |
| Romania | 12.0 | 20.0 | 16.0 | 52.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 3.9 | 22.4 | 32.9 | 30.3 | 10.5 | 100.0 |

The distribution of age groups across different countries reveals that the predominant age bracket among participants is 36-45 years, comprising 32.9% of the total respondents. Following closely behind are individuals aged 46-55, constituting 30.3% of the overall sample, and those aged 26-35, representing 22.4% of the total participants. Belgium and Romania show variations in age group representation: Belgium boasts a substantial proportion of respondents in the over 55 age group, accounting for 36.8% of its total, while Romania sees a notable presence of participants aged 18-25, making up 12.0% of its respondent pool. This nuanced distribution underscores the diverse age demographics contributing to the survey, reflecting a broad spectrum of perspectives and experiences across different age cohorts and geographic locations.

As already noted, the group of professionals who participated in the study has a wide variety of different professional qualifications deployed in different professional fields.

Tab.5: Distribution of respondents by field of work/specialization, v.%

| Country / field of work/specialisation | Belgium v.% | Bulgaria v.% | Italy v.% | Romania v.% | Total v.% |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Communication area | 15.8 | 7.1 | 11.1 | 0.0 | 7.9 |
| Education/training | 42.1 | 28.6 | 33.3 | 40.0 | 36.8 |
| Management/planning | 21.1 | 7.1 | 27.8 | 16.0 | 18.4 |
| Mediation | 0.0 | 21.4 | 5.6 | 4.0 | 6.6 |
| Psychology | 0.0 | 7.1 | 5.6 | 4.0 | 3.9 |
| Social assistance | 5.3 | 0.0 | 11.1 | 12.0 | 7.9 |
| Other areas of expertise | 15.8 | 28.6 | 5.6 | 24.0 | 18.4 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

The largest group, accounting for 36.8% of respondents, consists of experts in education/training, who in the context of social promotion and inclusion actions have the task of developing curricula and training programs that promote gender equality and empower girls with knowledge and skills.

This is a crucial role to ensure not only that the educational content is inclusive but also -in their roles as teachers and educators- to empower and equip girls with the skills and knowledge needed for their personal and professional development.

The second largest group of respondents are management/planning experts, equivalent to 18.4% of the total. To promote gender equality and support girls' rights practitioners from various sectors play distinct and complementary roles, but there is also a need for coordinators and professionals capable of designing and implementing programs and policies in support of gender equality and girls' rights, managing resources and monitoring progress. Management and leadership roles are increasingly crucial to ensure that intervention plans are well structured, sustainable and effectively respond to girls' needs, while monitoring and evaluating their impact.

The group of social workers and health mediators and those employed in the communication area follow in terms of incidence, both with a figure of 7.9%. Professionals in social assistance provide direct support and services to girls and their families, defend their rights and connect them with facilities specialized in aiding. This professional group ensures that girls have access to education, healthcare and social services and supports them in overcoming obstacles to their well-being and development. The role of communication specialists is instead to develop and disseminate information, create awareness campaigns and engage the public through various media channels, raising awareness of gender equality issues, educating the public on girls' rights and combating stereotypes and negative cultural attitudes.

The group of cultural mediation experts has a weight of 6.6% of the total. The function of these professionals is to bridge cultural gaps, facilitate dialogue between communities, address cultural practices and beliefs that may be harmful to girls, promote cultural understanding, and encourage the conditions to create environments in which girls can better assert themselves. In the context of the work carried out in contact with the Roma population these figures play an important role.

Psychologists are the last professional group in terms of number of participants in training activities (3.9%). These specialists are often called upon to collaborate with practitioners, educators, and other professionals to provide holistic support to persons in difficulty and/or social disadvantage. Their role in the project activities is to ensure comprehensive care that addresses various aspects of girls' lives, from mental health to education and social inclusion. Finally, a fraction of respondents amounting to 18.4% is associated with other areas of expertise.

Even if the Education/training area absorbs the majority of practitioners in all geographical contexts, notable variations are observed across different countries. For instance, in Belgium there is a strong concentration of respondents in the communication area, comprising 15.8% of the total. In Italy, management/planning emerges as a prominent area of specialization, with 27.8% of participants engaged in this field. The interviewees associated with the same category also have a moderate incidence in Belgium and Romania, while they are in a clear minority in Bulgaria, where mediation experts have a higher weight than average.

2. ANALYSIS OF THE TRAINING NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF PROFESSIONALS

Tab.6: Macro-themes proposed, distribution of respondents' answers¹, v.a. & v.%

| Marco-themes | v.a | v.% |
|---|------------|--------------|
| Skills development and training | 63 | 82.9 |
| Contrast to violence and abuse against girls | 61 | 80.3 |
| Community involvement | 58 | 76.3 |
| Equal Access | 54 | 71.1 |
| Strengthen the role of familiar responsibility in improving the status of girls | 52 | 68.4 |
| Financial inclusion | 49 | 64.5 |
| Girls' participation in social and political life | 48 | 63.2 |
| Media and communication | 46 | 60.5 |
| Policy and advocacy | 44 | 57.9 |
| Health and nutrition | 41 | 53.9 |
| Economic exploitation of child labor | 39 | 51.3 |
| Total | 76 | 100.0 |

Among the macro-themes proposed within the questionnaire, the one towards which respondents showed the greatest interest (and thus, the greatest interest in specializing) is 'Skills development and training'. This is a transversal theme that includes aspects relating to the development of skills, which are fundamental for increasing competitiveness in the labor market, and training in general. Preliminary research work carried out by the GEAR working group had already highlighted the importance of tackling this topic, especially in the context of an international project mainly oriented towards promoting gender equality. Many of the differences in working conditions experienced by men and women derive from structural factors such as the prevalence of part-time work among women, occupational segregation (i.e., the over-representation of women in work environments historically characterized by lower wages), disadvantages experienced by women workers during maternity and childcare, and the tendency for women to do more housework and take care of the family than men. One of the clearest effects of these critical issues is the fact that women are under-represented in management and coordination areas in almost every economic sector, both in the public and private sector. Initiatives aimed at providing young girls with quality training and competitive skills are needed to trigger the reversal or elimination of some of the most common trends in the labor market, which historically penalize women and contribute to replicating gender inequalities in employment. The share of respondents who said they would like to acquire more knowledge on this macro-topic is 63, equivalent to 82.9%.

The subject of 'Contrast to violence and abuse against girls' follows in importance and was found to be an area of specific interest for 61 professionals in the field, i.e. 80.3% of the total number of respondents. This is an extremely important topic, the study of which is characterized by multiple

¹ Respondents were allowed to provide more than one answer.

difficulties arising from the non-systematic emergence of phenomena: only a small percentage of victims report physical or sexual abuse, and an even smaller proportion report more serious incident. The difficulties that prevent women from reporting violence of any kind include the lack of support from family members and the community as well as, in some areas, cultural conventions that implicitly accept various forms of violence. It is thus important that professionals working in direct contact with the public, in various fields of activity, learn the necessary knowledge to support them in preventing, recognizing and combating abuse and violence against women.

More than 70% of the respondents were also interested in specializing in the topics of 'Community Involvement' and 'Equal Access'. Given how important community involvement and ensuring equal access to medical, educational and training services are in the fight against inequalities and gender stereotypes, it is natural that these topics were assigned such importance by the respondents. The topics 'Strengthen the role of family responsibility in improving the status of girls', 'Financial inclusion' and 'Girls' participation in social and political life' were selected by more than 6 out of 10 professionals, with interest values of 68.4%, 64.5% and 63.2% respectively. Also above the 60% threshold was the topic 'Media and communication'.

Fewer respondents indicated 'Policy and advocacy' and 'Health and nutrition' as topics of interest, with shares of 57.9% and 53.9% respectively. The topic towards which the least number of professionals stated that they would like to receive specialized training is 'Economic exploitation of child labor', for which a value of 51.3% is observed, however.

Tab.7: Macro-themes proposed, top topics per country

| Country | Top topics |
|-----------------|---|
| Belgium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal access • Community involvement • Contrast to violence and abuse against girls |
| Bulgaria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills development and training • Equal Access • Strengthen the role of familiar responsibility in improving the status of girls • Financial inclusion |
| Italy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contrast to violence and abuse against girls • Skills development and training, Community Involvement |
| Romania | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills development and training • Contrast to violence against girls • Community involvement |

The training needs indicated by the interviewees show many common features considering the four geographical areas of focus, but also some differences. 'Skills development and training' is the most important topic in Bulgaria and Romania and the second most important in Italy. In Belgium, the most popular topics were 'Equal Access', which was also relevant in Bulgaria, and 'Community Involvement', which was the third most important topic in Italy and Romania. 'Contrast to violence and abuse against girls' was the most frequently chosen topic in Italy and among the most selected in Belgium and Romania, while the other most frequent answers from Bulgarian respondents included the macro-themes 'Strengthen the role of family responsibility in improving the status of girls' and 'Financial inclusion'.

Tab.8: Macro-themes proposed, least popular topics per country

| Country | Least popular topics |
|-----------------|---|
| Belgium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and nutrition • Economic exploitation of child labor |
| Bulgaria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls' participation in social and political life • Media and communication • Policy and advocacy • Economic exploitation of child labor |
| Italy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and nutrition • Economic exploitation of child labor |
| Romania | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls' participation in social and political life • Financial inclusion • Policy and advocacy • Economic exploitation of child labor |

‘Economic exploitation of child labor’ is among the least selected topics in all countries. In Belgium and Italy, the topic 'Health and nutrition' also showed below-average interest, while among Bulgarian and Romanian professionals, 'Girls' participation in social and political life' and 'Policy and advocacy' were infrequently mentioned as topics on which respondents would like to receive specific training and preparation. Finally, among the macro-themes least indicated by the respondents were 'Media and communication' for Bulgaria and 'Financial inclusion' for Romania.

Tab.9: Macro-themes proposed, top topics per areas of work/specialization

| Areas of work/specialization | Top topics |
|---|---|
| Communication area/Mediation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media and communication • Contrast to violence and abuse against girls |
| Social assistance & Psychology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contrast to violence and abuse against girls • Strengthen the role of familiar responsibility in improving the status of girls |
| Education/training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills development and training • Community involvement |
| Management/planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community involvement • Skills development and training • Contrast to violence and abuse against girls |
| Other areas of expertise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills development and training • Contrast to violence against girls |

On the other hand, looking at the distribution of preferences for various areas of competence and specialisation, it is possible to notice many differences consistent with the characteristics of the different areas of work of the professionals involved in the survey. Education/training professionals, representing almost 4 out of 10 respondents, assigned most importance to the subject of 'Skills development and training'. This macro-topic also attracted the interest of other professionals, so much so that for Management/planning professionals it is the second most selected topic, second only to 'Community involvement'. For practitioners in the Communication area/Mediation the theme of greatest interest is 'Media and Communication'. ‘Contrast to violence and abuse against girls’ is among the topics of greatest interest for almost all professional groups, and in particular for

the Social Assistance & Psychology area, within which it is the one the interviewees were most interested in.

Focus: macro-themes

Tab.10: ‘Skills development and training’, number of professionals interested in the proposed macro-theme and subtopics, v.a. & v.%

| | v.a | v.% |
|---|-----------|--------------|
| Respondents interested in the macro-theme | 63 | 100.0 |
| <i>of which:</i> Equal Opportunities: to ensure that girls have equal opportunities for skills development and vocational training. To encourage enrolment in traditionally male-dominated fields (es. by implementing mentorship Programs / involving communities in promoting and supporting girls' skills development) | 57 | 90.5 |
| <i>of which:</i> Other | 1 | 1.6 |

As previously observed, the macro-theme towards which respondents have shown the most interest in receiving training and specialization is ‘Skills development and training.’ Indeed, 63 respondents selected it within the questionnaire. Among these, 57 (90.5% of the total related to the main theme) also expressed interest in the subtopic concerning equal opportunities: to ensure that girls have equal opportunities for skills development and vocational training, and to encourage enrolment in traditionally male-dominated fields (es. by implementing mentorship programs / involving communities in promoting and supporting girls' skills development).

Tab.11: ‘Contrast to violence and abuse against girls’, number of professionals interested in the proposed macro-theme and subtopics, v.a. & v.%

| | v.a | v.% |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| Respondents interested in the macro-theme | 61 | 100,0 |
| <i>of which:</i> To develop and implement prevention programs that address the root causes of violence, challenge harmful cultural norms, and promote gender equality into schools, workplaces, and communities in general | 50 | 82.0 |
| <i>of which:</i> To develop and strengthen support services for victims, including counselling, legal assistance, and medical care | 45 | 73.8 |
| <i>of which:</i> To collect Data on risk factors and protective factors to inform targeted prevention strategies | 35 | 57.4 |
| <i>of which:</i> To collaborate with NGOs and community organizations to provide safe spaces and resources for girls who have experienced violence | 43 | 70.5 |
| <i>of which:</i> Other | 10 | 16.4 |

The second most prominent macro-theme in terms of interest is ‘Contrast to violence and abuse against girls,’ which garnered 61 responses. The questionnaire also featured four specific subtopics where professionals could indicate specific areas of interest that they considered important to delve into. Among these, ‘To develop and implement prevention programs that address the root causes

of violence, challenge harmful cultural norms, and promote gender equality into schools, workplaces, and communities in general’ was the most selected, with 50 respondents (82% of the total for the macro-theme). Following this, ‘To develop and strengthen support services for victims, including counselling, legal assistance, and medical care’ was chosen by 45 individuals (73.8%), and ‘To collaborate with NGOs and community organizations to provide safe spaces and resources for girls who have experienced violence’ by 43 (70.5%). The least considered subtopic was ‘To collect Data on risk factors and protective factors to inform targeted prevention strategies’, which attracted interest from 35 respondents.

It is noteworthy that for this topic, a higher number of professionals opted for the ‘other’ option among the proposed subtopics, indicating the complexities surrounding physical gender-based violence and the importance of public awareness on the matter.

Tab.12: ‘Community involvement’, number of professionals interested in the proposed macro-theme and subtopics, v.a. & v.%

| | v.a | v.% |
|---|-----------|--------------|
| Respondents interested in the macro-theme | 58 | 100,0 |
| <i>of which:</i> Parental and Community Involvement: to involve parents and communities in promoting gender equality and supporting girls' education and development | 32 | 55.2 |
| <i>of which:</i> Community Workshops: to conduct workshops and awareness programs at the community level to address cultural and social norms that may contribute to discrimination | 43 | 74.1 |
| <i>of which:</i> Other | 3 | 5.2 |

The data also demonstrate a pronounced need among respondents for educational programs centered on ‘Community involvement’, a theme selected 58 times. Among the two associated subtopics, ‘Community Workshops: to conduct workshops and awareness programs at the community level to address cultural and social norms that may contribute to discrimination’ was chosen by a higher number of respondents, amounting to 43 (74.1% of the total referring to the overarching theme), while ‘Parental and Community Involvement: to involve parents and communities in promoting gender equality and supporting girls' education and development’ was chosen by 32 (55.2%).

Tab.13: ‘Equal access’, number of professionals interested in the proposed macro-theme and subtopics, v.a. & v.%

| | v.a | v.% |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| Respondents interested in the macro-theme | 54 | 100.0 |
| <i>of which:</i> To ensure equal access to education for girls, including addressing financial barriers, providing transportation, and creating a safe and supportive learning environment | 50 | 92.6 |
| <i>of which:</i> Girls-only programs or gender-sensitive teaching methods or awareness about unconscious biases | 19 | 35.2 |
| <i>of which:</i> Other | 1 | 1.9 |

Interest in the topic ‘Equal Access’ - closely linked to the themes of education and training - attracted a high number of respondents, totaling 54. Nearly all of them (50, equivalent to 92.6%) also assigned importance to the subtopic ‘To ensure equal access to education for girls, including addressing financial barriers, providing transportation, and creating a safe and supportive learning environment’. In contrast, the attention shown for ‘Girls-only programs or gender-sensitive teaching methods or awareness about unconscious biases’ was lower, with only 19 selections (35.2%). The result indicates a lower perception of the importance of initiatives related to such themes. In many Roma communities, entrenched gender roles and expectations can limit the opportunities available to girls and women. Girls-only programs can provide a safe space for Roma girls to develop their skills and confidence, especially in areas where they may face additional barriers to education or participation, such as early marriage or cultural norms that prioritize boys' education.

Tab.14: ‘Strengthen the role of familiar responsibility in improving the status of girls’, number of professionals interested in the proposed macro-theme and subtopics, v.a. & v.%

| | v.a | v.% |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| Respondents interested in the macro-theme | 52 | 100,0 |
| <i>of which:</i> To implement programs that educate parents, especially in areas with limited access to formal education, about the importance of girls' education, health, and overall well-being | 33 | 63.5 |
| <i>of which:</i> To conduct workshops within communities, involving families, to promote gender equality, challenge stereotypes and emphasize the importance of equal opportunities for boys and girls | 27 | 51.9 |
| <i>of which:</i> To encourage parents to model gender-equal behavior at home. Demonstrate shared responsibilities in caregiving, household chores, and decision-making, fostering an environment of equality | 30 | 57.7 |
| <i>of which:</i> To establish community support networks where families can share experiences, resources, and advice. This fosters a sense of community responsibility for the well-being of all children | 27 | 51.9 |
| <i>of which:</i> Other | 1 | 1.9 |

‘Strengthen the role of familiar responsibility in improving the status of girls’ was selected by 52 respondents. However, despite having 4 subtopics, none of them garnered more than 65% interest of the total related to the main theme. Even though the topic is considered important by many professionals, the lack of interest in the proposed subtopics might indicate a need to address the theme starting from basics, providing a solid foundational knowledge in the initial phase and then expanding the spectrum of information shared in a later phase.

The most chosen subtopic, in any case, is ‘To implement programs that educate parents, especially in areas with limited access to formal education, about the importance of girls' education, health, and overall well-being’ with 33 selections (63.5% of the total related to the overarching theme). This is followed by ‘To encourage parents to model gender-equal behavior at home. Demonstrate shared responsibilities in caregiving, household chores, and decision-making, fostering an environment of equality’ with 30 selections (57.7%), while ‘To conduct workshops within communities, involving families, to promote gender equality, challenge stereotypes and emphasize the importance of equal

opportunities for boys and girls’ and ‘To establish community support networks where families can share experiences, resources, and advice. This fosters a sense of community responsibility for the well-being of all children’ both attracted the same number of interested respondents, totaling 27 each (51.9%).

Tab.15: ‘Financial inclusion’, number of professionals interested in the proposed macro-theme and subtopics, v.a. & v.%s

| | v.a | v.% |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| Respondents interested in the macro-theme | 49 | 100,0 |
| <i>of which:</i> Financial Support: to provide financial support for girls' education and skills development, addressing economic barriers that may contribute to discrimination | 34 | 69.4 |
| <i>of which:</i> Entrepreneurship Opportunities: to facilitate entrepreneurship opportunities for girls, empowering them economically and socially | 34 | 69.4 |
| <i>of which:</i> Other | 0 | 0.0 |

The overarching topic ‘Financial Inclusion’ received a number of selections equivalent to the median value of the distribution of interest among professionals towards the survey's proposed topics: 49. Furthermore, neither of the two proposed subtopics surpassed the threshold of 70% of the total related to the macro-theme, although they came close, with both ‘Financial Support: to provide financial support for girls' education and skills development, addressing economic barriers that may contribute to discrimination’ and ‘Entrepreneurship Opportunities: to facilitate entrepreneurship opportunities for girls, empowering them economically and socially’ characterized by 34 selections each (69.4%).

Tab.16: ‘Girls’ participation in social and political life’, number of professionals interested in the proposed macro-theme and subtopics, v.a. & v.%s

| | v.a | v.% |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| Respondents interested in the macro-theme | 48 | 100.0 |
| <i>of which:</i> Girl-Led Initiatives: to support and encourage girl-led initiatives that provide platforms/networks or safe spaces for them to express their opinions, share experiences, and collaborate on projects | 34 | 70.8 |
| <i>of which:</i> Inclusive Curriculum: to ensure that educational curricula include topics related to civic education, leadership, and the history of women in politics | 32 | 66.7 |
| <i>of which:</i> Community Centers: to establish community centers that serve as hubs for educational and empowerment programs for girls | 26 | 54.2 |
| <i>of which:</i> Other | 1 | 2.1 |

The data also highlights a clear attention among respondents for educational opportunities related to ‘Girls’ participation in social and political life’. The macro-theme garnered 48 responses, which is just one unit below the median value. Among the three proposed subtopics, the one that professionals showed the most interest in is ‘Girl-Led Initiatives: to support and encourage girl-led

initiatives that provide platforms/networks or safe spaces for them to express their opinions, share experiences, and collaborate on projects’ with 34 selections (70.8% of the total related to the general topic). Following closely is ‘Inclusive Curriculum: to ensure that educational curricula include topics related to civic education, leadership, and the history of women in politics’ which received 32 responses (66.7%), while ‘Community Centers: to establish community centers that serve as hubs for educational and empowerment programs for girls’ recorded a lower value of 26 responses (54.2%).

Tab.17: ‘Media and communication’, number of professionals interested in the proposed macro-theme and subtopics, v.a. & v.%s

| | v.a | v.% |
|---|-----------|--------------|
| Respondents interested in the macro-theme | 46 | 100.0 |
| <i>of which:</i> Positive Representation: to encourage positive and diverse representation of girls and women in media to counteract stereotypes | 31 | 67.4 |
| <i>of which:</i> Media Literacy Programs: to implement media literacy programs to help girls critically evaluate and respond to media messages that may perpetuate discrimination | 30 | 65.2 |
| <i>of which:</i> Other | 1 | 2.2 |

The issues related to the representation of women within modern media and communication strategies have gathered the interest of 46 respondents. The overall attention appears to be slightly declining - <70% - considering the two proposed subtopics, with 31 selections for ‘Positive Representation: to encourage positive and diverse representation of girls and women in media to counteract stereotypes’ (67.4% of the total related to ‘Media and communication’), and 30 for ‘Media Literacy Programs: to implement media literacy programs to help girls critically evaluate and respond to media messages that may perpetuate discrimination’ (65.2%).

Tab.18: ‘Policy and advocacy’, number of professionals interested in the proposed macro-theme and subtopics, v.a. & v.%s

| | v.a | v.% |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| Respondents interested in the macro-theme | 44 | 100,0 |
| <i>of which:</i> Gender-sensitive Policies: to develop and implement gender-sensitive policies in education, healthcare, and workforce development to ensure equal opportunities for girls | 33 | 75.0 |
| <i>of which:</i> Advocacy Campaigns: to engage in advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of empowering girls and eliminating discrimination | 28 | 63.6 |
| <i>of which:</i> Other | 1 | 2.3 |

Participants have shown a moderate inclination toward acquiring knowledge and skills related to ‘Policy and advocacy’ as well. The number of professionals interested in this topic is 44. Among the proposed subtopics, the one that generated the highest engagement is ‘Gender-sensitive Policies: GEAR Project: [101088262] — [CERV-2022-GE]

to develop and implement gender-sensitive policies in education, healthcare, and workforce development to ensure equal opportunities for girls’, gathering 33 selections (which equals 75% of the total related to the overarching theme), while ‘Advocacy Campaigns: to engage in advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of empowering girls and eliminating discrimination’ drew the attention of 28 professionals (63.6%).

Tab.19: ‘Health and nutrition’, number of professionals interested in the proposed macro-theme and subtopics, v.a. & v.%s

| | v.a | v.% |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| Respondents interested in the macro-theme | 41 | 100,0 |
| <i>of which:</i> Access to Healthcare: to ensure girls have access to healthcare services, including reproductive health education and services and Nutrition programs to address specific Nutritional needs | 26 | 63.4 |
| <i>of which:</i> Awareness Campaigns: to conduct awareness campaigns to educate communities about the importance of girls' health and Nutrition, debunking myths and cultural taboos | 34 | 82.9 |
| <i>of which:</i> Other | 1 | 2.4 |

The theme of ‘Health and nutrition’ indicated by 41 respondents, has proven to be second to last in interest expressed by survey participants. Eight out of ten professionals in this subgroup have shown interest in acquiring knowledge regarding the subtopic ‘Awareness Campaigns: to conduct awareness campaigns to educate communities about the importance of girls' health and Nutrition, debunking myths and cultural taboos’ (82.9%), while ‘Access to Healthcare: to ensure girls have access to healthcare services, including reproductive health education and services and Nutrition programs to address specific Nutritional needs’ garnered a lower level of attention with 26 selections (63.4% of the total related to the main theme).

Tab.20: ‘Economic exploitation of child labor’, number of professionals interested in the proposed macro-theme and subtopics, v.a. & v.%s

| | v.a | v.% |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| Respondents interested in the macro-theme | 39 | 100,0 |
| <i>of which:</i> Legal Frameworks and Enforcement: to strengthen and enforce legal frameworks to prohibit and penalize child labor, ensuring that businesses adhere to ethical labor practices | 21 | 53.8 |
| <i>of which:</i> Engage communities in addressing the root causes of child labor, including poverty, lack of awareness, and social norms that perpetuate exploitation | 34 | 87.2 |
| <i>of which:</i> Other | 0 | 0.0 |

Finally, the overarching theme toward which the fewest respondents expressed determination to obtain extensive training is ‘Economic exploitation of child labor’. Despite this result, it is worth noting that the number of professionals who selected this theme is more than half of the total - 39

out of 76 - indicating that all proposed topics are highly significant in the daily work of professionals engaged in social services and gender equality initiatives.

Nearly all these respondents expressed interest in the subtopic 'Engage communities in addressing the root causes of child labor, including poverty, lack of awareness, and social norms that perpetuate exploitation' accounting for 34 selections (87.2% of the total related to the overarching theme). 'Legal Frameworks and Enforcement: to strengthen and enforce legal frameworks to prohibit and penalize child labor, ensuring that businesses adhere to ethical labor practices' on the other hand, garnered less attention with 21 selections (53.8%).