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AL REPUBLICII MOLDOVA



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Parteneriat pentru
Dezvoltare

EVALUATION REPORT ON THE YOUTH CENTERS INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

#2022 Follow-up Report



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INTRODUCTION

In 2017, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research launched the National Program for Youth Centers Development for the years 2017-2022, which aims to strengthen their institutional capacities in order to develop and expand territorially the youth services, increase the number of beneficiaries and achieve the following objectives of the National Strategy for Youth Sector Development 2020:

- increasing the level of civic activism of young people, including those with fewer opportunities;
- consolidating local youth councils;
- diversification of young people's methods of access to information;
- development of outreach services;
- intensification of measures to promote a healthy lifestyle among young people;
- expanding non-formal education services.

For the launch of the second phase of the Program for Youth Centers Development, the Center Partnership for Development during October-November 2022 carried out the evaluation of the Program for the years 2017-2022. The evaluation process took place within the "Partnerships for Youth Empowerment" project, implemented by the Center Partnership for Development with the support of the Joint Fund for the development of Youth Centers and strengthening participation and civic engagement among young people in the Republic of Moldova of the Ministry of Education and Research, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the United Nations Population Fund.

During the evaluation process, 22 Youth Centers were interviewed:

- Ciorescu Youth Center
- Cricova Youth Center
- Grătiești Youth Center
- "Multifunctional Center for Integrated Local Development Anenii Noi" Public Institution
- Youth Resource Center CRAT
- Municipal center for Minors and Youth "Contemporanul"
- Municipal center for Minors and Youth "Făclia"
- Cimișlia Regional Youth Center
- Youth Resource Center "Youth Universe" UNIT
- Dubăsari Regional Youth Center, Coșnița village
- Fălești Regional Resource Center for Youth
- Youth Center from the Glodeni district
- "Hîncești Regional Youth Center" Public Institution
- Leova Youth Center
- "Nișporeni Regional Youth Center" Public Institution
- Ocnița Regional Youth Center
- Orhei Youth Center
- Rîșcani Youth Center
- Sîngerei Youth Center
- Soroca Youth Resource Center "DACIA"
- Strășeni Regional Youth Center
- Ungheni Regional Youth Center

The report aimed to evaluate 26 Youth Centers, most of them established by LPA level II, but 4 out of 26 institutions were not functional at the time of the evaluation process, namely: the Public Institution "Cahul Youth Center", Edineț Youth Center, Florești Youth Center, and Rezina Youth Center

SUMMARY

Youth Centers are institutions that offer a wide range of services and programs, with equal access for every young person. These refer to information, guidance, counselling, education, empowerment and organization of leisure activities for young people, with the aim of preparing them for the social and professional transition to adulthood. Currently, the Ministry of Education and Research (MER) supports the activity of 44 Youth Centers throughout the country (of which 26 are district/municipal centers, and the rest – their subsidiaries).

However, currently the Youth Centers have a limited area of coverage of young people in the services. According to the available data, only half of the young people who need support manage to benefit from the services provided by these institutions. The gap between the levels of need and actual benefit of services can be determined by several structural factors: *(i) access to these services* (from the perspective of geographic location, physical accessibility, hidden costs); *(ii) the motivation and understanding of the importance* of accessing youth services and *(iii) the options of offered services* to align with the real needs of young people. Considering that this gap is also persistent among young people who show increased civic activism, we can conclude that the motivation to benefit from the services of Youth Centers would have a lower weight as an influencing factor.

Although the regulatory framework provides for an extensive number of recommended services to be provided by Youth Centers, they are limited to only a few basic services of medium to minimal complexity. Thus, according to the Framework Regulation, in order to achieve the objectives and based on the identified interests of the young people in the community, YC can provide 9 types of services of various complexity. However, the reality shows that most of young people access 3 types of services, most frequently provided by the Youth Centers, as follows: (i) leisure activities (ii) information and documentation, (iii) participation. More complex services, such as economic empowerment, vocational guidance, etc., are less common in the portfolio of most YCs. Most often, young men/women aged 15-19 from urban areas benefit of the Youth Centers services. From the perspective of inclusion, the integration of people with disabilities in YC activity is still an important challenge for youth specialists. However, the share of beneficiaries with disabilities increased from 0.5% of the total number of visitors at the beginning of the activity of the Youth Centers to 0,8% in 2022.

Regarding the level of institutional development, the Youth Centers have managed to advance slightly in recent years. The analysis of the level of institutional development of the Youth Centers, measured on a scale from 0 (lack of organizational capacity) to 4 (advanced organizational capacity), indicates an average of 2.05 in 2022, compared to 1.64 in 2018. Positive trends were recorded in each assessment area. At the same time, the most significant increases are seen in the institutional components: (i) Programs/services and activities – increased by 0.59 points, (ii) Planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting – evolved by 0.55 points and (iii) Public image/ communication and partnerships – with 0.52 points increase. On the other hand, financial and human resources management remain underdeveloped and risk undermining progress in other organizational areas.

In recent years, most of the Youth Centers have managed to benefit from institutional support, which has determined a more balanced organizational development, compared to 2018. In 2018, there were 6 Youth Centers with a consolidated level of development and over 9 centers with an initial level of development. In the year 2022, there are 13 YCs with a consolidated and advanced level of development, and only one with an early level of development. Therefore, we find that over 50% of the Youth Centers in Moldova have a higher-than-average level of institutional development.

THE PARTICULARITIES OF YOUTH SERVICES IN MOLDOVA

Youth Centers are institutions mandated to provide services for young people. [The 2016 Youth Law](#) defines Youth Centers as non-profit organizations that provide services for young people. These refer to information, guidance, counselling, education, empowerment, and the organization of leisure activities for young people, with the aim of preparing them for the social and professional transition to adulthood. Currently, the Ministry of Education and Research (MER) records the activity of 44 Youth Centers (including branches of district/municipal Youth Centers) throughout the country.

PORTFOLIO OF SERVICES

The accessibility of youth services and the inclusion of disadvantaged groups are some of the basic principles that define the activity of Youth Centers. [Framework Regulation regarding the organization and operation of the Youth Center](#) establishes as principles for organizing its activity: accessibility and availability of services, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, participation, etc. Although the Youth Centers aim to facilitate the personal and social development of all young people, the Framework Regulation qualifies as priority beneficiaries of YC services people from vulnerable, marginalized categories and those with fewer opportunities.

Youth Centers offer services and programs which follow increasing the participation and multilateral development of young people in the community, promoting active citizenship, and preparing them for life, based on the application of non-formal and informal education methods and activities. In order to achieve their mission, according to the Framework Regulation for the operation of the Youth Centers, the latter are mandated to provide the following services:

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Information and documentation service for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring equal access to quality and free information for young people regarding the challenges, rights and opportunities for their information and participation in different areas of interest;
Participation service for youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraging and supporting the participation of young people in the decision-making and democratic processes that concern them, as well as supporting different forms and structures of their participation;
Vocational guidance, training and professional integration service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing support for the development of the necessary skills and capitalizing on the potential, skills and ideas of young people, according to their development trends and interests, including vocational guidance activities, support in identification and adaptation to the workplace;
The youth economic empowerment service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing the knowledge and skills of young people regarding the opening of a form of economic activity and its management, providing support for the opening of an entrepreneurial activity, counseling in maintaining and developing the entrepreneurial activity;
Leisure entertainment service for youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> creating opportunities for useful leisure time, discovering and promoting young talents, according to their interests;
Voluntary service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> coordination of young people's participation in volunteering activities by ensuring all stages of integration, orientation, stimulation and recognition of the results achieved both individually and in groups by young volunteers;
Integration service of youth in risk situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitating the social inclusion of young people, offering opportunities to use their full potential, to reduce the risk of social exclusion;
Life Skills Development Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> advising young people through activities, progressive and coordinated experiences with the aim of stimulating their development from a social, emotional, moral, physical and cognitive point of view;
Outreach service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the provision of youth services outside the Center building, including outdoors activities and for young people with fewer opportunities, which can be achieved through the mobile team, a community partner or information technologies.

Figure 1. The spectrum of youth services that can be provided by the Youth Centers from Moldova
Source: Framework regulation on the organization and operation of the Youth Center, 2017

The data shows that only half of the young people who need services manage to benefit from them. [Study regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the participation of young people](#) indicates that, on a general level, only 20% of young people show interest in services and feel the need to be involved in activities to develop and strengthen their personal and professional capacities. To a large extent, the needs of young people are focused on the development of professional skills (economic empowerment, guidance, and career guidance), training activities, thematic information sessions and volunteering events - actions that take place mostly by associating young people in various groups with common interest. The gap between the levels of need and actual benefit of services can be caused by several structural factors: (i) *access to these services* (from the perspective of geographic location, physical accessibility, hidden costs); (ii) *the motivation to access youth services* and (iii) *the options of offered services* to align with the real needs of young people. Considering that this gap is also persistent among young people who show increased civic activism, we can conclude that the motivation to benefit from YC services would have a lower weight as an influencing factor.

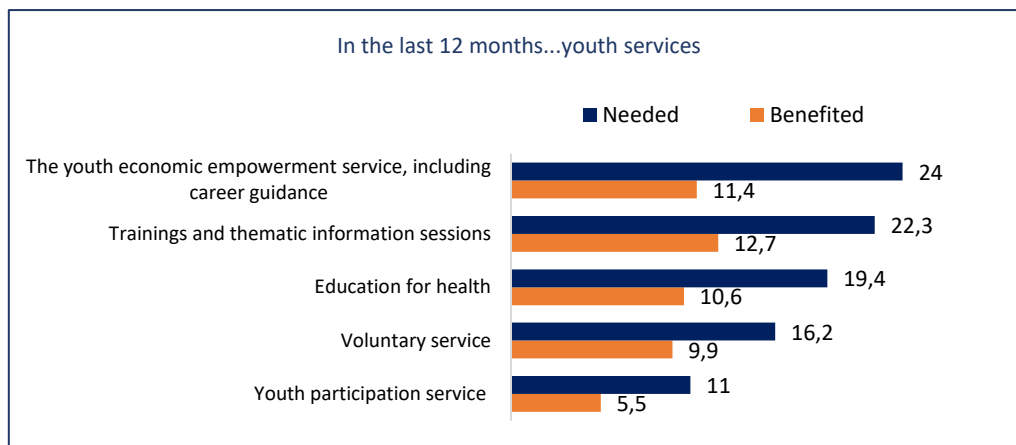


Figure 2. Share of young people who needed services and benefited from them
Source: CPD national survey, UNFPA; August 2020

The crises of recent years further reduced the rate of use of Youth Center services. The pandemic crisis has had a significant impact on the participation of young people in youth activities and programs. According to the data, only 10% of young people used YC services in 2020, which is a 10 p.p. lower number compared to 2016, when there were very few Youth Centers at national level.

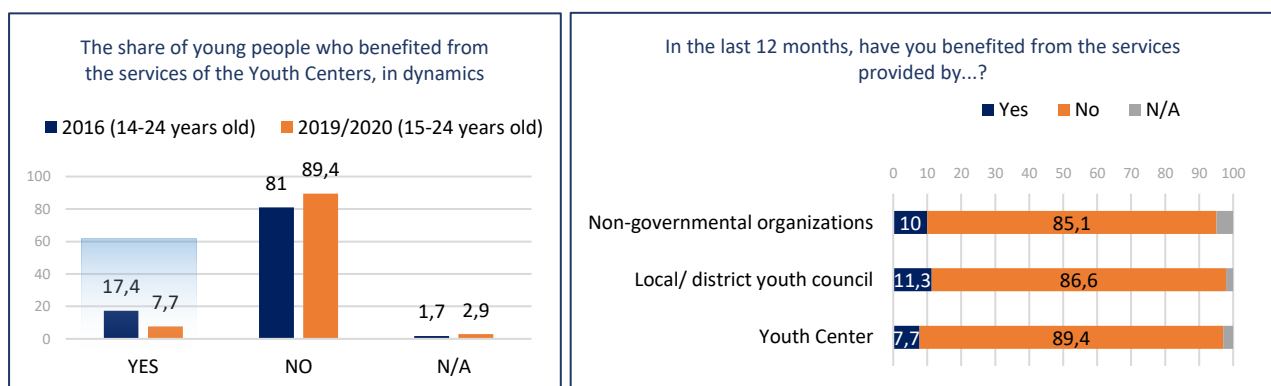


Figure 3. Share of young people who needed services and benefited from them
Source: CPD national survey, UNFPA; August 2020

BARRIERS OF ACCESS SERVICES

Every tenth young person faced structural barriers that limited their access to Youth Centers' services. Lack of time, unavailability of the necessary service and travel difficulties are the main barriers for young people who have shown interest in YC services. According to the data, about every fifth beneficiary of the Youth Centers did not access their services in the last 6 months due to lack of time and the unavailability of the service they would have needed. At the same time, for every tenth young person, travel restrictions and the distance to the Youth Center limited access and involvement in the activities carried out. This situation highlights two structural aspects: (i) the services offered by the Youth Centers must meet the current needs of young people and (ii) the Youth Centers must be accessible from the perspective of infrastructure and geographical location. Limited accessibility directly affects the opportunities offered to young people, limiting the chances to meet their needs for involvement and development.

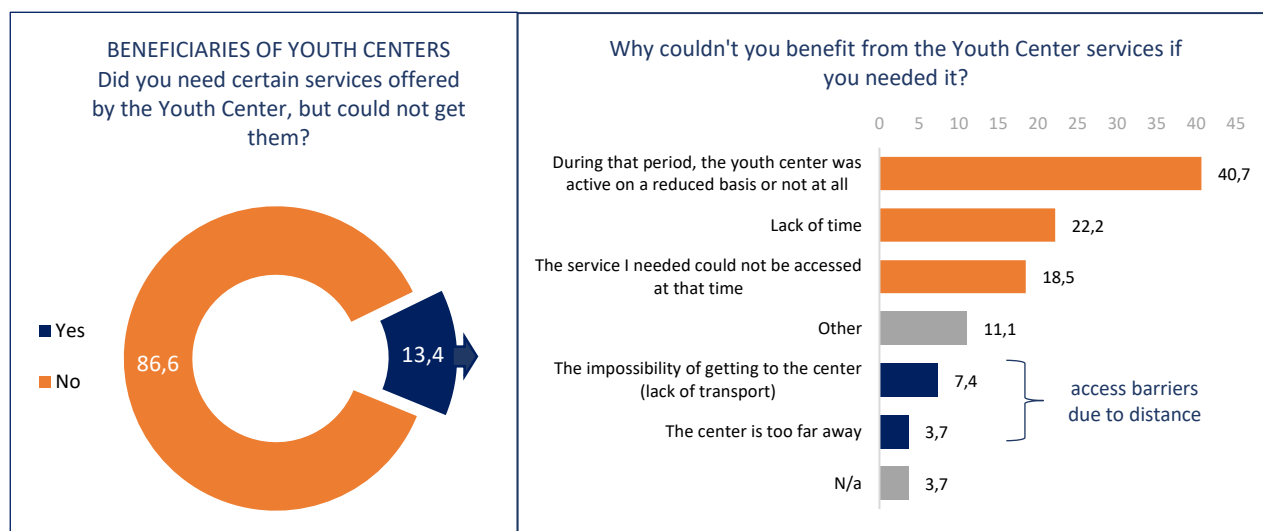


Figure 4. Types of barriers cited by beneficiaries in accessing youth services in the last 6 months, %
Source: CPD national survey, UNFPA, November 2020

Access to youth services and programs is also often limited by socio-demographic factors. Age, health status, socio-economic status can determine the willingness and possibility of young people to benefit from development services. Data analysis shows that young people with disabilities, those from rural areas or those with low income have less access to services and activities by and for youth. This is caused by the reduced level of institutional capacities and professional skills of youth specialists to work with disadvantaged and/or marginalized groups, the poorly developed infrastructure and not adapted to the needs of disadvantaged young people, the extremely low level of involvement of the Centers/workers youth in delivering programs and activities through outreach methods (see figure 5).

Youth-oriented services have a low representation in rural area. Youth structures are mostly founding the urban environment. Therefore, the activity of/and for the youth is limited to a certain group of young people, who are characterized by a higher degree of activism, mainly from the urban environment, with wider access to various sources of information. Often, the same categories of teenagers and young people are found in several youth participation structures from the locality, region and national level, the same young people being involved in youth activities.

Young girls/women are more actively involved in various activities being, to a greater extent, beneficiaries of youth services. The level of access to youth services is directly correlated with the visibility of the structures that provide them. Despite the wide range of services offered by Youth Centers, only 25.3% of young people

know about their existence¹. Young women were more informed than young men, and awareness was higher among urban than rural youth.

Youth services mostly cover people in the younger age groups. The highest level of activism is shown by young people aged 15-19, who are also the main beneficiaries of the youth services provided. An explanation of this fact lies in the existing dissonance between the services offered by local youth structures (YC, YLC, NGO, YFHS, etc.) and the interests of people from the older age categories, already oriented towards employment, family, etc. and who can benefit from the specialized services of other institutions concerned with employment in the labour field, entrepreneurship, social assistance, etc.

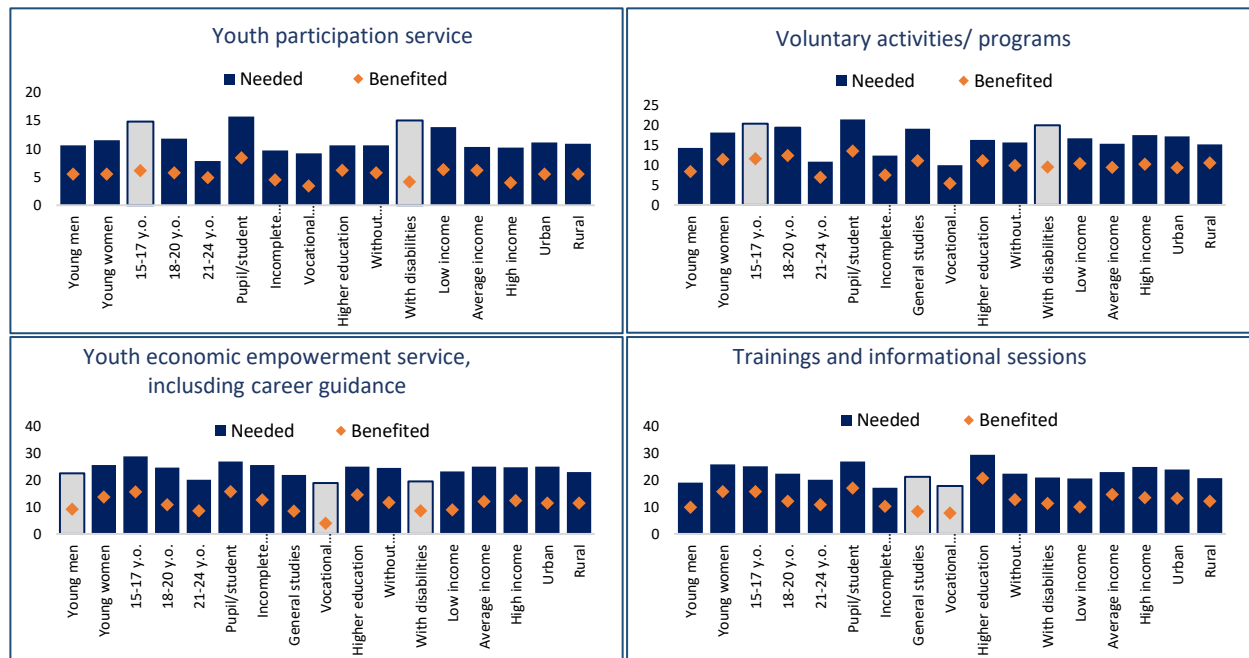


Figure 5. Access to services, by socio-demographic categories, %
Source: CPD national survey, UNFPA; August 2020

¹Youth Wellbeing Policy Review Moldova; OECD, 2018, https://www.oecd.org/countries/moldova/Youth_Well-being_Policy_Review_Moldova.pdf

BENEFICIARIES PROFILE OF YOUTH CENTERS SERVICES

Mostly, girls are the main beneficiaries of the Youth Centers' services. According to the statistical data provided every six months by the Youth Centers, girls and young men aged 15-19 attend their services most often. Compared to Semester I of 2020, in 2022 there is an equalization of the level of access to the services of the Youth Centers by gender. On the other hand, the share of young people from urban area attending YC is higher in the second semester of 2022, by 6.1 p.p. compared to the first semester of 2020.

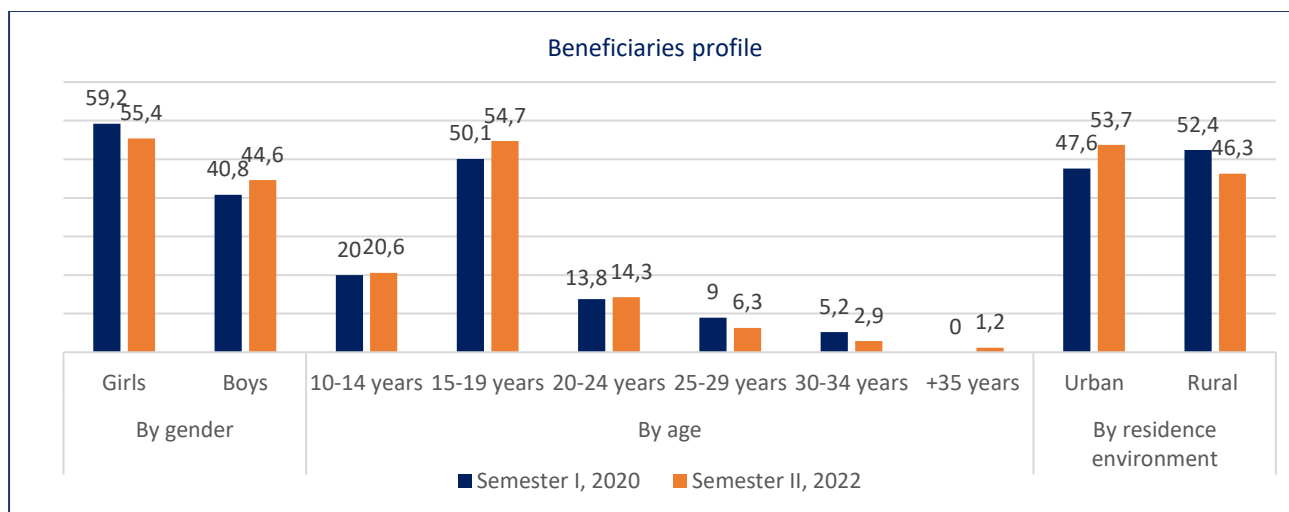


Figure 6. Profile of beneficiaries who access the services of Youth Centers, 2020-2022, %
Source: Statistical report on the "Youth Centers Activity", semester II 2022, UNFPA

The integration of young people with disabilities into the activity of Youth Centers still presents difficulties for specialists in the field. At the beginning of the YC activity, the share of disabled people represented only 0.5% of the total beneficiaries, in 2022 it increased to 0.8%. Considering that in 2021 there were about 11.7 thousand young people with disabilities aged 16-29, the involvement of the latter in the activities of the Youth Centers is extremely low. This is mainly due to the lack of capacities of Youth Centers' workers to ensure inclusion and low level of knowledge on how to make activities more accessible for young people with special needs. Accessibility of the infrastructure is also a major problem. The inclusion is a common issue for the whole country and, according to the existing data, it is also transposed within the activity of the centers.

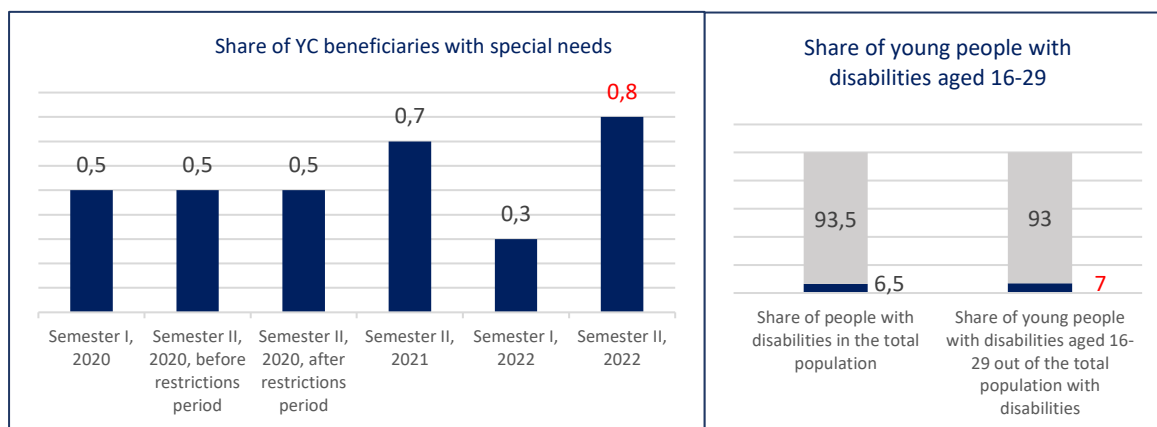


Figure 7. Share of young people with disabilities participating in YC activities, %, 2020-2022
Source: Statistical report on the "Youth Centers Activity", semester II 2022, UNFPA;

Figure 8. Share of young people (16-29 years) with disabilities from the total population with disabilities in the Republic of Moldova, %, 2021
Source: [National Bureau of Statistics](#)

The number of beneficiaries of the Youth Centers' services remains mostly the same. Compared to the first semester, 2020, in the second semester, 2022, their number increased by 258 people. Some fluctuations recorded during this period are largely explained by the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic on the activity of public institutions. At the same time, the share of young people who participate in several activities of the center has increased considerably. Thus, in the second semester of 2022, the share of beneficiaries who participated in only one activity was 37.1%, which is 17.5p.p. less than in the first semester of 2020. This is also due to the effort of the Youth Centers teams to conceptualize entire programs, which would ensure the involvement of young people in a complex cycle of learning and training stages in a specific field.

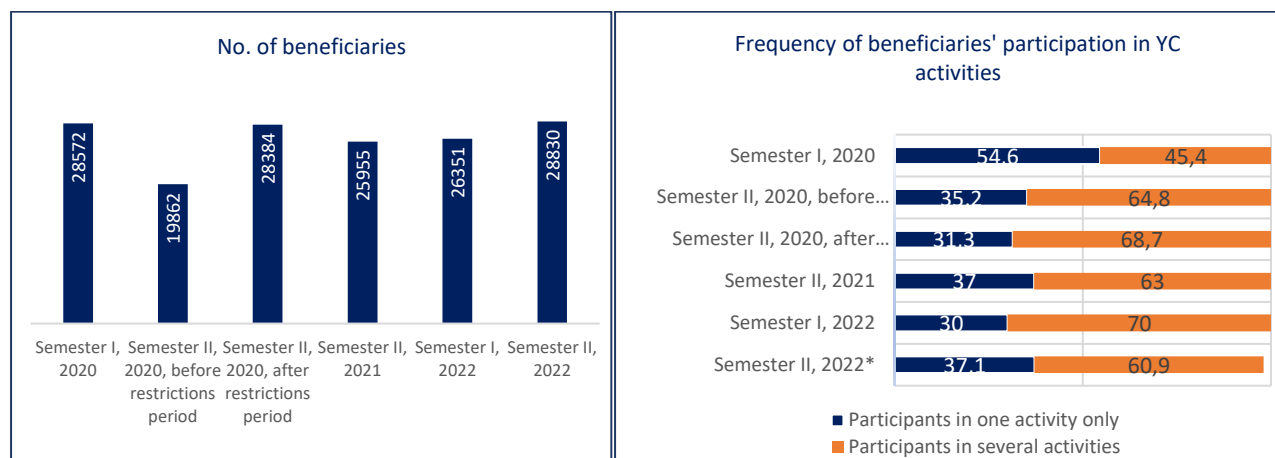


Figure 9. Number of beneficiaries and frequency of participation in YC activities, %
 *Differences up to 100% are explained by errors in filling out the Statistical Reporting Form.
 Source: Statistical report on the "Youth Centers Activity", semester II 2022, UNFPA

According to the statistical data, the top 4 services most accessed by young people are: (i) Leisure entertainment service (ii) the information and documentation service, (iii) the participation service, as well as (iv) services other than those set out in the Framework Regulation for the operation of the centers. The only deviation from that trend was the significant decrease in services other than those prescribed by the Regulation. The decrease is due to the focus of efforts on the development and institutionalization of comprehensive services and programs, as the activities provided before did not fit into any and were carried out focusing on the needs and requests of a limited group of beneficiaries, therefore they were short-term activities.

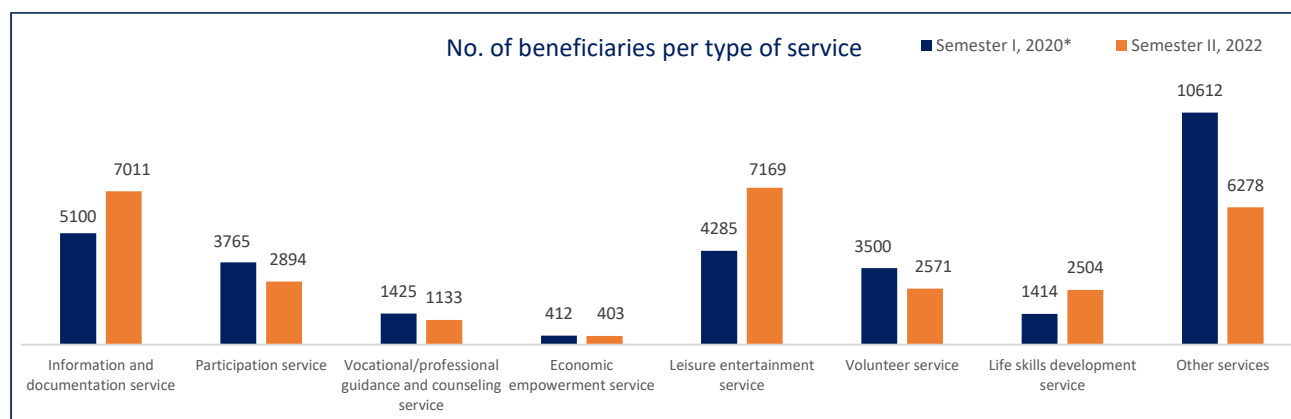


Figure 10. Number of beneficiaries per YC services, %
 Source: Statistical report on the "Youth Centers Activity", semester II 2022, UNFPA

The voluntary service is most often attended by girls. From a gender perspective, the biggest discrepancy between girls and boys attending the Youth Centers can be seen in the volunteer service: on average, 69.8% of girls benefit, compared to 30.2% boys. This difference is explained by the low involvement of boys in civic

participation activities. The profile of young people by age is the same, regardless of the type of service accessed. Thus, over 80% of the beneficiaries are young people aged 10-19, of which about 65% are aged 15-19. In the group of beneficiaries who accessed the participation and information and documentation services, there are young men and women aged 20-24, which is explained by empowering people of this age for active involvement in the decision-making process.

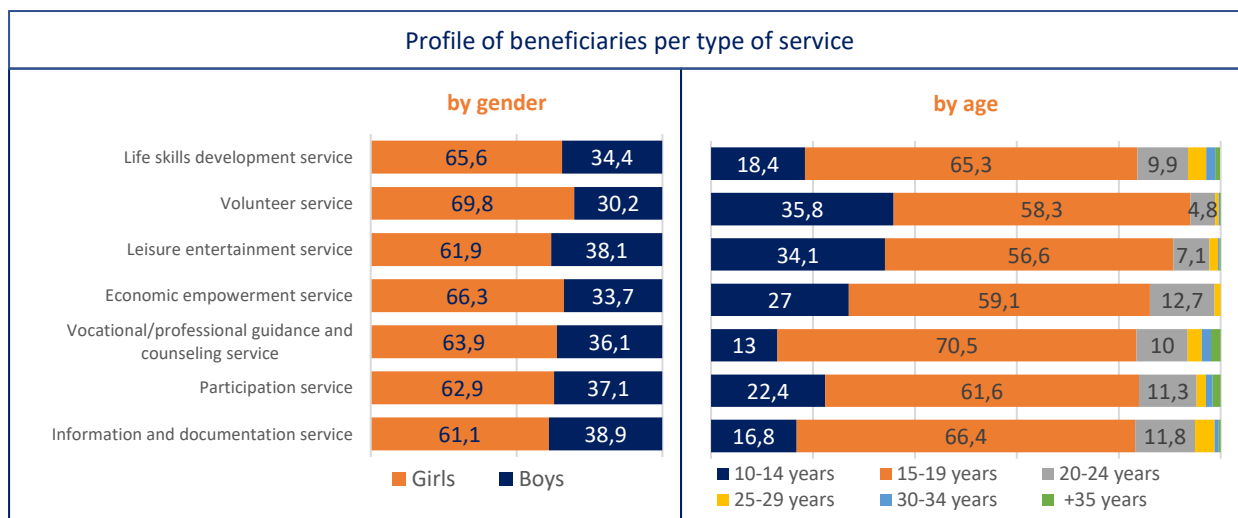


Figure 11. Profile of young people by gender and age per YC services, %
Source: Statistical report on the "Youth Centers Activity", semester II 2022, UNFPA

Although youth from urban and rural areas attend equally Youth Center activities data disaggregated by type of service show some significant discrepancies depending on living environment. The participation service is most often accessed by young men and women from rural areas: 57.7% compared to 42.3% in urban areas. This share is due to the expansion of this service through outreach activities, which led to an increased access of young people from rural areas. Instead, the economic empowerment service is mostly preferred by young men and women from cities. As a rule, this service is carried out in partnership with other social actors and, most of the time, at the headquarters of the YC. Since for young people in rural areas the limited access to public transport is an important barrier, their involvement in various activities is lower than that of those in the city.

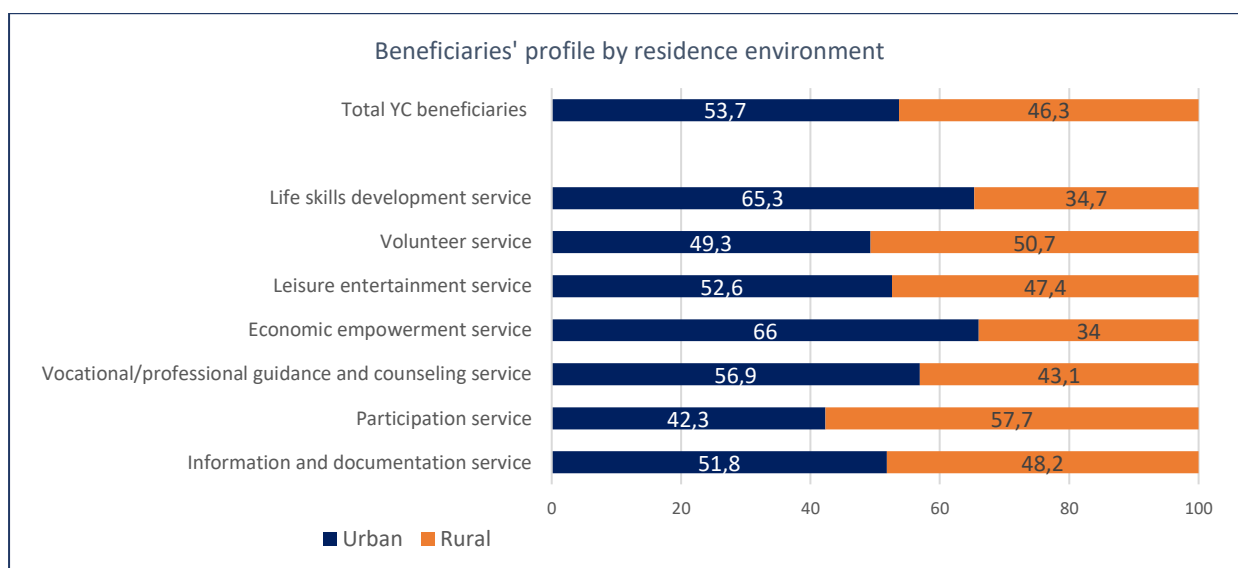


Figure 12. Profile of young people by residence environment per YC services, %
Source: Statistical report on "Youth Centers Activity", semester I 2022, UNFPA

IMPLEMENTATION RESULTS OF THE YOUTH CENTERS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The level of development of the Youth Centers has increased. Measured on a scale from 0 (lack of organizational capacity) to 4 (advanced organizational capacity), the average level of institutional development of Youth Centers is 2.05 in 2022, compared to 1.64 in 2018. Positive trends have been registered within each assessment area. At the same time, the most significant increases in the level of organizational development refer to the institutional components: (i) Programs/services and activities – increased by 0.59 points, (ii) Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting – by 0.55 points and (iii) Public image/communication and partnerships – with 0.52 points. On the other hand, financial and human resources management remain underdeveloped and risk undermining progress in other organizational areas.

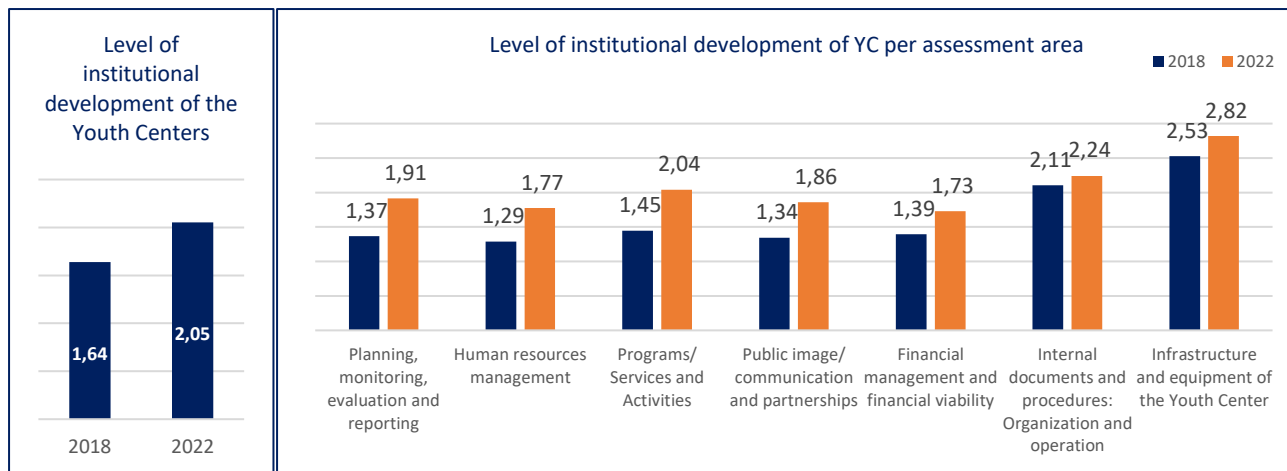


Figure 13. The level of institutional development of Youth Centers (points)

Source: "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018" Report, TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Most of the Centers benefited from institutional support, which has led to a more balanced organizational development, compared to 2018. In 2018, there were 6 Youth Centers with a consolidated level of development and over 9 centers with an initial level of development. In the year 2022, there are 13 YCs with a consolidated and advanced level of development, and only one with an early level of development. Therefore, we find that over 50% of the Youth Centers in Moldova have a higher-than-average level of institutional development.

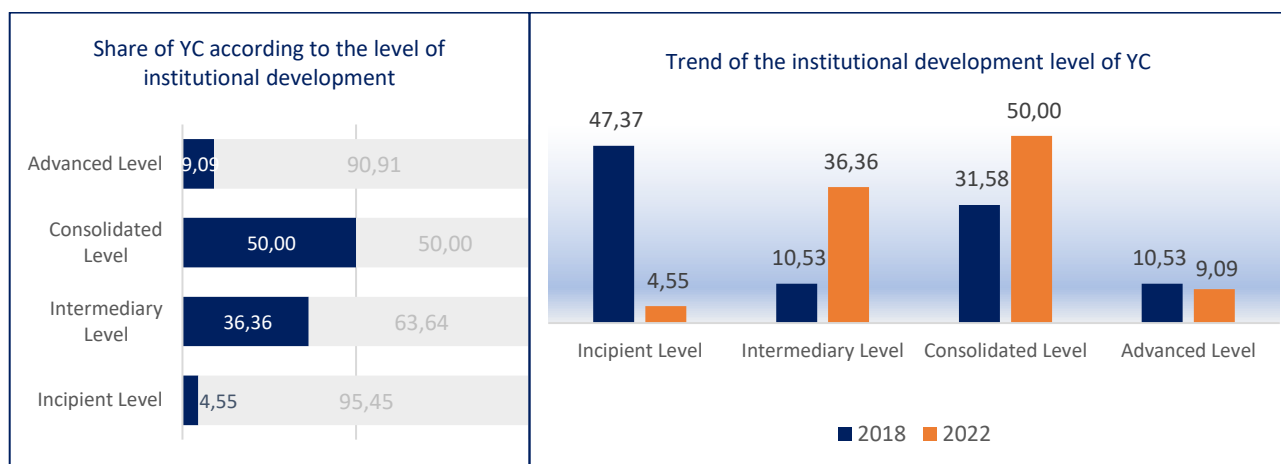


Figure 14. Share of Youth Centers according to the level of institutional development and its trend compared to 2018, %

Source: "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018 Report", TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

More than 90% of the Youth Centers are under the LPA and are not independent legal entities. According to the legal status, all the Youth Centers are under the management of the Local Public Authorities. Therefore, the internal regulations are also transposed into the activity of the YC. From a financial perspective, the centers also do not have an independent management, and do not have neither separate bank accounts nor the ability to manage their own budget. This is explained by the fact that in the process of establishing the YC, the LPAs did not consider the Framework Regulation on the organization and operation of Youth Centers, that specifies that these institutions are legal entities with their own organizational structure, and the LPA has the role of founder.

Therefore, the low level of development in operational and financial management is also explained by the legal status of the Youth Centers. In the evaluation process of the internal procedures related to operational and financial management, it was found that the lack of legal status as an independent entity is the basic cause of the low level of development in this field. Also, at the legislative level, the lack of normative acts regulating the activity of Youth Centers is a barrier in the organization of their activity.

See below the key findings for each stage of the internal management process.

A. Internal documents and procedures: Organization and operation

The internal documents and procedures that regulate the organization and operation of the Youth Centers are not subject to changes for years, thus they do not correspond to the rigors of time and the ever-changing needs of young people. A minimum set of internal regulations are required for the activity of Youth Centers, with reference to: (i) organization and infrastructure, (ii) human resources, (iii) organization of the activity, (iv) financial procedures and (v) security and health in the work. According to the data presented below, only half of the centers have internal procedures regarding the organization of the institution's activity, its organization and infrastructure, and procedures that regulate financial processes. Instead, around 30% of the total number of youth centers have internal regulations regarding human resources, safety and health at work.

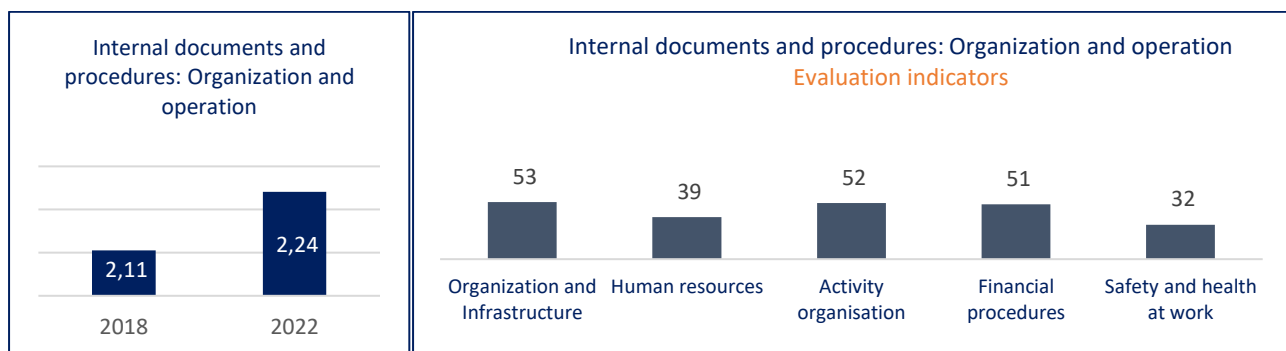


Figure 15. Institutional development level on internal documents and procedures (points), and on evaluation indicators, %
Source: Report "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018", TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

The evaluation process shows that most of the Youth Centers are at a consolidated level regarding the institutionalization of internal regulations and procedures of activity. The share of Youth Centers with an advanced level in this field remained the same in 2022. Most centers had this level of institutional development in 2018 as well. Conversely, the share of Youth Centers with a consolidated level has doubled, because of the decrease in the share of those with an intermediate level.

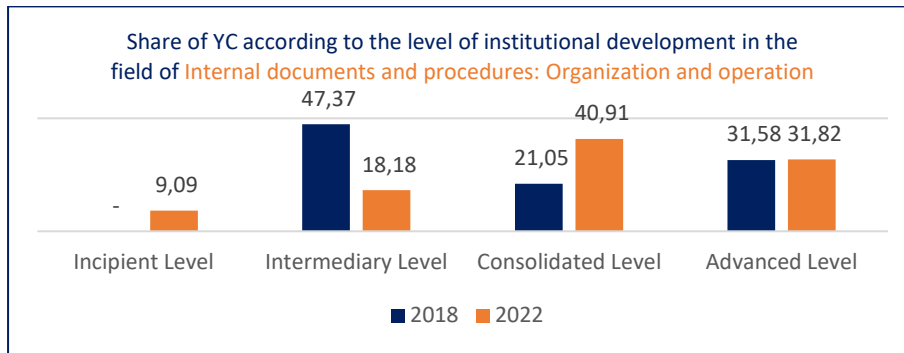


Figure 16. Share of YC according to the level of institutional development in the area of Internal documents and procedures, %
 Source: Report "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018", TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

More than 75% of the total number of Youth Centers do not have internal regulations regarding the registration and settlement of complaints, as well as regulations regarding the observance of the rights of young people in terms of equal opportunities and equal treatment. Once it is expected for the Youth Centers to be a safe space for the young people, it is important that the right to submit and settle complaints, as well as the right of young people to equal treatment are clearly regulated within the institution, in terms of ensuring these rights and giving tools for solving cases when they are violated. At the same time, several YCs have internal regulations aiming at ensuring the equal participation of young people in their activities. Even if they do not have formal regulations, each center tries to involve young people through various methods in their activity. All Youth Centers draw up activity reports, especially thanks to the requirement to present them within the Joint Fund for the Development of Youth Centers. The reports are drawn up according to a standard form and are focused on the progress achieved because of the implementation of the planned activities. For the activity report to become an evaluation tool of the Center's progress, it is recommended that the reporting be carried out based on the results achieved and not only on the activities carried out.

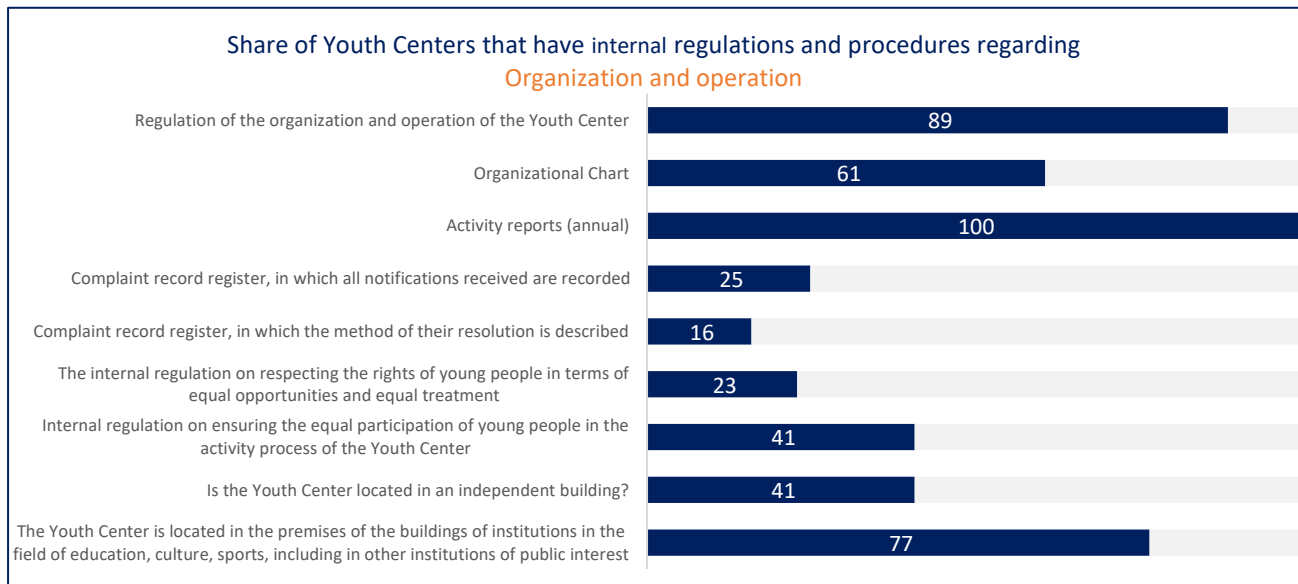


Figure 17. Share of Youth Centers that have internal regulations and procedures regarding organization and operation, %
 Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Although Youth Centers provide a wide range of services and programs, only 23% of them developed concepts of the services they deliver and only 36% of the programs they run. For the institutionalization of some programs or services, their initial conceptualization is crucial, otherwise the expected results will not be achieved, and their implementation may not have an impact on the development of young people. Considering the flow of personnel existing within the Centers, the concept documents of the programs and services are necessary to ensure their continuity, regardless of the people who will be responsible for them.

About half of the Youth Centers have tools for evaluating and monitoring the activities carried out, but since there are no concepts per programs and services, the tools are used to monitor and evaluate only short-term results. At the same time, a process of organizing the activity cannot be carried out qualitatively, if it does not have as a starting point the analysis of the profile of the beneficiary. When asked if they have a database of beneficiaries, 64% of the Centers gave an affirmative answer and mentioned that disaggregated data are collected based on criteria of gender, age, living environment, disability.

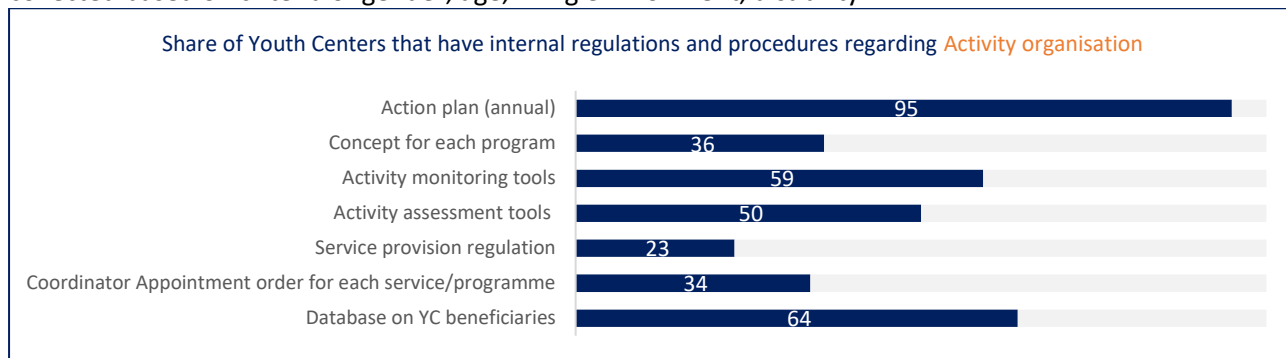


Figure 18. Share of Youth Centers that have internal regulations and procedures regarding organization and operation, %
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Few centers have regulated human resources processes. The management and regulation of internal processes with reference to human resources is indispensable in the activity of any institution that has employees, and Youth Centers are no exception. Of the 10 minimum documents and procedures that an institution must have, most Centers only have the job descriptions for each employee and the staff statements. During the interview process, the managers/directors of the Centers mentioned that this situation is explained by the fact that most YCs have up to 3 employees, therefore, they do not consider it necessary to develop such regulations. If necessary, they apply the regulations of the institutions they are under.



Figure 19. Share of Youth Centers that have internal regulations and procedures regarding human resources, %
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Considering that the budgets of 91% of the Youth Centers are managed by the institutions to which they are subordinated, financial procedures are not a priority for them. According to the data presented below, only 27% of the centers have internal regulations on financial procedures. Obviously, it was expected that the 23% of Centers with separate bank account have clear regulations established on how to conduct internal processes regarding the management of financial resources. However, only 3 Youth Centers out of 22 have developed such procedures. Additionally, based on the results of the evaluation process, we note that approximately 60% of the centers annually prepare the operational budget and the report on its execution, ensuring a minimum monitoring and evaluation process in this regard.

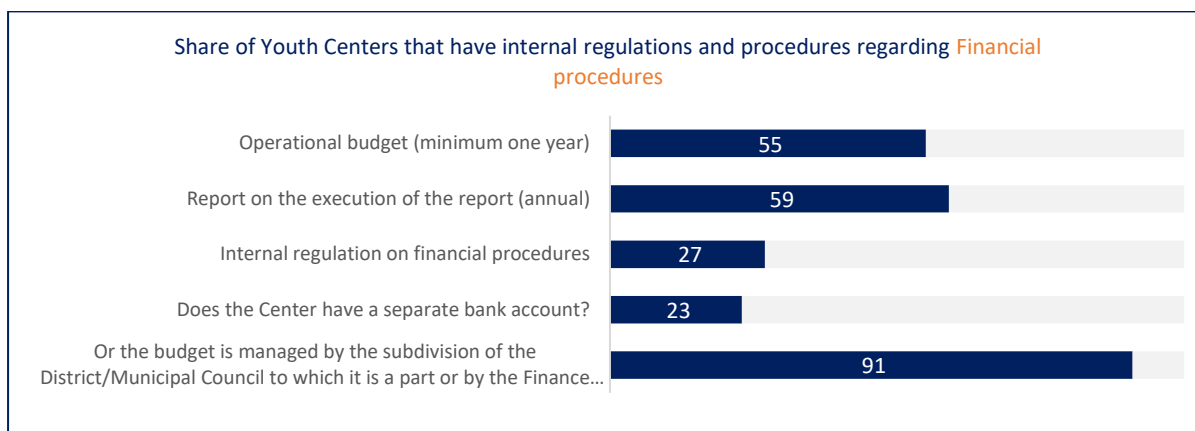


Figure 20. Share of Youth Centers that have internal regulations and procedures regarding financial procedures, %
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Safety and health regulations are less developed in Youth Centres. In half of the YC there are safety and health instructions at work, and in the personal files of the employees there are medical records confirming the medical control of the employed personnel. According to Law no. 186/ from 2008 regarding safety and health at work, employers are obliged to have a set of internal regulations, but also to ensure systematic information and training of employees in this regard. The fact that only 30% of Youth Centers have other internal regulations or procedures than those mentioned above is alarming.

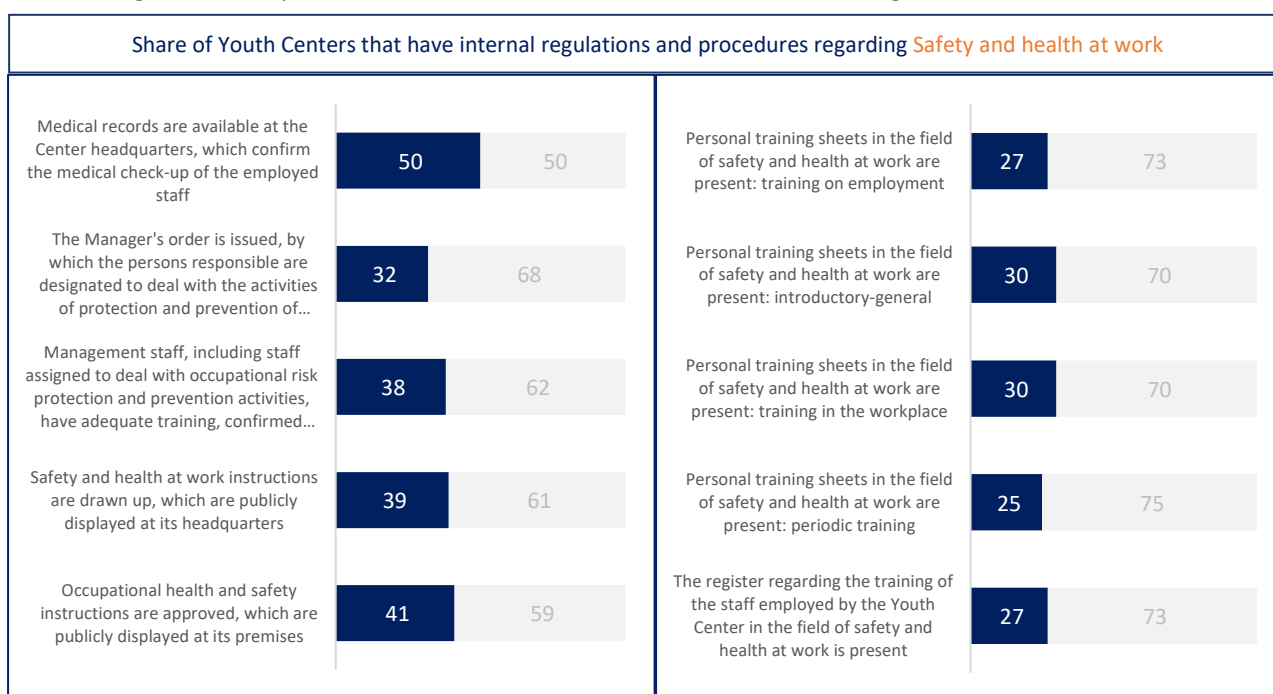


Figure 21. Share of Youth Centers that have internal regulations and procedures regarding safety and health at work, %
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

B. Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting remains an underdeveloped area within Youth Centres. According to the data presented below, in 2022 the level of development in this field increased by 0.54 percent compared to 2018. Although there is an evolution in this chapter, efforts must still be concentrated to reach an advanced level of development in this regard. Analysis of the disaggregated data on the evaluation indicators shows that the stagnation occurs mainly at the monitoring and evaluation stage. When analysing

the method of organizing the performance measurement process within the institution, most of the Centers were classified at an intermediate level of development (see figure 22).

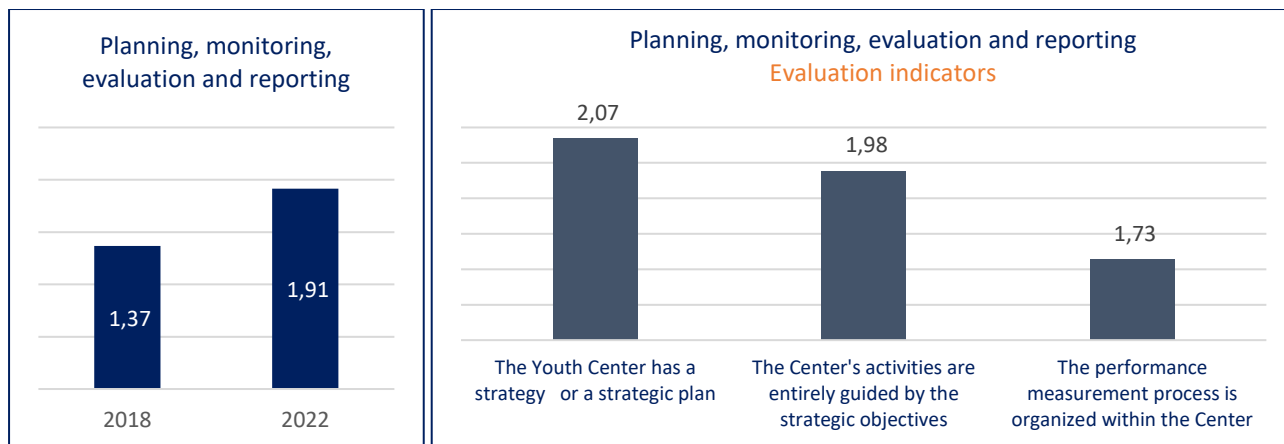


Figure 22. Institutional development level on planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (points), and on evaluation indicators, points

Source: "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial assessment 2018" Report, TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

The share of Youth Centers with a consolidated and advanced level in the field of planning, monitoring and reporting remained the same in 2022, compared to 2018. More than 50% of all Youth Centers have a consolidated or advanced level of institutional development in this field. Positive trends can be seen in the share of Youth Centers with an initial and intermediary level, the latter registering an increase of over 31% in 2022 and, respectively, a decrease in the share of Centers that had an initial level in 2018.

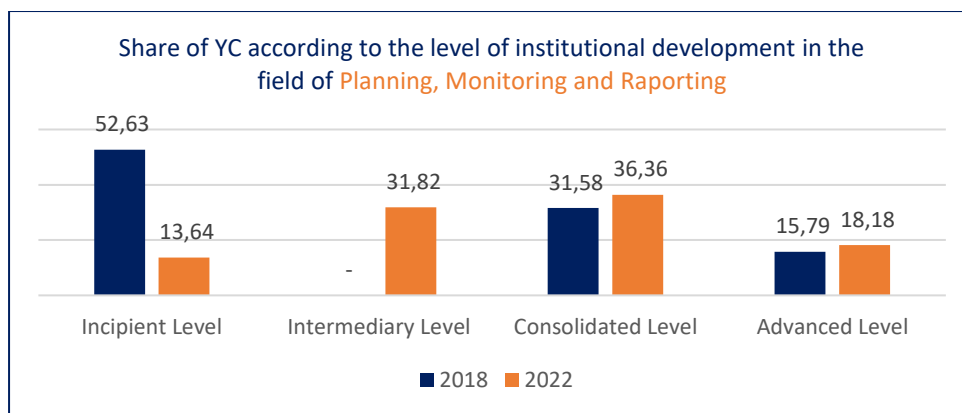


Figure 23. Share of YC according to the level of institutional development in the field of Planning, monitoring and reporting, %

Source: Report "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018", TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

For the most part, the Youth Centers do not operate based on a strategic plan. A strategic plan that establishes the areas of intervention of the institution and the results it proposes is an indispensable document in the organization of the activity of the Youth Centers. In 2022, only 7 of the 22 Centers that participated in the evaluation process have a strategic plan or a strategy. Therefore, the rest of the Centers operate sporadically or based on an annual action plan. This way of carrying out the activities does not allow adequate and objective monitoring and evaluation of the Center's results.

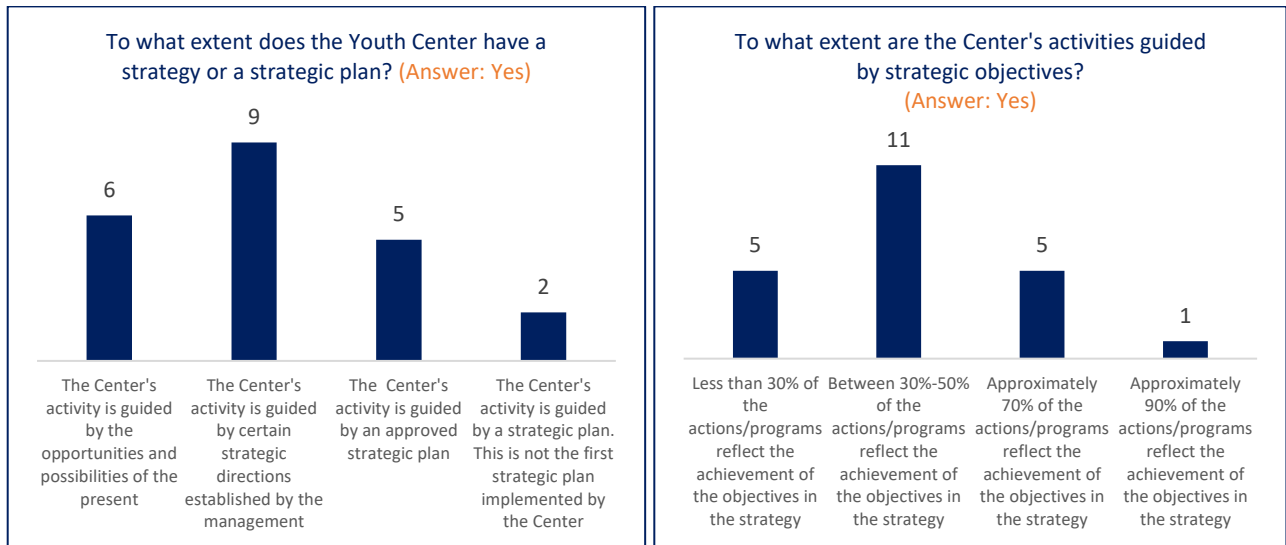


Figure 24. Number of Youth Centers that have a strategy or strategic plan and the number of those whose activity is guided by these documents

Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Eighteen Youth Centers take minimal measures to evaluate and monitor their own performance. As mentioned above, the monitoring and evaluation effort is not consistently and coherently applied in YC work. The cause also lies in the lack of monitoring and evaluation tools, as well as a strategic document. As a result, the institutions have no possibility to account for the impact of their activity on the beneficiaries. Omitting this step in the activity does not ensure the full achievement of the Center's mission to fully respond to the needs of young people, and it cannot be said that the actions carried out are sufficient and effective to register progress.

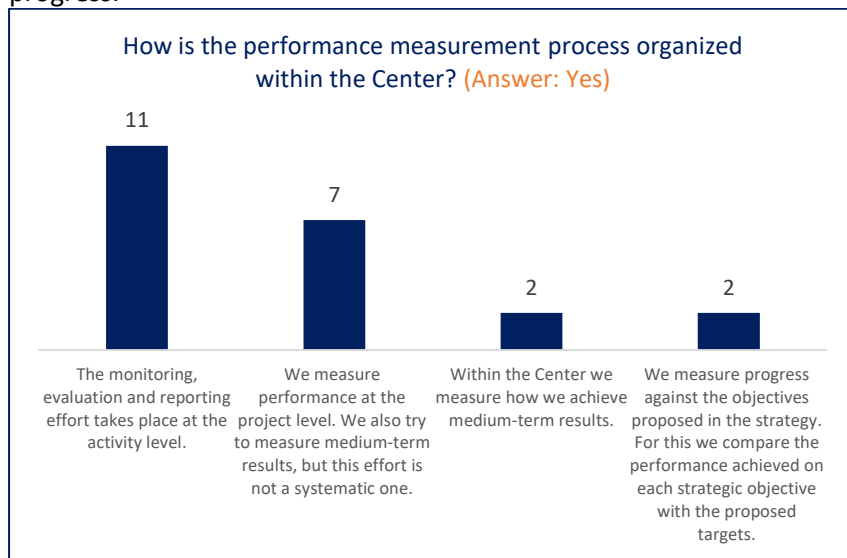


Figure 25. Number of Youth Centers classified according to the progress monitoring method

Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

C. Human resources management

The managers/directors of the Youth Centers are to be further trained on the management of human resources. The data of the evaluation process attests to progress regarding the level of institutional development in this area from 1.29 points in 2018 to 1.77 points in 2022. However, on average, the level of development remains low. The highest value among all indicators is recorded by the one that evaluates the involvement of volunteers. This is explained by the carrying out of volunteering activities in all the Centers interviewed. However, employee management needs to be improved. The evaluation indicators in this regard have a value below 2 points, which means that most Centers do not have procedures for regulating human resources and their professional development, as well as institutionalized tools for monitoring employee performance.

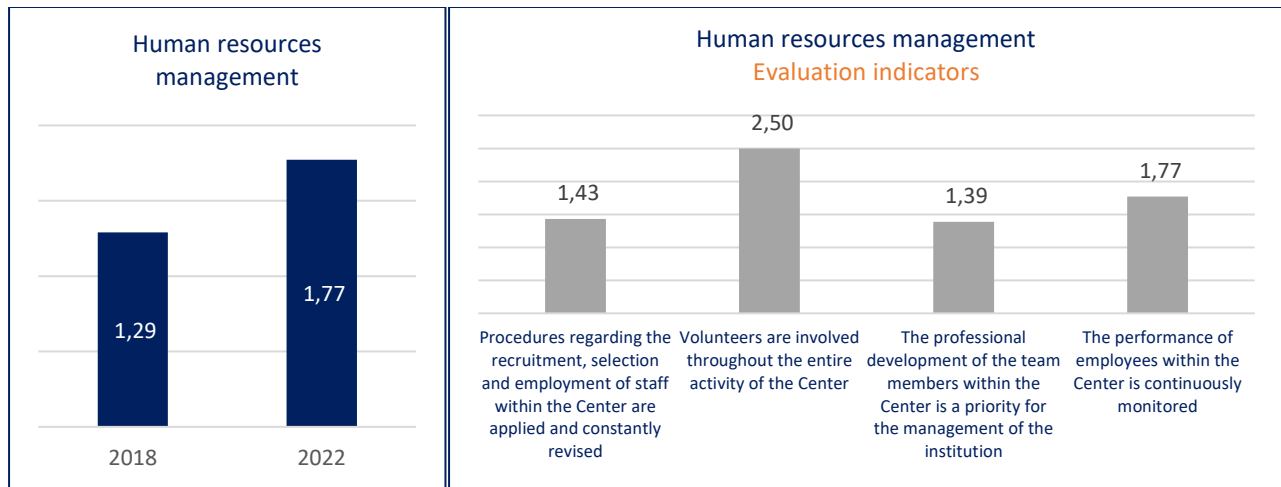


Figure 26. Institutional development level regarding the management of human resources (points), and on evaluation indicators, points
Source: "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018" Report, TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

More than half of the Youth Centers have an intermediate or early level of institutional development in the field of human resources management. Compared to the other areas evaluated, there is regression here. In 2018, the share of Youth Centers with an advanced level of development in this field was 15% more than in 2022. This negative trend is explained by staff turnover, especially among Center managers/directors. Thus, the non-institutionalization of internal procedures regarding the management of human resources led over time to a decrease in its quality.

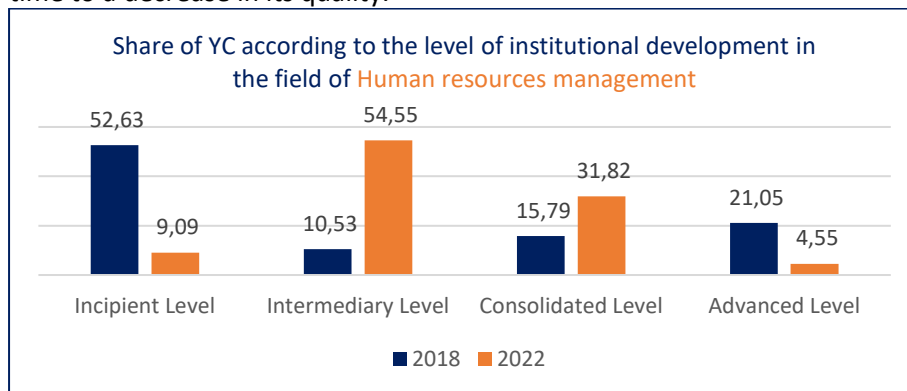


Figure 27. The share of YC according to the level of institutional development in the field of Human Resources Management, %
Source: "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018" Report, TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

77% of the interviewed Youth Centers do not have procedures regarding the recruitment, selection and employment of staff. In processes related to human resources, the management of the centers applies the existing legal provisions in this regard. Thus, 2 Youth Centers have a policy that is inconsistent, and 3 Youth Centers have institutionalized policies that they apply, monitor and review systematically. The benefit of the development and implementation of such internal procedures at the workplace is both for the employer, since the procedures involve a series of regulations in various situations that may arise in labour relations, and for the employee, in order to bring clarity about the rights and his obligations at the workplace.



Figure 28. Number of Youth Centers classified by the application level of procedures for recruitment, selection and employment of personnel in youth centers

Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

About half of the Youth Centers involve volunteers sporadically. Given the fact that most Centers do not have a conceptualized volunteering program, their involvement happens occasionally, in various activities, without having the possibility to evaluate the development of their capacities, or this is presumed by the involvement of volunteers. At the same time, 10 Youth Centers ensure a clear management process for volunteers: they have an institutionalized volunteering policy or a well-designed program, both resulting from the increased interest of YCs, recorded recently, in becoming host Institutions of volunteer activity.

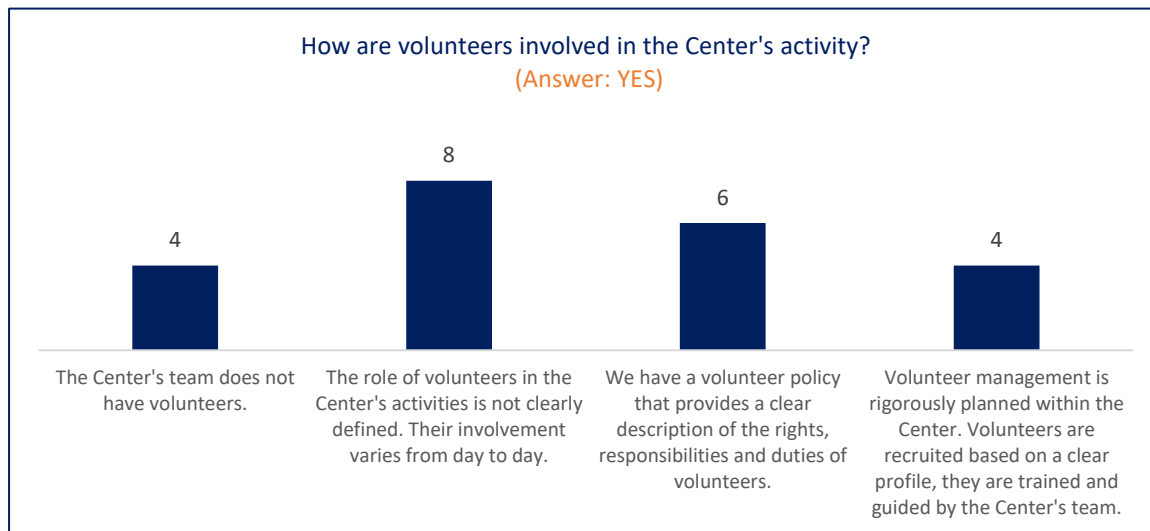


Figure 29. Number of Youth Centers classified according to the way volunteers are involved in their activity

Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Only one Youth Center has a professional development plan. At the same time, it has not established a periodic internal mechanism regarding the analysis and systematic updating of development needs, and its

achievement is not evaluated. As a rule, team members develop their professional capabilities at work, identifying opportunities themselves or benefiting from opportunities that come from outside the organization. Therefore, in most Centers there are no institutionalized mechanisms for evaluating the performance of employees. However, in the interview process, the managers/directors stated that they ensure monitoring through an informal process, which involves individual discussions with each member of the team, but they are aware that this practice is not an efficient one, because such information must be presented in the personal file of each employee.

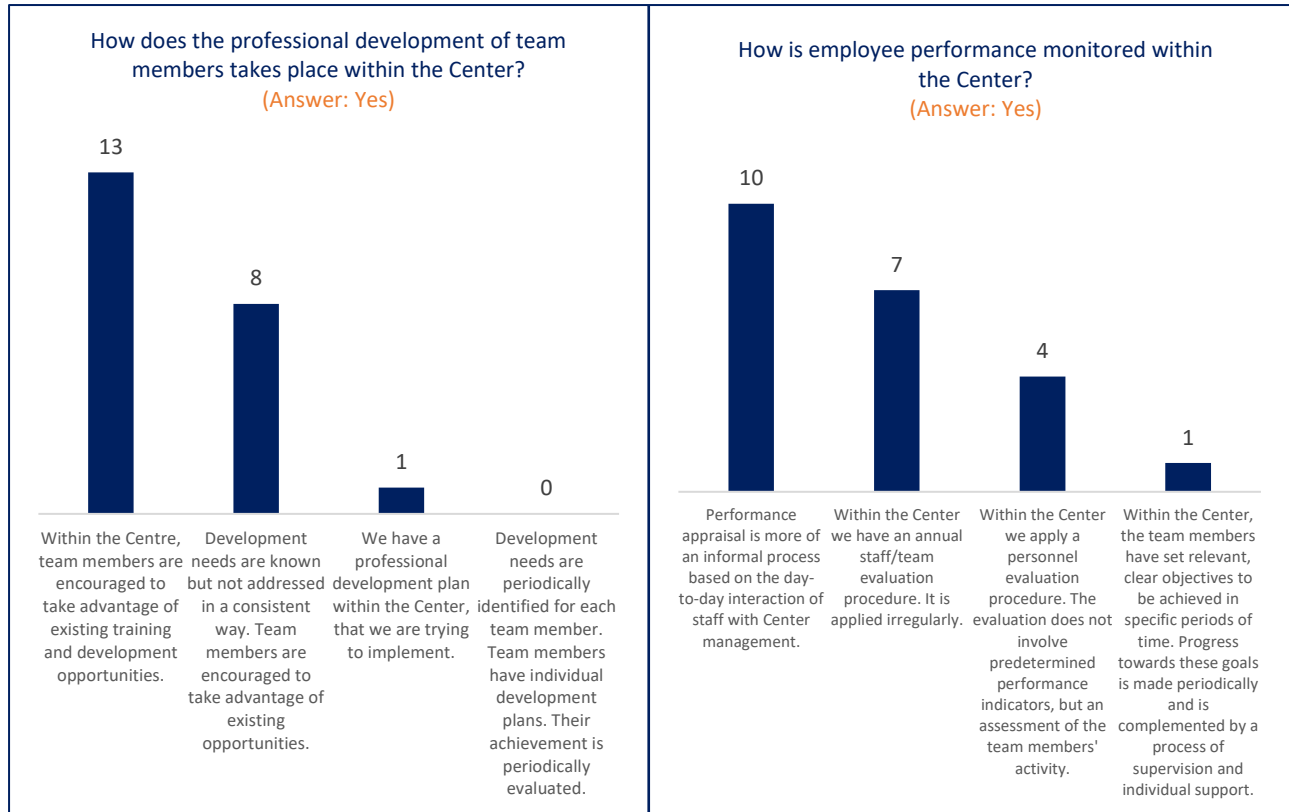


Figure 30. Number of Youth Centers classified according to the way in which professional development of team members takes place and monitoring process of their performance
 Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

D. Financial Management

Financial management is a poorly developed field in most Youth Centers. The level of organizational development remains the same during the 4 evaluated years: intermediate level. Although there is an increase from 1.39 points in 2018 to 1.73 points in 2022, this is insufficient. The low level of financial management development was determined by several circumstances: (i) the budget does not fully cover the achievement of the proposed objectives; (ii) there is no or superficial internal control regarding the use of the Center's resources and (iii) the budget development process is partially integrated into strategic planning, but also (iv) the legal status by which YCs are dependent on LPA, mentioned previously.

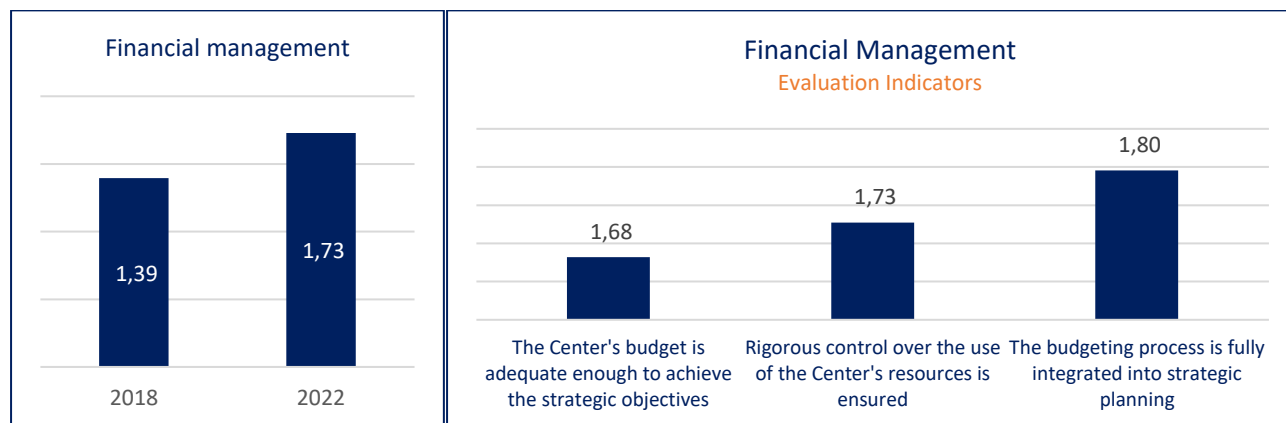


Figure 31. Institutional development level on financial management (points) and on evaluation indicators, points

Source: "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018" Report, TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Every 3 Youth Centers out of 4 have an initial or intermediate level of institutional development in the field of financial management. The share of those with a consolidated level increased insignificantly in these 4 years, while the share of Youth Centers with an advanced level of development is decreasing, reducing by 2.87% in 2022, compared to 2018. The given values are explained by the fact that the main, even the only, source of their financing is the local public budget, and the youth sector, which is not a priority for many representatives of LPA level II, is allocated insufficient resources to cover the entire spectrum of desired activities or programs. Since YC resources are managed by the institutions to which they are subordinated, most Center managers/directors have not institutionalized mechanisms to control their use.

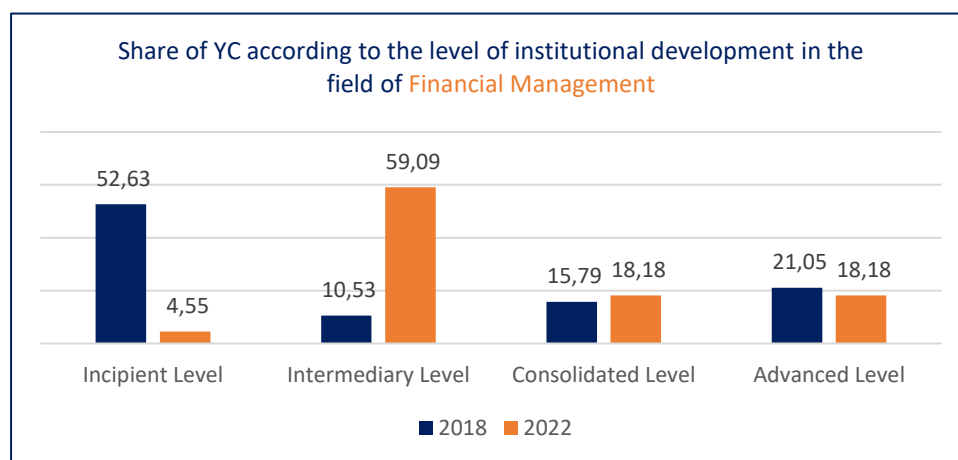


Figure 32. Share of YC according to the level of institutional development in the field of Financial Management, %

Source: Report "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018", TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

None of the Youth Centers have sufficient available budget to expand or improve existing programs. Just 5 of the Centers interviewed believe that the available budget allows them to implement or expand existing programs. Another 5 teams mentioned that the Center's budget assumes a small but steady increase each fiscal year. More than half of the Centers do not have the possibility to carry out their planned activities due to insufficient financial resources. The evaluation shows that the budgets of Centers are mainly made up of the resources allocated by LPA level II, but there are some Centers that have managed to attract external financial means, in the form of grants. Depending on the legal form they have, YCs have the possibility to substitute the budget from various sources. Diversifying the budget will provide financial stability, but also flexibility in its use, over a longer period.

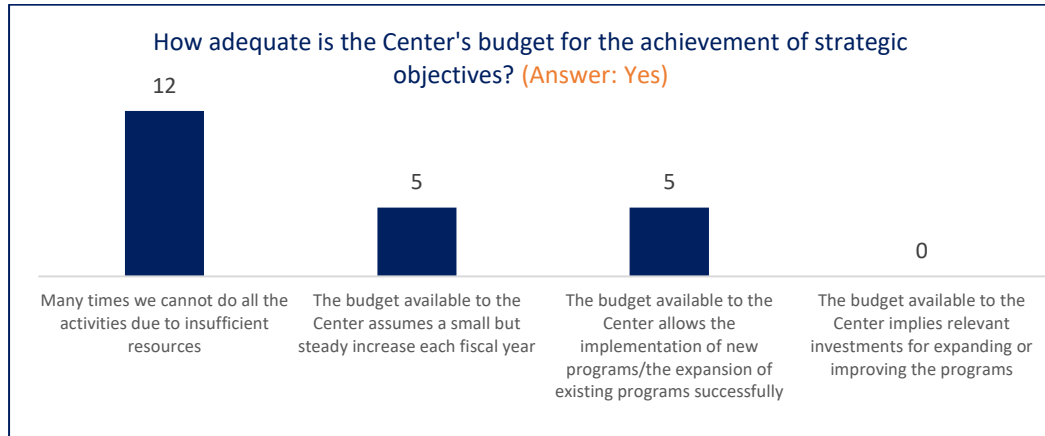


Figure 33. The number of Youth Centers classified according to the way they assess the available budget for the achievement of strategic objectives

Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Only one Center has a secure financial control system. The team managed to institutionalize a series of internal procedures to ensure integrity in their use, but also to guarantee proper management in the most efficient way. The evaluation found that 5 Centers apply a simple internal financial control procedure, and another 3 apply them sporadically. At the same time, 13 Youth Centers do not have tools for the use and monitoring of financial resources and are guided only by the legislation in force.

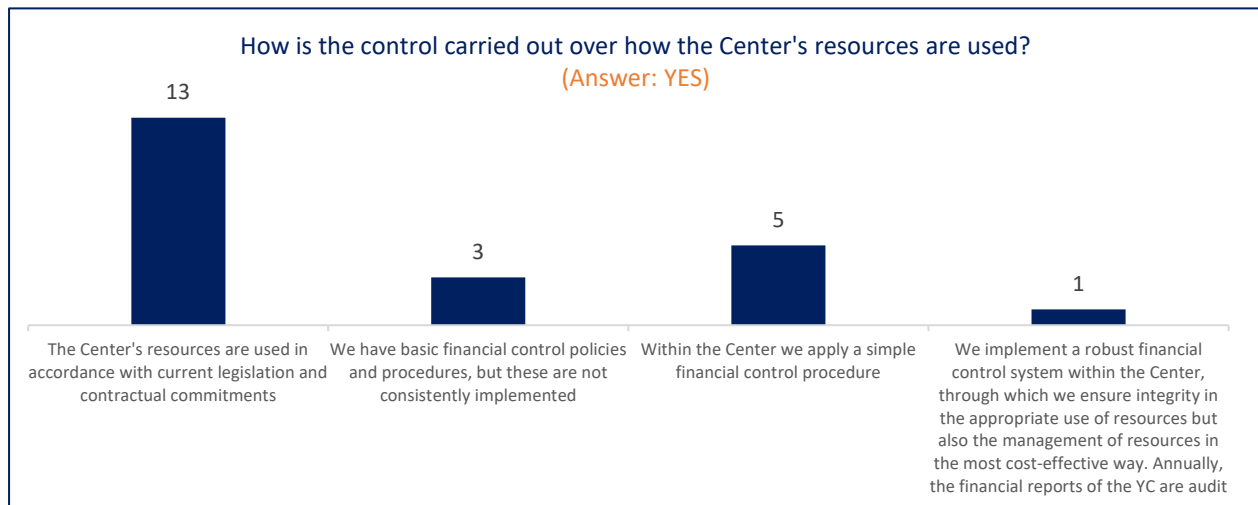


Figure 34. Number of Youth Centers classified according to the way financial control is carried out

Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

None of the Centers has a multi-annual budget. All Youth Centers have financial coverage for one year only, which makes their activity quite difficult. Since Centers are expected to institutionalize comprehensive programs and deliver qualitative and diverse programs, it is crucial for them to have financial stability for at

least 2 years. It is worrying that half of the Centers plan their budget, respectively their activities, based on the existing financial possibilities. As mentioned above, these are very limited and therefore do not allow the centers to function to their full extent.

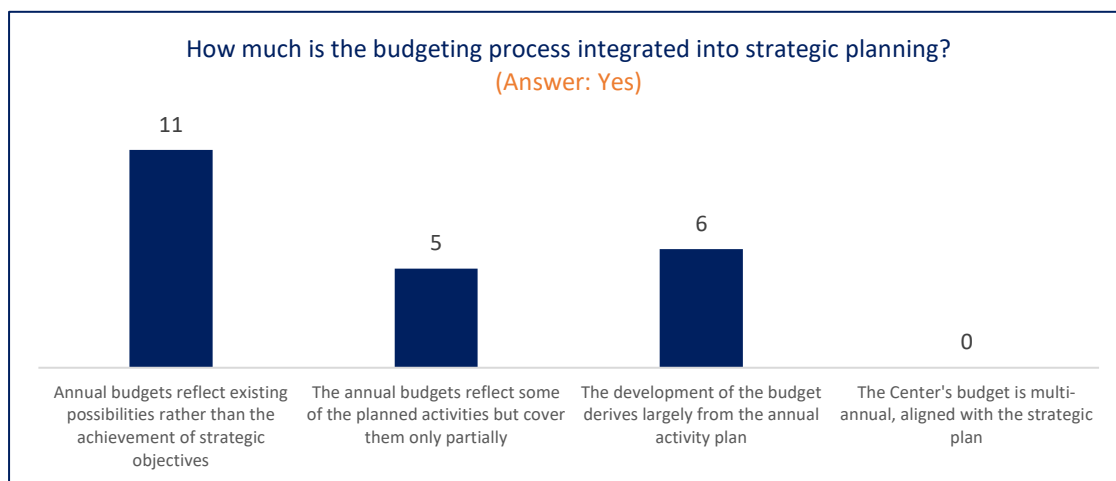


Figure 35. Number of Youth Centers classified according to the way budgeting is integrated into strategic planning
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

E. Public image, communication and partnerships

The level of institutional development regarding public image, communication and partnerships has increased due to the increase in the number of collaborations and partnerships of Youth Centers with other institutions. Compared to 2018, in 2022 the level of institutional development reached a value of 1.77 points out of a maximum of 4, but remained at the same level: intermediate. Regarding the collaborations and partnerships created by the Youth Centers, most of them have a consolidated level of institutional development. The greatest stagnation can be seen in the process of transparency of the Center's activity.

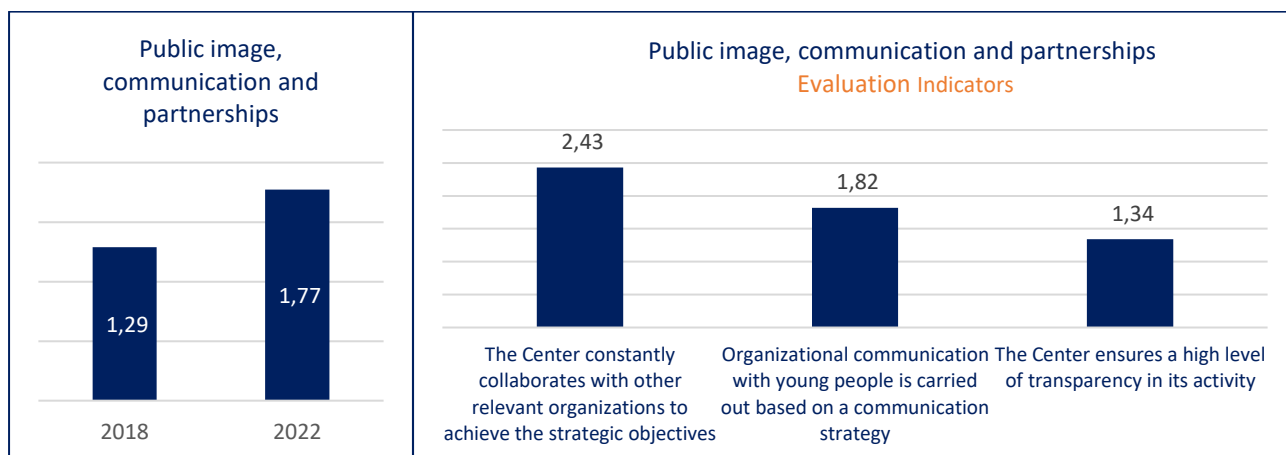


Figure 36. Institutional development level regarding public image, communication and partnerships (points), and on evaluation indicators, points
Source: Report "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018", TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

The field of public image, communication and partnerships registers the biggest decrease in the weight of Youth Centers with an advanced level. In 2018, their share was 21.05%, and in 2022 the value reached 9.09%. However, there is a significant increase in the share of Centers with an intermediate and consolidated level of institutional development. In 2018, half of the Centers had an initial level of institutional development, in

2022 the value reached 4.55%. This process has been achieved by recently established Centers or whose activity has been interrupted for an indefinite period.

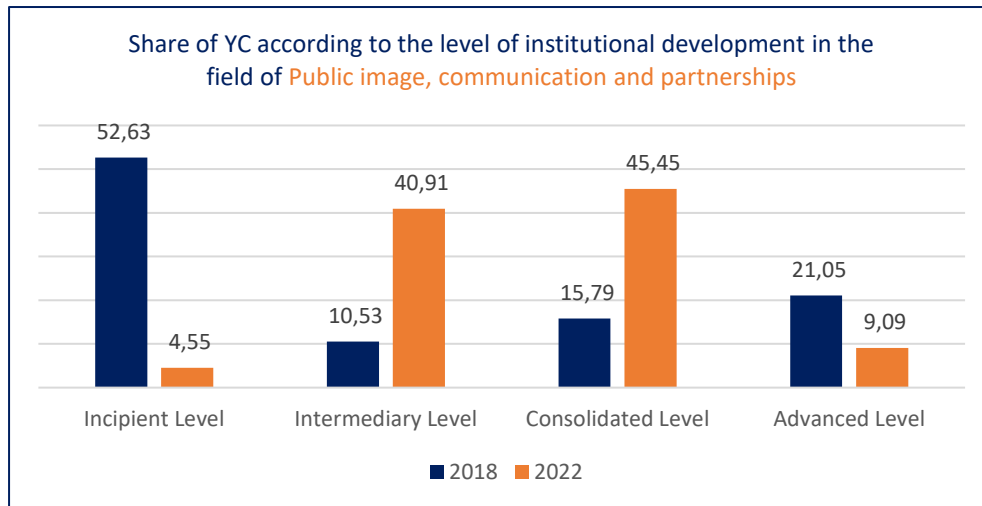


Figure 37. Share of YC according to the level of institutional development in the field of Public image, communication and partnerships, %

Source: "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018" Report, TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

More and more activities of the Youth Centers were carried out in the context of partnerships. Many YCs have recognized and appreciated the effectiveness and benefits of partnership relationships. Thus, 8 out of the 22 Centers aim to establish long-term partnerships to achieve common goals, and 4 of them have also agreed on joint action plans. 10 Youth Centers are making efforts to identify new partners and build various partnerships, but these are short-term relationships oriented towards the realization of a single type of activity or initiative. At the same time, 4 Youth Centers consider it strictly necessary to increase the effort to identify and select partners.



Figure 38. Number of Youth Centers classified according to the way in which they collaborate with other organizations in order to achieve the strategic objectives of the center

Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

A single Center carries out organizational communication based on a communication strategy. In the rest, the Centers carry out their communication activity, based on the profile of the beneficiaries. Although this method of communication allows them to deliver the necessary information, it does not ensure the attraction of new beneficiaries, who could be part of other categories of young people who have not yet accessed the Center's services and programs. 7 out of the 22 Centers carry out their communication sporadically, and this

is a risk for the sustainability of the activity, since constant interaction with young people is absolutely necessary to ensure a permanent flow of beneficiaries.

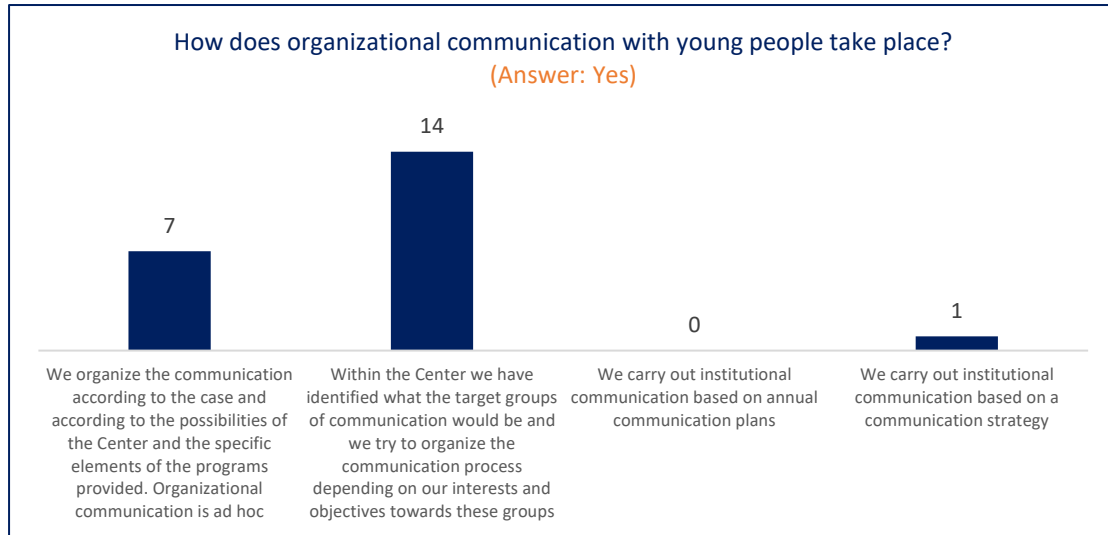


Figure 39. Number of Youth Centers classified according to the way communication with young people is carried out
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

The transparency of the Centers is reduced, for the most part, to the publication of information about the Centers' activities. During the evaluation, 15 Youth Centers stated that they regularly publish information about the activities carried out, and 7 Centers regularly publish information about the action plan, budget and annual report. Based on the notion of activity transparency, the Centers do not ensure this principle in their activity only by regularly publishing information of public interest and making it accessible to various groups of young people. The transparency of the activity is an obligation for any public institution and ensuring it only brings benefits: (i) shows the level of integrity of the institution, in our case, the Youth Centers, (ii) attracts new beneficiaries, (iii) attracts alternative financial investments, as well as various contributions to the activity, (iv) represents a good tool for establishing new partnerships and collaborations.

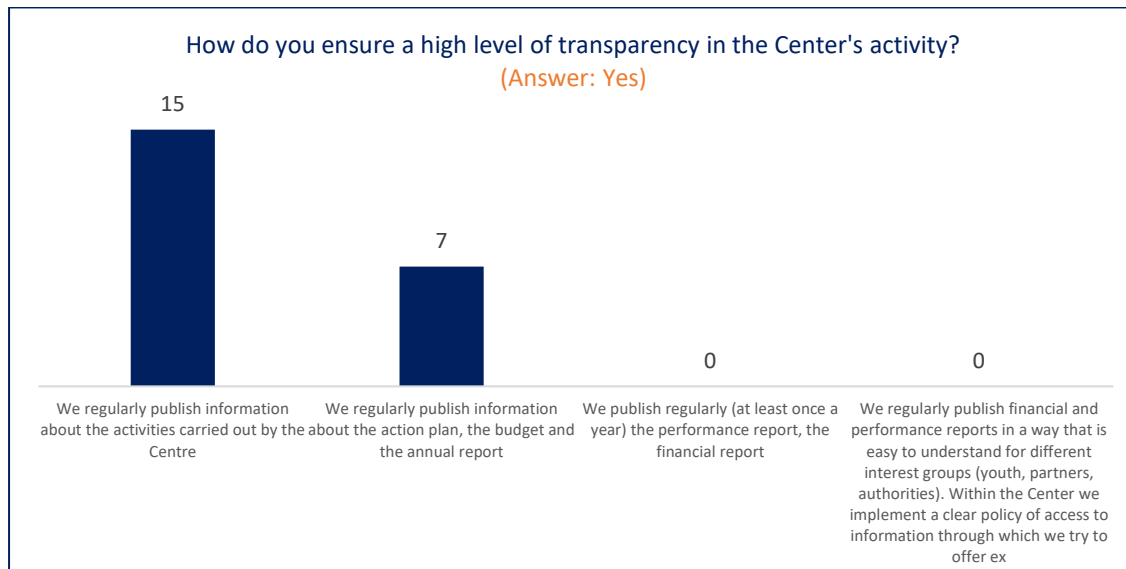


Figure 40. Number of Youth Centers classified by the level of transparency
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

PROGRAMS, SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

The performance of Youth Centers in terms of providing youth services and programs has increased in recent years. Now, the Youth Centers are at a consolidated level of development, reaching in 2022 a score of 2.04 points, on a scale from 0 to 4, where 0 means an early level of development (it is only in the process of formalization of activity), and 4 – advanced level of development. Although, at a slower pace, during the 4 years of implementation of the Youth Centers Development Program they managed to progress in the way of providing services and evolution of youth programs, the overall score increasing from 1.45 points in 2018 (intermediate level) to 2.04 points in 2022 (consolidated level). This evolution is also seen in YCs that have made progress in the development of youth programs and services - the share of those at an early stage of development decreased from 52.6% in 2018 to 4.6% in 2022. We note about 23% of the Youth Centers are at an advanced level of development.

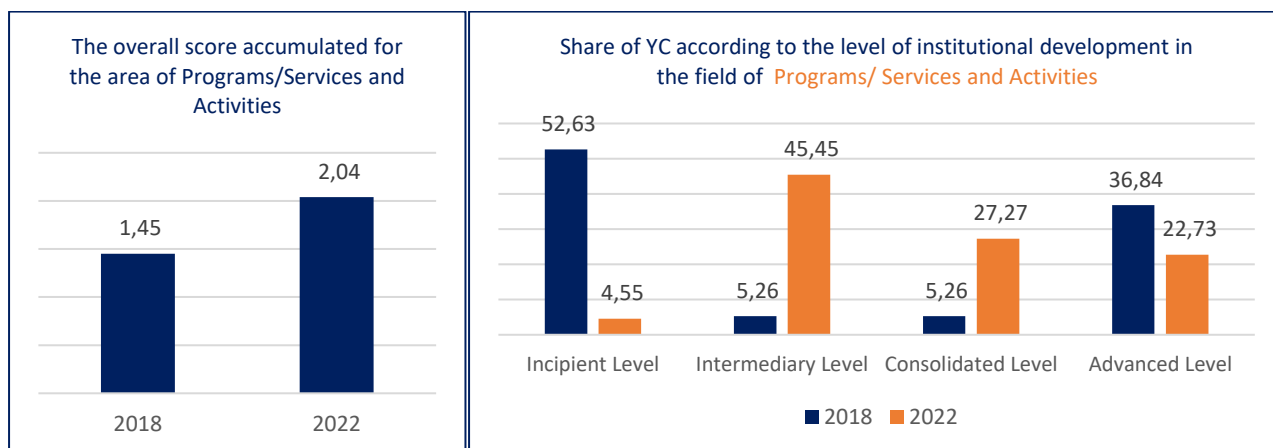


Figure 41. The level of institutional development in the field of Programs, services and activities, in dynamics

Source: "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018" Report, TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

The lowest level of institutional capacity is found in the area of strategic planning of youth services and programs. Despite progress over the last 4 years, Youth Centers continue to face barriers to strategic planning. Specifically, we refer to the capacity of these institutions to conceptualize and plan youth services and programs, considering the principles of results-based management (score of 1.86). In this context, we aim at limited capacities and skills to monitor and evaluate the performance of services, programs provided (deliberately difficult to achieve in the absence of strategic planning) (score of 1.55).

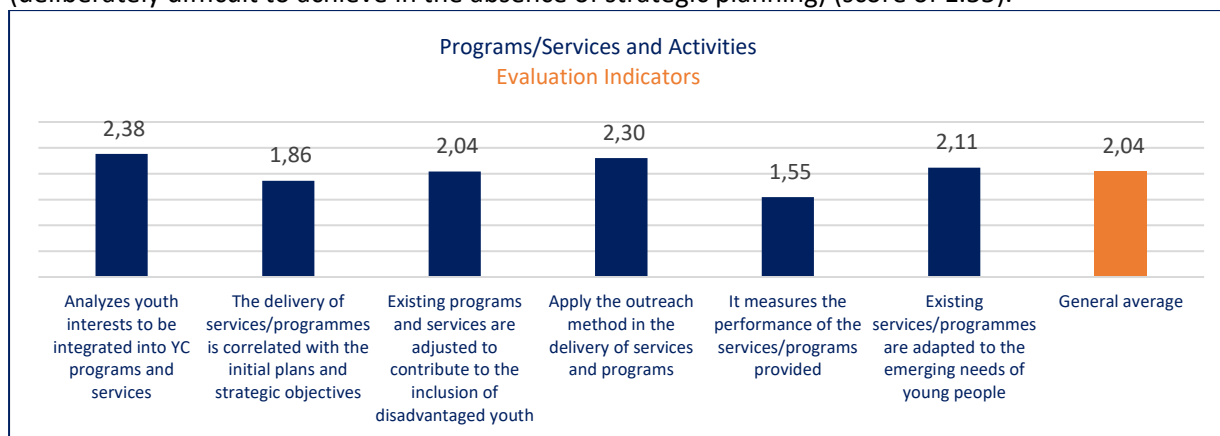


Figure 42. Average accumulated score on each evaluation indicator of the Programs, services and activities domain

Source: Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

The activity of most Youth Centers is based on general regulations. Deficiencies in strategic planning have implications for how youth services, programs and activities are delivered. For the most part, they are provided based on general regulations, stipulated in the Activity Regulation, without developing instructions, guides or structured concepts for each service. Currently, only 3 out of 22 evaluated Youth Centers have instructions based on which youth services and programs are provided. In the rest of the cases, performance is measured at the level of short-term results, without estimating their impact.

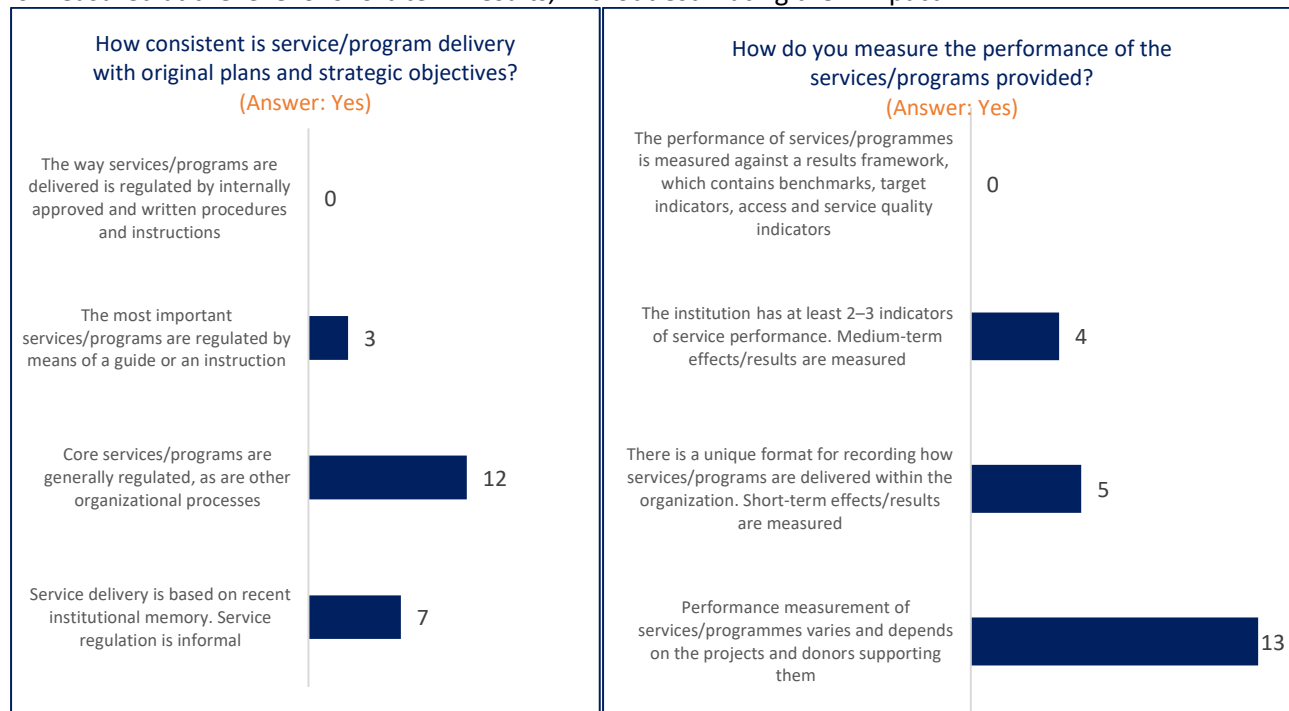
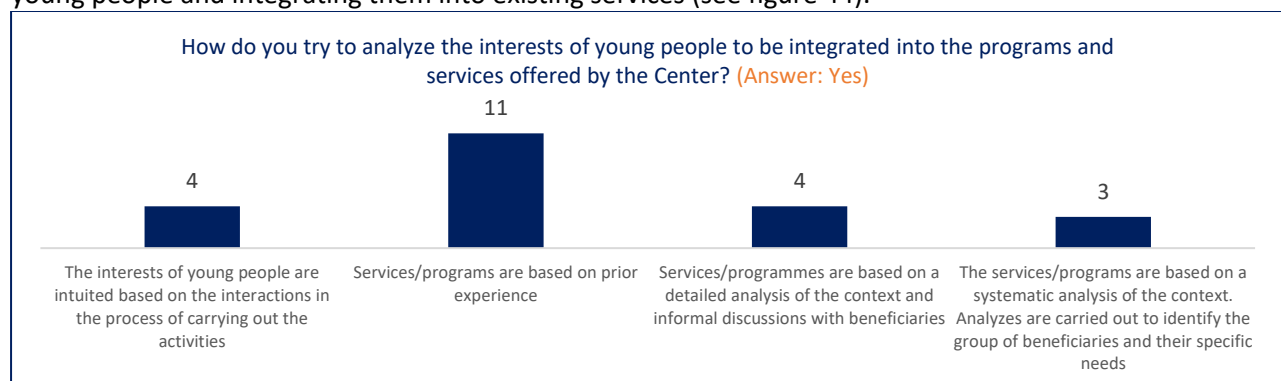


Figure 43. Number of Youth Centers that apply elements of strategic planning in practice
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

The analysis of young people's interests belongs to an informal, less structured process. The quality of services and their performance depend, to a large extent, on how they are planned and the degree to which they respond to the specific needs of young people. In the absence of a consistent and systematic assessment of needs, there is a risk that youth services and programs will superficially address the interests of young people, thus becoming unattractive or having limited impact on beneficiaries. The evaluation results show that more than half of the Youth Centers do not apply structured needs assessment practices, relying more on previous observations or experiences. This is determined by the limited institutional capacities of the YC to develop evaluation tools, but also to plan a systematic and consistent process of analysing the needs of young people and integrating them into existing services (see figure 44).



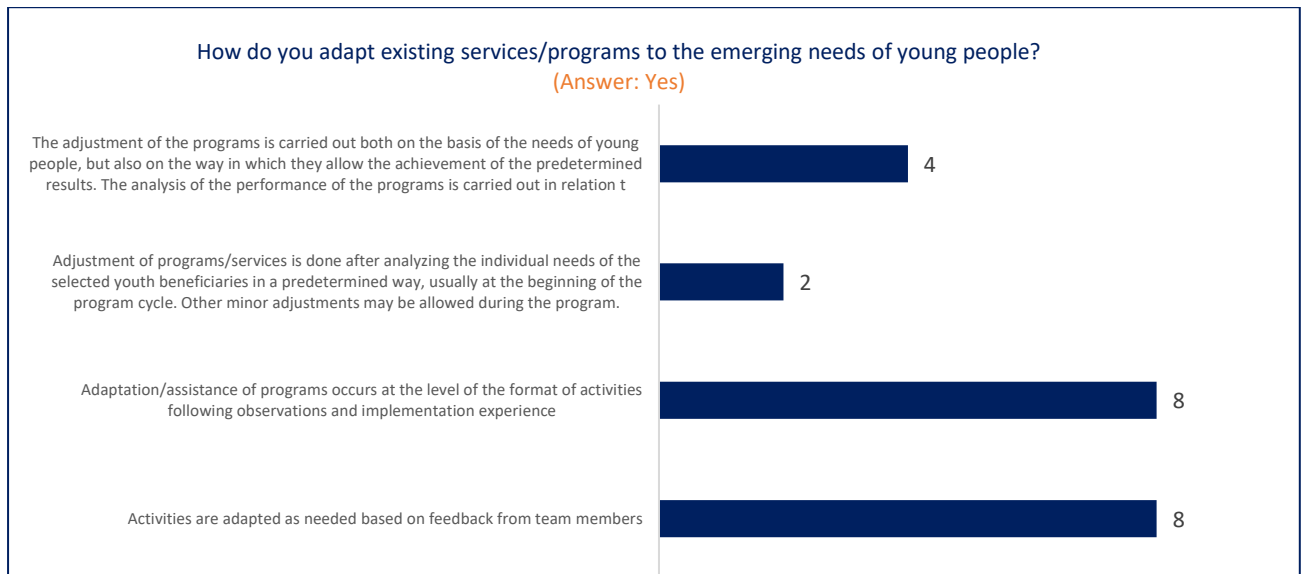


Figure 44. The number of Youth Centers that apply practices of analyzing the needs of young people and integrating them into services
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

The perspective of inclusion continues to be insufficiently addressed in youth services and programs. Although considerable efforts have been made in recent years to ensure the inclusion of all young people in services/programmes and various opportunities, the principle of "leaving no one behind" remains a challenge for YC. A small number (only 6) managed to integrate the principle of inclusion in one or more services and programs provided. Limited capacities, both at the level of human resources and at the level of infrastructure, are important barriers for Youth Centers in terms of ensuring broad access, especially of disadvantaged young people, to youth services and programs. A solution in this sense aims to provide services through outreach methods, but this practice is also not very widespread in the activity of the Centers.

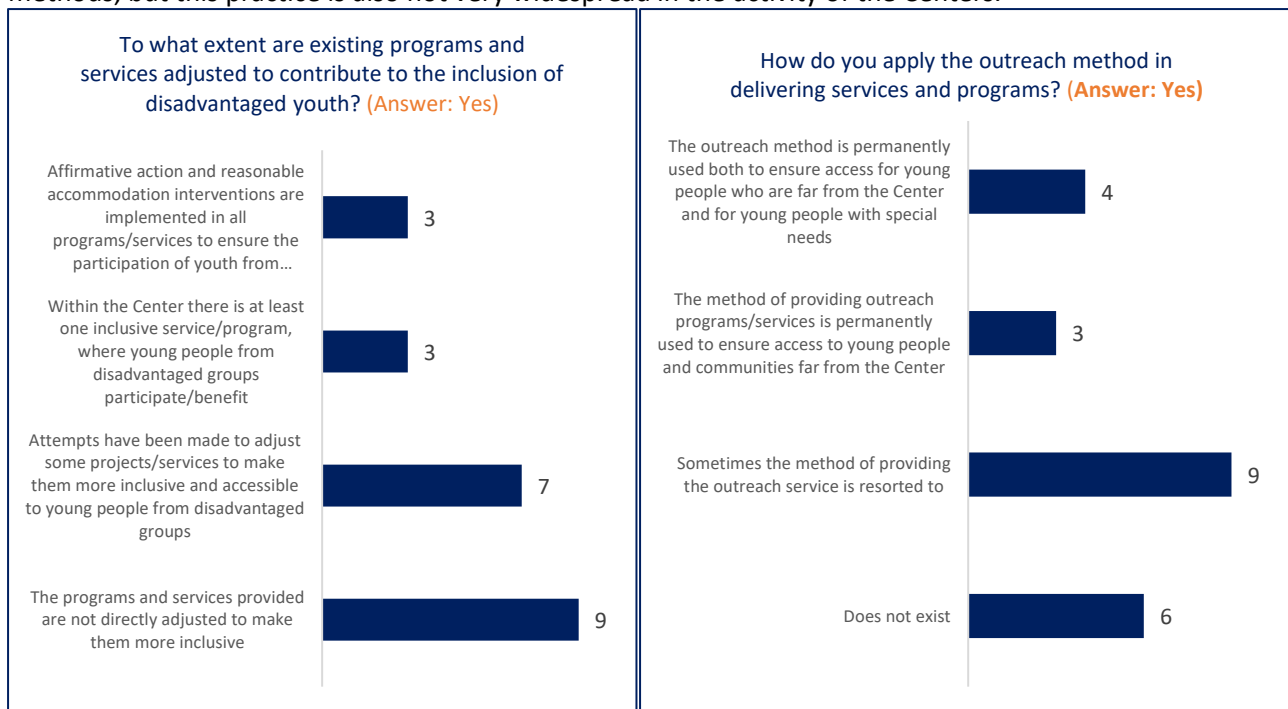


Figure 45. Number of Youth Centers addressing the perspective of inclusion in services and programs
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT

The level of institutional development in the field of infrastructure and equipment has increased significantly. Data in the figure below show that the Youth Centers have gone through a significant process of institutional development. If in 2018, YCs that had an intermediate level of development constituted about 21.05%, then at the end of 2022 this indicator decreased by about 16.5%, which shows that some of the YCs have evolved in this chapter. The same positive trend can be seen in the case of centers with a consolidated level of development. Their share increased in 2022 by approximately 25.12% compared to 2018. The decrease in share by 8.61% of YC with advanced level in 2022 is explained by the fact that, since the last assessment carried out in 2018, the YC network has been expanded with new centers, whose level of institutional development was intermediate.

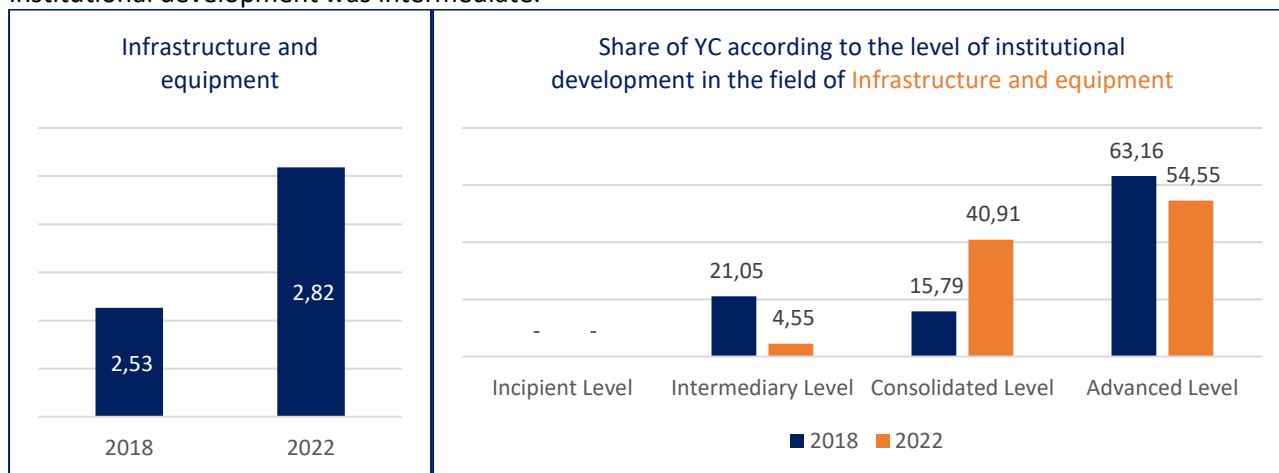


Figure 46. The level of institutional development in the field of Infrastructure and equipment (points), and on evaluation indicators, % Source: "Institutional capacities of Youth Centers - initial evaluation 2018" Report, TdH Moldova, PA Făclia, UNFPA; Results of the CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022.

Youth centers have become more accessible to young people, including young people with disabilities. The accessibility process was possible thanks to the financial support worth 4 million lei, offered by the United Nations Population Fund for the accessibility of institutions, with the aim of increasing the inclusion of young people in the youth programs held at the local level². Thus, during 2022, YCTs in Nisporeni, Bălți, Soroca, Orhei and Criuleni have become more accessible and friendlier for young people. Although, according to the self-evaluation, 45% of the YCs stated that they are accessible, in the evaluation process it was found that the accessibility of the infrastructure is limited only to the installation of an access ramp, which is not enough.

Most of the Youth Centers have a favourable geographical location, being in the premises of public institutions well known by the population and near the main routes provided by means of public transport. However, the lack of separate buildings reduces the accessibility of young people. The location of the YC is very important, because the beneficiaries are also the young people from the neighbouring rural areas. Directly, for this category, but also for the others, about 77% of YCs place through communication networks and/or official online pages, data on the accessibility of the premises, and a share of 86% have information panels installed.

² https://moldova.unfpa.org/ro/news/centrul-raional-de-tineret-nisporeni-fost-accessibilizat-pentru-personele-cu-disabilitate%C4%83%C8%9Bi?fbclid=IwAR0j3m3q0ws9YexoYHBJfTCDGgsNHcNKLIQYqVDOABv9Gij91NkcZY_5Bkk

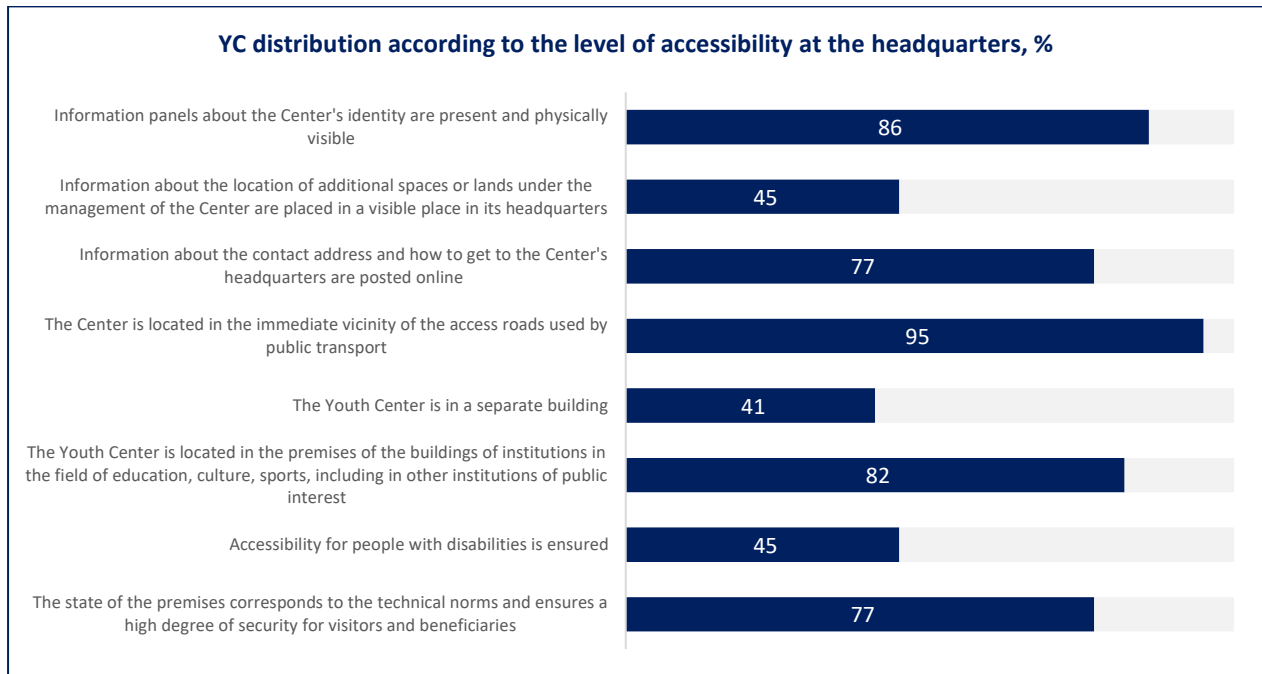


Figure 47. Share of YC according to the level of accessibility at the headquarters, %
 Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Increasing the level of institutional development of the Youth Centers' infrastructure remains a priority for the coming years. YCs still need support to create favourable conditions for carrying out activities. It is unfortunate that not all Centers have access to basic sanitary conditions. Thus, only 77% of YCs have access to drinking water and only 86% have a sanitary group in the institution. Sanitary conditions are crucial for the proper functioning of every institution, where the flow of beneficiaries is continuous. This also refers to access to hot water, especially during the cold period of the year. Conditions for people with disabilities, especially those with locomotor problems, are even worse. Only 23% of YCs have a sanitary-hygienic group adapted for this category of beneficiaries. However, there are also positive aspect in YC activity: access to the Internet network, for example, registers a weight of 91%, which contributes to the consolidation of knowledge in IT fields.

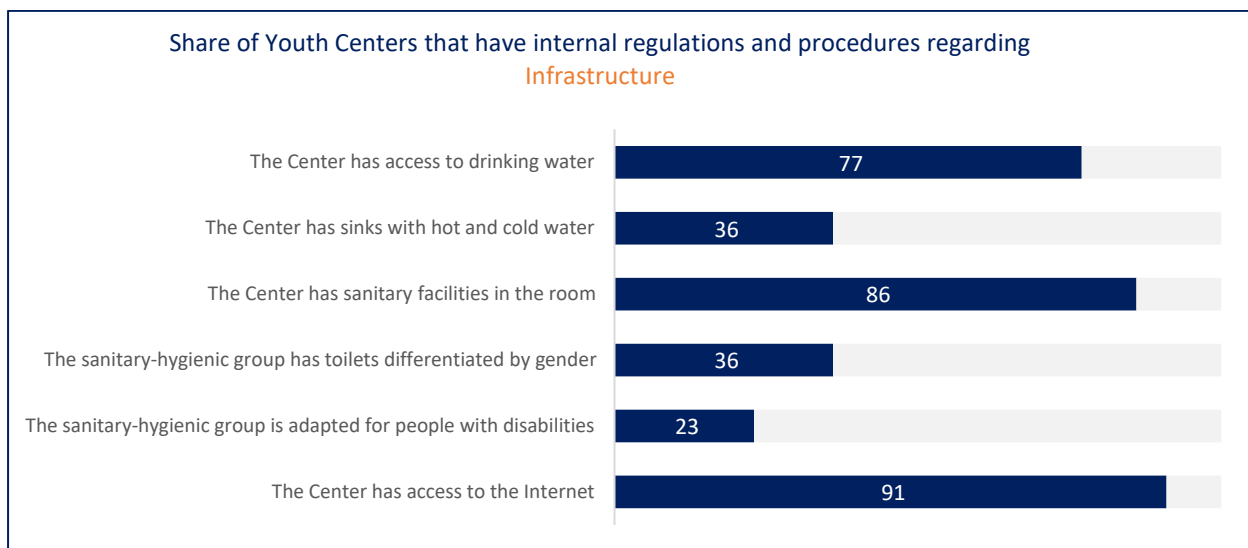


Figure 48. Share of Youth Centers according to the type of infrastructure they own, %
 Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Most of the Youth Centers have sufficient and adequate space for carrying out activities/programs aimed at young people between the ages of 14-35. Youth centers offer a wide range of activities and programs for its beneficiaries. One of the most requested services is the leisure entertainment service, which requires an adequate space for its implementation. About 50% of the YCs have a total area greater than 81 m², which is an advantage for the Centers, because they have the opportunity to carry out several activities at the same time, based on the needs of young people. Another important aspect that was analysed is the form of ownership of the headquarters, which affects the expenses borne by each YC. About 31.82% of YCs operate in rented premises, having to bear maintenance and lease expenses in addition. As a result, this burden leads to budget cuts and insufficient financial resources to carry out more useful activities for young people.

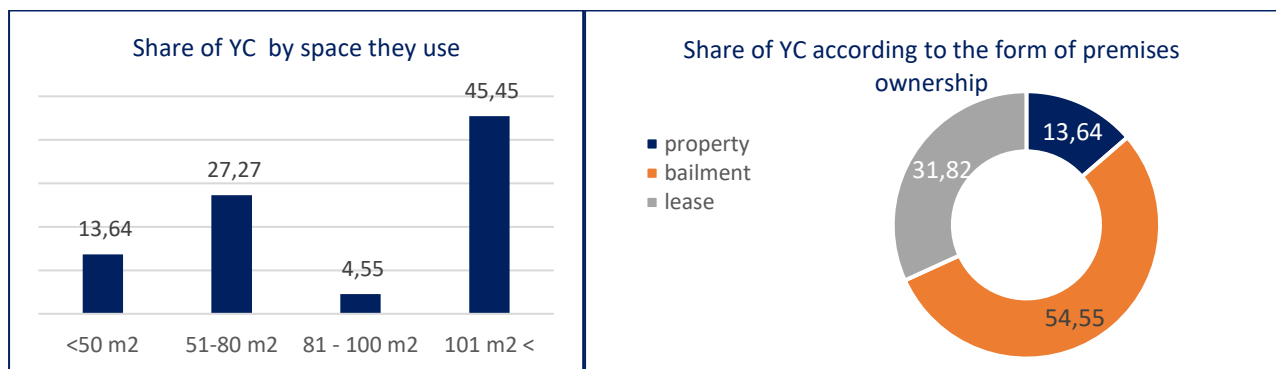


Figure 49. YC distribution according to the form of ownership and the area they have at their disposal, %
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

Due to the rapid development of information technologies, technical equipment has become indispensable tools for every person, especially for young people. For the provision of quality services, it is very important to be equipped with suitable and high-performance equipment. There are still Youth Centers that do not have stationary computers, laptops, printers, flipchart boards and licensed software, so necessary in their daily activities. The use of the computer/laptop and access to the Internet positively influences the increase in the quality and efficiency of learning of young people, especially for young people from socially vulnerable categories, who do not have access to such technologies. In addition, electronic equipment is indispensable in the work of a youth worker, who is responsible for carrying out various interactive and innovative activities.

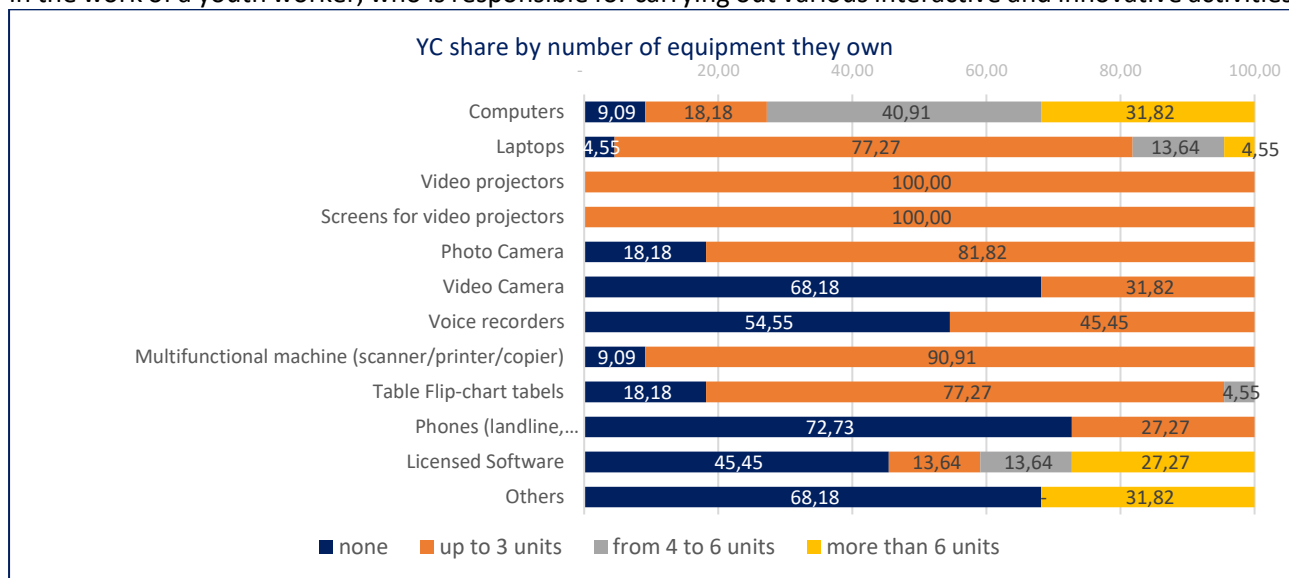


Figure 50. YC distribution according to equipment, %
Source: Results of CPD evaluation process, UNFPA, 2022

RECOMMENDATIONS

Certainly, for young people to be able to develop their life skills and know how to capitalize on their skills, it is necessary to provide them with favourable conditions and circumstances. This can only be achieved through the collaboration of all social actors, who, by joining their efforts, can ensure that every young person benefit from as many opportunities as possible at home.

As a result of the findings highlighted in this comprehensive evaluation process, a holistic approach is proposed, which would improve the activity of the Youth Centers. Specifically, the proposed approach aims at four major recommendations, which would contribute to the consolidation and dynamism of the activity of the Youth Centers: **(i)** to strengthen the institutional status of the Centers in relation to District Council/Municipal Council; **(ii)** to provide support to the Centers in the multiannual budget planning, a strategic planning based on the results of the basic programs; **(iii)** to offer support to the Centers to develop programs that are much more inclusive and closer to young people in rural areas; **(iv)** to consolidate and develop the network of Youth Centers.

(i) Strengthening the institutional status of the Youth Centers in relation to the District Council/Municipal Council

The intervention of the central public authorities is necessary in the development/revision of the main documents regulating the activity, which would contribute to ensuring the organization and efficient functioning of the Youth Centers. Here we refer to: the revision and improvement of the framework Regulation regarding the organization and operation of the Youth Center and its approval by Government Decision; to establish a unique legal status for all Youth Centers, and to assign a unique position in the Nomenclature of Functions to all the leaders of these institutions. Salary in the budget system is carried out within the limits established by law and, therefore, if the heads of the same type of institutions have different functions and the salaries are different. It is also necessary to develop a unique set of internal procedures regarding the organization and operation of the Youth Centers, and each Center to adjust them according to its own needs. In addition to the list of documents that need to be prepared, it is important to provide unique models of documents, internal procedures and forms, which would greatly facilitate the work of YC.

Stimulating youth workers and increasing their number within Youth Centers. It is necessary to have a unique approach to staffing, requirements and criteria for selection and employment, as well as remuneration. To avoid personnel fluctuations, it is necessary to simplify the requirements for the staff that can be attracted/employed within the Youth Centres. At the same time, it is recommended to introduce a salary scale for the personnel employed in YC. All these must be part of the regulation on the recruitment, selection, employment and performance evaluation of employees. This would stop the flow of personnel and reduce the number of replacements of employees within the Youth Centers.

It is imperative for the sustainability of the Youth Centers that they gradually move to financial self-management, but still the main source of funding should be the local public budget. Now, many Youth Centers do not change their organizational and operating status for fear of losing the support of local public authorities. The conditionality that the Youth Centers for any action/activity must have the approval and decision of the local authorities stagnates their activity and progress. Financial autonomy would increase funding growth and diversify funding sources, with the precondition that a certain share of funding from the local public budget is maintained for the sustainability of the centers.

(ii) Multiannual budgeting and strategic planning

A strategy is crucial for an organization who wants to achieve better long-term results. Being oriented towards the future, the strategy creates premises and offers effective solutions for the development of the Youth Center and the youth sector over a long period of time. A strategy takes into account important aspects

such as: analysing the needs and wants of young people, creating the portfolio of programs and services, organizational structure, monitoring, revising and/or reorganizing activities. Thus, strategy provides a balance between the actions that must be taken for short-term success and the actions that must be executed for long-term success. When the strategy is missing, priority is given to activities that generate short-term results, thus, the long-term performance of the center cannot be accounted for. Having agreed the priorities and areas of intervention on which each Youth Center will focus its efforts, they will be preceded by a detailed plan of actions over an extended period, in which the stages of the implementation of the strategy and the spectrum of actions will be described. This approach is a conditionality for ensuring the functionality of Youth Centers and its recognition as a well-defined entity that works for and in the interest of young people. Agreeing and assuming concrete objectives will organize the activity of each Center and increase cooperation with other youth institutions, local and central authorities, as well as with development partners.

(iii) Development of programs that are much more inclusive and closer to young people in rural areas

A precondition for the operation and coalition of the Youth Centers is to integrate the gender dimension and inclusion into their activity and in the programs/services provided. The principle of inclusion and ensuring equal chances and opportunities for all means respecting the status and rights of all people in a society, creating the conditions for everyone to have the opportunity to participate meaningfully in its life and to enjoy equal treatment with others. Youth centers must be aware that young people are not a homogenous group and therefore have different needs, life situations and interests, as well as coming from different backgrounds. It is imperative that a youth-focused strategy promotes activities that provide opportunities for all young people to get involved, especially those with fewer resources and/or those whose voices may not be heard. The integration of the gender dimension and inclusion must be embedded both in the activities of the Centers in general and in all internal documents and regulations, especially in the strategic plan. This can be ensured including through the development of disaggregated data collection tools on beneficiaries, which will allow the organization to understand how to address various categories of young people more effectively.

(iv) Consolidation of the Youth Centers network

When we talk about strengthening the Youth Centers network, we mean:

- **strengthening the capacities of managers and youth specialists, but also of local public authorities** by developing continuous training programs for YC managers, especially in terms of operational planning, continuous monitoring and evaluation of achieved progress. Training for youth specialists and representatives of local public authorities will address, in particular, the field of gender equality and inclusion. It is also necessary to strengthen the capacity of youth centers in the development of programs and services, as well as how to integrate the gender dimension and the principle of inclusion in them.
- **strengthening cooperation at local, national and international level** by organizing a cooperation mechanism between Youth Centers at national level, as well as exchange of international experience. It is recommended to encourage mutual visits between Youth Centers, ensuring spaces for communication/reflections and mutual support within the network, where each YC can share good practices, but also the barriers they face. The creation of consultation activities or public discussions with non-governmental organizations in the field, as well as local and central public authorities, international forums will ensure the constant analysis of the situation of young people and will facilitate the identification of innovative solutions. The creation of an international network of Youth Centers where discussions or joint activities could be initiated, to exchange experience and promote good practices, would be an action with a long-term impact.
- **strengthening the public image of the Youth Centers** aims at the promotion and presentation of the network, but also of each individual Youth Center as an indispensable entity for promoting the voice of young people, inclusion and gender equality in every community in Moldova.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation process was carried out in 3 stages:

1. **Organizational Development Matrix** – an organizational self-evaluation tool that was completed by the managers of the Youth Centers. The matrix is a questionnaire that is completed individually, and which consists of 3 major compartments that evaluate:
 - (i) Organizational Development, which addresses 5 dimensions (see Appendix 1):
 - Ø Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting;
 - Ø Human resources management
 - Ø Programs/Services and Activities
 - Ø Public image, communication and partnerships
 - Ø Financial management and financial viability
 - (ii) Existence of internal documents and procedures (see Annex 2);
 - (iii) The infrastructure and level of equipment of the Youth Center (see Annex 3).
2. **Interview with center managers** – to have a more complex picture about the level of organizational development of the Center, an interview of up to 2 hours is conducted. The interview is structured in such a way as to address all the previously mentioned dimensions, with the aim of assessing in more detail the impact of the Development Program on each Youth Center.
3. **Analysis of statistical data** – to document the results of the interview process and the results of the matrix, the available internal documents of each organization were analysed, as well as their activity reports. Also, the statistical data available at national level regarding the area of analysis will be analysed.

The evaluation report presents the main findings as a result of the triangulation of the conclusions from the 3 stages mentioned above.

DETERMINING METHOD OF THE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL

As a result of the validation of the self-assessment questionnaire, the determination of the level of institutional development of each Youth Center was made based on a scoring system. The evaluation areas are divided into evaluation indicators.

For each indicator, evaluation aspects/monitoring indicators were established, assessed as follows:

- § 1 point – for achieving 0-25% of the monitoring indicators.
- § 2 points – for achieving 25-50% of the monitoring indicators.
- § 3 points – for achieving 50-75% of the monitoring indicators.
- § 4 points – for achieving 75-100% of the monitoring indicators.

Thus, for each evaluation indicator, the finding of an existing situation on the evaluated indicator is obtained. The score for each domain will be obtained by calculating the arithmetic mean of the scores obtained on the indicators. The final score for the Youth Center evaluated for the purpose of identifying institutional capacities was obtained by calculating the arithmetic mean of the scores obtained on the 7 evaluation domains. Later, depending on the score obtained, the level of institutional development of each Youth Center will be assessed with one of 4 qualifications: "Incipient", "Intermediary", "Consolidated", "Advanced", according to the following evaluation scale:

Level	Description	Score
<i>Incipient</i>	The Youth Center is at the stage of formalizing its activity. It is in the process of establishing services and developing infrastructure.	0 – 1
<i>Intermediary</i>	It has experience of activity; the administration structures are functional. The spectrum of services is in the process of development. The infrastructure and material base are provided.	1 – 2
<i>Consolidated</i>	The Youth Center is an active entity at the local level, it has developed partnership relations at the regional level. It provides a wide range of services for young people. Financial sustainability is ensured from several sources. It has branches in the localities of the district.	2. 3
<i>Advanced</i>	The youth center is functional, with the entire spectrum of services for young people. He is involved in local, regional, national and international networks and projects. Functional and financial sustainability ensured by local, regional, national and international partnerships. It has branches in the district, it is a platform for taking over good practices for similar structures in the country.	3-4

ANNEXES

1. Organizational assessment matrix

Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Indicator	Level of maturity/development			
	1	2	3	4
To what extent does the Youth Center have a strategy or a strategic plan?	The activity of the Center is guided by the opportunities and possibilities of the present.	The Center's activity is guided by certain strategic directions established by the management.	The activity of the Center is guided by an approved strategic plan.	The Center's activity is guided by a strategic plan. This is not the first strategic plan implemented by the Center.
To what extent are the Center's activities (annual action plan or program portfolio) guided by strategic objectives?	Less than 30% of the actions/programs reflect the achievement of the objectives in the strategy.	Between 30%-50% of the actions/programs reflect the achievement of the objectives in the strategy.	Approximately 70% of the actions/programs reflect the achievement of the objectives in the strategy.	Approximately 90% of the actions/programs reflect the achievement of the objectives in the strategy.
How is the performance measurement process organized within the Center?	The monitoring, evaluation and reporting effort takes place at the activity level.	We measure performance at the project level. We also try to measure medium-term results, but this effort is not a systematic one. It all depends on the projects we implement and the requirements of the financiers and the district management.	Within the Center we measure how we achieve medium-term results.	We measure progress against the objectives proposed in the strategy. For this we compare the performance achieved on each strategic objective with the proposed targets.

Human resources management

Indicator	Level of maturity/development			
	1	2	3	4
How do the procedures for recruitment, selection and employment of staff work within the Centre?	We do not have/apply such formal procedures. Staff selection takes place based on existing legal provisions.	We have certain core policies that are sometimes partially and inconsistently enforced.	We have a staff selection policy which we strive to apply consistently.	We have a personnel selection policy. This is applied consistently. The effectiveness and fairness of the procedure are monitored and reviewed regularly.
How are volunteers involved in the Center's activity?	The Center's team does not have volunteers.	The role of volunteers in the Center's activities is not clearly defined. Their involvement varies from day to day.	We have a volunteer policy that provides a clear description of the rights, responsibilities and duties of volunteers.	Volunteer management is rigorously planned within the Center. Volunteers are recruited based on a clear profile, they are trained and guided by the Center's team. We always try to give them opportunities to gain new experience and relevant skills. At the end of the volunteer cycle, we always evaluate the experience of the participants
How does the professional development of team members take place within the Center?	Within the Centre, team members are encouraged to take advantage of existing training and development opportunities.	Development needs are known but not addressed in a consistent way. Team members are encouraged to take advantage of existing opportunities.	Within the Center we have a professional development plan that we are trying to implement.	Development needs are periodically identified for each team member. Team members have individual development plans. Their achievement is periodically evaluated.

How is employee performance monitored within the Center?	Performance appraisal is more of an informal process based on the day-to-day interaction of staff with Center management.	Within the Center we have an annual staff/team evaluation procedure. It is applied irregularly.	Within the Center we apply a personnel evaluation procedure. The evaluation does not involve predetermined performance indicators, but an assessment of the team members' activity.	Within the Center, the team members have established relevant, clear objectives to be achieved in specific periods of time. Progress towards these goals is made periodically and is complemented by a process of supervision and individual support.
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Programs, Services and Activities

indicator	Level of maturity/development			
	1	2	3	4
How do you try to analyse the interests of young people to be integrated into the programs and services offered by the Center?	We intuit the interests of young people based on the interactions we have in the process of carrying out the Center's activities.	The organization's services/programs are based on previous experience.	All the organization's services/programmes are based on a detailed analysis of the context and informal discussions with the beneficiaries.	All services/programmes of the organization are based on a systematic analysis of the context. We carry out analyses to identify the group of beneficiaries and their specific needs. We do this together with partners, beneficiaries and other relevant actors.
How consistent is service/program delivery with original plans and strategic objectives?	Service delivery is based on recent institutional memory. Service regulation within the organization continues to be informal.	The basic services/programs are regulated in the general way as well as other organizational processes (Statute, Internal Regulation of activity).	The most important services/programmes are regulated by means of a guide or an instruction.	The way services/programs are delivered is regulated by internally approved and written procedures and instructions.

<p>To what extent are existing programs and services adjusted to contribute to the inclusion of disadvantaged youth?</p>	<p>The programs and services provided are not directly adjusted to make them more inclusive.</p>	<p>Within the Center we have tried to adjust some projects/services to make them more inclusive and accessible to young people from disadvantaged groups.</p>	<p>Within the Center there is at least one service/program that we managed to make more inclusive where young people from disadvantaged groups participate/benefit.</p>	<p>Within all programs/services we implement affirmative action and reasonable accommodation interventions to ensure that they benefit young people from disadvantaged groups. The number of young people from disadvantaged groups is increasing as a share of the total number of beneficiaries of the Center.</p>
<p>How do you apply the outreach method in delivering services and programs?</p>	<p>Does not exist!</p>	<p>Sometimes we resort to the method of providing the outreach service.</p>	<p>We constantly use the outreach method of providing programs/services to ensure access to young people and communities far from the center.</p>	<p>We constantly use the outreach method both to ensure access for young people who are far from the Center, but also for young people with special needs.</p>
<p>How do you measure the performance of the services/programs provided?</p>	<p>How we measure service/program performance varies and depends on the projects and donors who support them.</p>	<p>There is a unique format for recording how services/programs are delivered within the organization. Short-term effects/results are measured.</p>	<p>The organization has at least a set of 2–3 indicators of service performance. Medium-term effects/results are measured.</p>	<p>The performance of the services/programmes is measured based on a results framework that contains a series of reference indicators, target indicators, indicators regarding the degree of access, but also the degree of service quality.</p>
<p>How do you adapt existing services/programs to the emerging needs of young people?</p>	<p>We adapt the activities as necessary based on the observations of the team members.</p>	<p>We usually have a flexible approach. Adaptation/adjustment of programs occurs at the level of activity format following observations and</p>	<p>We adjust the programs/services after analysing the individual needs of the young beneficiaries selected in a predetermined way,</p>	<p>The adjustment of the programs is carried out both based on the needs of young people, but also on the way in which they allow the achievement of the predetermined results. Thus,</p>

		implementation experience as part of the organizational learning process.	usually at the beginning of the program cycle. Other minor adjustments may be allowed during the program.	we always try to analyse the performance of the programs in relation to the predetermined results.
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Public image, communication and partnerships

indicator	Level of maturity/development			
	1	2	3	4
How do you collaborate with other relevant organizations to achieve the Centre's strategic objectives?	We are open to collaborating with other organizations, but we do not make a consistent effort to identify and select partners, and to improve cooperation with them.	We usually try to identify partners to support us in carrying out specific activities or initiatives. They vary depending on the type of activities and initiatives.	We try to proactively identify long-term partners with whom we can have a relevant collaboration.	Within the Center we identify strategic partners with whom we have agreed common action plans in the medium term with the aim of achieving common objectives.
How does organizational communication with young people take place?	We organize the communication according to the case and according to the possibilities of the Center and the specific elements of the programs provided. Organizational communication is ad hoc.	Within the Center we have identified what the target groups of communication would be and we try to organize the communication process depending on our interests and objectives towards these groups.	We carry out institutional communication based on annual communication plans.	We carry out institutional communication based on a communication strategy.
How do you ensure a high level of transparency in the Center's activity?	We regularly publish information about	We regularly publish information about the	We publish regularly (at least once a year) the performance	We regularly publish financial and performance reports in a

	the activities carried out by the Centre.	action plan, the budget and the annual report.	report, the financial report.	way that is easy to understand for different interest groups (youth, partners, authorities). Within the Center we implement a clear policy of access to information through which we try to offer ex officio (but also upon request) as much information as possible from the Center's activity.
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Financial management and financial viability

indicator	Level of maturity/development			
	1	2	3	4
How adequate is the Center's budget for the achievement of strategic objectives?	Many times, we cannot complete all activities due to insufficient resources.	The budget available to the Center assumes a small but steady increase each fiscal year.	The budget available to the Center allows the implementation of new programs/the expansion of existing programs successfully.	The budget available to the Center implies relevant investments for expanding or improving the programs.
How is control over how the Centre's resources are used?	The Center's resources are used in accordance with current legislation and contractual commitments.	We have basic financial control policies and procedures, but these are not consistently implemented.	Within the Center we apply a simple financial control procedure.	Within the Center we implement a robust financial control system through which we ensure integrity in the appropriate use of resources but also the management of resources in the most cost-effective way. Annually, the financial

				reports of the Center are audited by an external auditor.
How much is the budgeting process integrated into strategic planning?	Annual budgets reflect existing possibilities rather than the achievement of strategic objectives.	Annual budgets reflect some of the planned activities, but only partially cover them.	The development of the budget derives largely from the annual activity plan.	The Center's budget is multi-annual, aligned with the strategic plan.

2. List of internal documents

Name	Yes	Not	Under development	Comments
Organization and operation				
Regulation of the organization and operation of the Youth Center				
Organizational Chart				
Activity reports (annual)				
Complaint record register, in which all notifications received are recorded				
Complaint record register, in which the method of their resolution is described				
The internal regulation on respecting the rights of young people in terms of equal opportunities and equal treatment				
Internal regulation on ensuring the equal participation of young people in the activity process of the Youth Center				
Is the Youth Center located in a separate building?				
The youth center is located in the premises of the buildings of institutions in the field of education, culture, sports, including in other institutions of public interest				
Human resources				
Internal regulation on human resources				
Internal regulation regarding the employment of human resources				
Internal regulation regarding the promotion of employees				
Internal regulation regarding the salary policy				
Staff states				
Job description for each employee				
Regulation regarding the monitoring of employed personnel				
Regulation regarding the evaluation of employed personnel				
Annual staff evaluation plan				
Periodic reports on the evaluation of the employed staff (If yes, how often?)				
Activity organisation				
Action plan (annual)				
Concept for each program				
Activity monitoring tools (If yes, what are they?)				
Activity assessment tools (If yes, what are they?)				
Service provision regulation				

Appointment order of the coordinator for each service/programme				
The database on YC beneficiaries				
Financial procedures				
Operational budget (minimum one year)				
Report on the execution of the report (annual)				
Internal regulation on financial procedures				
Does the center have a separate bank account?				
Is the budget managed by the subdivision of the District/Municipal Council, to which it is a part, or by the Finance Department?				
Safety and health at work				
Continuous professional development plan for staff				
Medical records are available at the Center headquarters, which confirm the medical check-up of the employed staff				
The Manager's order is issued, by which the persons responsible are designated to deal with the activities of protection and prevention of occupational risks				
The management staff, including the staff assigned to deal with the protection and prevention of occupational risks, have adequate training according to the requirements of the legislation in force, confirmed by the certificates issued by the licensed institutions in this regard, which are present in their files				
Occupational health and safety instructions are drawn up and are publicly displayed at the Center's headquarters				
Occupational health and safety instructions are approved, which are publicly displayed at its premises				
Personal training sheets in the field of safety and health at work are present in the employee file, which confirms their training in the following phases: employment training				
Personal training sheets in the field of safety and health at work are present in the employee file, which confirms their training in the following phases: introductory-general training				
Personal training sheets in the field of safety and health at work are present in the employee file, which confirms their training in the following phases: training at the workplace				
Personal training sheets in the field of safety and health at work, which confirm their training in the following phases, are present in the employee file: periodic training				

The register regarding the training of the staff employed by the Youth Center in the field of safety and health at work is present				
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3. Infrastructure and Equipment of the Youth Center

<input type="checkbox"/>	Information panels about the Center's identity are present and physically visible
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information about the location of additional spaces or lands under the management of the Center are placed in a visible place in its headquarters
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information about the contact address and how to get to the Center's headquarters are posted online
<input type="checkbox"/>	The center is located in the immediate vicinity of the access roads used by public transport
	Specify what youth safety risks exist in the area where the Youth Center is located? 1. ... 2. ... 3. ...
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Youth Center is in a separate building
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Youth Center is located in the premises of the buildings of institutions in the field of education, culture, sports, including in other institutions of public interest
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accessibility for people with disabilities is ensured
<input type="checkbox"/>	The state of the premises corresponds to the technical norms and ensures a high degree of security for visitors and beneficiaries
The right to use the building/room:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> lease <input type="checkbox"/> bailment <input type="checkbox"/> in the property of the Youth Center
The document confirming the rights to use the building/room	
Indicate the total area, m2	
Indicate the number of rooms and their destination	
Outbuildings (boilers, warehouses, etc.), area, destination.	
Adequate and sufficient spaces for staff (m2/employee)	
Adequate and sufficient spaces for activities with young people (number of rooms, m2)	
Infrastructure engineering elements	
Type of heating (mark):	<input type="checkbox"/> central heating <input type="checkbox"/> autonomous heating: <input type="checkbox"/> natural gases <input type="checkbox"/> coal / wood <input type="checkbox"/> electricity
<input type="checkbox"/>	The center has access to drinking water
<input type="checkbox"/>	The center has sinks with hot water
<input type="checkbox"/>	The center has sanitary facilities in the room
<input type="checkbox"/>	The sanitary-hygienic group has toilets differentiated by gender
<input type="checkbox"/>	The sanitary-hygienic group is adapted for people with disabilities
<input type="checkbox"/>	The center has access to the Internet

Equipment and software (indicate their type and number)	
<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>
Computers	
Laptops	
Video projectors	
Screens for video projectors	
Photo cameras	
Video cameras	
Voice recorders	
Multifunctional machine (scanner/printer/copier)	
Flip charts	
Phones (landline, fax, mobile)	
Licensed Software	
Other	