

**Evaluation of the Burma Young  
Community Leaders Programme (BYCLP)  
and Myanmar Young Leaders Programme  
(MYLP)**

**November 2019 to January 2020**

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## Acronyms

ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BYCLP	Burma Young Community Leaders Programme
CDCE	Community Development and Civic Empowerment (Thailand course)
CDEC	Comprehensive Development Education Center (Yangon)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ELI	English Language Institute (Victoria University of Wellington)
EPP	English Proficiency Programme
GBV	Gender-based violence
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HOM	Head of Mission (fund)
HSF	Hanns Seidel Foundation
INGO	International Non-government Organisation
INSPIRASI	East Indonesia Young Leaders Programme
JCfD	Joint Commitment for Development
LTO	Long-term Outcome
MBELT	Myanmar Bespoke English Language Training
MCRB	Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFAT	NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MBIE,	NZ Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
MIGSI	Myanmar Institute of Gender Studies
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
MRTI	Myanmar Responsible Tourism Institute
MSDP	Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan
MTO	Medium-term Outcome
MYPL	Myanmar Young Leaders Programme
NGO	Non-government Organisation
NLD	National League of Democracy
NZ	New Zealand
NZ ELTO	NZ English Language Training for Officials
NZ SST	NZ Short t\Term Training
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PWU	Pa'O Women's Union
SOP	Standard Operating Practices
STO	Short term Outcomes
TIA	Tourism Industry Aotearoa
TKMI	Theik Khar Myanmar Institute (Taunggyi)
TYC	Taunggyi Youth Center
VUW	Victoria University of Wellington
YLP	Young Leaders Programme
WLB	Women's League of Burma

# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1 Overview of the programme being evaluated

The Burma Young Community Leaders Programme (BYCLP) (2009-2012) and Myanmar Young Leaders Programme (MYLP) (2014 - 2021)<sup>1</sup> have brought young leaders from Myanmar to New Zealand (NZ), to improve their English language and to develop their knowledge, skills, attributes and values. The programme aims to develop a strong network of civil society alumni with the skills, knowledge and leadership to support peaceful development and democratic transition in Myanmar.

There have been 84 young leaders<sup>2</sup> in the programme (50% men and 50% women) of 19 different ethnicities. The programme is implemented by UnionAID and delivered over 25 weeks annually<sup>3</sup>. Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) manages and teaches the English Proficiency Programme (EPP), and contributes to other parts of the programme.

Apart from the one-day pre-departure workshop which was introduced in 2016, the format has been the same for both BYCLP and MYLP:

- One day pre-departure Foundation Workshop held in Yangon (since 2016);
- Two-week Orientation on arrival in Wellington;
- 13-week English Proficiency Programme in Wellington;
- Nine-week course tailored for the Myanmar group on development, human rights, democratic processes, economics, conflict resolution, and research and proposal writing in Wellington.
- One week of English language testing, evaluation, preparation for home and presentations of project proposals.

As part of the curriculum, the young leaders prepare a proposal for a project, which since 2014 has been funded by the programme (if approved) and implemented on the young leaders' return to Myanmar<sup>4</sup>. The project is informed by young leaders' learning during the programme, including a special interest topic chosen by each young leader, which in recent years has been mentored by UnionAID volunteers. A key element of the programme is that young leaders live with host families for the 25 weeks. This gives the young leaders an opportunity to improve their English language, and to learn about NZ culture and life. Host families learn about Myanmar, and support alumni during their time in NZ, and sometimes on their return to Myanmar, contributing to ongoing communication and links between the alumni and NZ.

The context of the programme has changed considerably over the years since the initial BYCLP cohort of six students came to New Zealand (NZ) in 2009. Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, has recently emerged from decades of military dictatorship (since 1962), and isolation from the world. The country's development continues to be challenged with widespread poverty, and ongoing civil and religious conflict. Education lags behind other ASEAN countries. BYCLP was succeeded by the first phase of MYLP (2014<sup>5</sup>-2016) with eight students, has since been renewed for another phase (2017-2021) with twelve students per year.

## 1.2 Evaluation purpose, design and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation is to examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the programme, and identify areas for improvement. The findings of the evaluation will be used by MFAT to inform decision-making to potentially expand Young Leaders Programmes (YLPs) to other ASEAN countries, and inform any changes or improvements to be made to MYLP and other current or future YLPs.

Extensive monitoring data, including survey results and progress reporting by UnionAID (much of it quantitative) informed the evaluation. A review of the programme commissioned in 2015 provided quantitative results. The

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<sup>1</sup> BYCLP and MYLP are referred to as 'the programme' hereafter unless there is a reason to differentiate between them.

<sup>2</sup> One (male) defected and sought asylum in 2011 and is not regarded as an alumni. Thus, there are 83 alumni.

<sup>3</sup> Except for 2013 when the programme was suspended.

<sup>4</sup> Prior to 2014 only a few projects were funded.

<sup>5</sup> s6(a)

evaluation approach to data collection was qualitative. Field work in Myanmar, and interviews in NZ verified monitoring data, combined data gathered from this evaluation with the monitoring data, and provided new knowledge and understanding. In total 51 (21 male and 30 female) out of 83 alumni were engaged in the evaluation (61.4%).

Field work took place in Myanmar in November 2020 to coincide with the programme's annual alumni conference, enabling focus groups and individual interviews with alumni. The key methods used in the evaluation to gather data in Myanmar were: individual semi-structured interviews, Focus Groups with alumni, and seven detailed case studies of organisations, and the alumni that work there (or have worked there). In addition, a sample of alumni not at the conference were contacted by phone and email to ensure perceptions of potentially 'less engaged' alumni were included. The case studies explored the effect of the programme on the alumni and the impact of the programme on their development work. All interview and focus group questions were open ended and flexible to allow for participant-led prioritisation of issues, unintended outcomes to be explored, and other important issues to emerge. Interviewees and case studies were purposefully selected. All alumni attending the conference were invited to join focus groups. The MYLP Results Framework was used as a basis for assessing the effectiveness of the programme.

### 1.3 Findings and conclusions

#### **The programme is relevant to the Myanmar and NZ governments, and to the alumni**

The programme is relevant to the Myanmar government's recent policy priorities (Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP)) in particular Pillar 1: Peace and Stability, Goal 1: Peace, National reconciliation, security and good governance. MYLP also aligns to Pillar 3 of MSDP: People and Planet, which seeks to 'improve equitable access to high quality lifelong educational opportunities'.

The programme is aligned with policy and strategic interests of the New Zealand government. The MFAT document 'Strategic Intentions 2019-2023'<sup>6</sup> describes MFAT's purpose as 'The Ministry acts in a world to make New Zealanders safer and more prosperous', achieving this through international development. The first three Short term Outcomes (STO) of South East Asia Official Development Assistance (ODA)<sup>7</sup> directly align with the goal and outcomes of the MYLP. The Joint Commitment for Development (JCfD) for Myanmar (2017-2021)<sup>8</sup>, which was agreed and signed by the Myanmar and New Zealand governments in 2017, states 'knowledge and skills'<sup>9</sup> as one of its four priority areas for NZ-funded assistance to Myanmar and specifically refers to the 'Myanmar Young Leaders Programme'.

The programme has remained largely relevant to alumni even though the context of Myanmar has changed since 2009 when BYCLP was initiated. Aspects of the programme that have been the most useful and relevant to alumni's work<sup>10</sup> are English language, critical thinking, special interest topic, and proposal writing. Visits (especially to parliament and democratic organisations) were also considered to be highly useful. These aspects remain relevant and valid. Peacebuilding and democracy also remain relevant to the Myanmar context. The value of young leaders mixing with different ethnicities is valued and relevant, but alumni suggested that even more young leaders from remote areas and of different ethnicities could be targeted for selection.

Most alumni perceived there to be 'no least useful aspects' of the programme, indicating that all aspects of the programme were useful and relevant to their work. Alumni were also positive about the length of the programme (25 weeks), the young leaders do not lose contact with their families and careers, but have enough time to develop an understanding of what they can achieve, and the skills, knowledge and attributes needed for this. However, alumni mentioned that the tailored part of the course is 'exhausting' and 'too much'.

While there is a strong focus in the programme curriculum on human rights, there is little on crosscutting issues of gender, environment and youth. Some recent alumni considered the human rights topic (particularly theoretical aspects) to be 'too much' in the curriculum, and not as relevant as it was when the BYCLP started.

<sup>6</sup> MFAT. Strategic Intentions. 2019-2023. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

<sup>7</sup> South East Asia ODA Short term Outcomes. Document provided by Jonathan Lee. MFAT.

<sup>8</sup> Myanmar- New Zealand Joint Commitment for Development. 2017-2021. Myanmar Ministry for Planning and Finance (MOPF) (for the Myanmar Government) and New Zealand Government.

<sup>9</sup> Increased knowledge, skills, and capability to contribute to Myanmar's development ...'

<sup>10</sup> Most and least useful; aspects of the programme to alumni's work were ranked in Discussion Groups.

Gender, environment and youth need to be covered in the MYLP curriculum for all the young leaders in more detail than is currently provided, and not only as a special interest topic for some young leaders, which is the current situation.

The use of host families is highly relevant to the intended outcomes of the programme. Most alumni's host family experiences were positive. Alumni learned about NZ culture; were introduced to different sectors of NZ society; were supported for English language learning; learned social skills, learned to cook, eat healthy food and grow vegetables; were supported with public speaking; and young leaders felt welcome and cared for. Learning about flexible gender roles in the household has also been useful to the young leaders. For some the support continues as host families help alumni with proposals and keep in touch through Facebook. However, alumni did not rank the host families as highly useful in the Discussion Groups, and there were several examples where the host family experience had not been good. This included situations where alumni felt the host families were too strict, had invaded their privacy, were not available (too busy) and/or did not understand their culture or food. There were some personality clashes. UnionAID prepares host families and the young leaders well, carefully monitors the host family situation and intervenes immediately if issues are identified. However, in some cases UnionAID were not aware of issues, and thus resolution did not occur. Intended outcomes of the host family arrangement may not be achieved if the situation is tense, or young leaders are unhappy. Monitoring needs to ensure issues are identified early on so that they can be resolved. Some young leaders may benefit from leaving the host family situation and staying in a different kind of accommodation (if they wish) after a period of time.

### **The programme has been effective**

Overall the programme has been effective in achieving intended results and objectives. The achievement of outputs and short-term outcomes are described in each UnionAID annual progress report, and were validated by the evaluation. A table describing the medium and long-term outcomes of the programmes (developed for the purposes of this evaluation), and what success looks like for these outcomes is in Section 5.2 of this report.

In terms of medium-term outcomes alumni are demonstrating leadership, skills, knowledge gained in the programme, and also values and personal attributes. The programme has strongly contributed to the alumni's advancement in their careers, with alumni being promoted to positions of responsibility, leadership and influence where they can bring about change and development for Myanmar. The change in alumni's attributes (for example, increased self-confidence, being able to think critically, improved leadership), and values (for example changed personal values including respect for others, and the way they treat others) were important for their development work, and is a key reason for alumni's advancement in their careers. Links between alumni and New Zealand (NZ) (medium-term outcome) are important for the alumni and the NZ government. The links between programme personnel and the alumni are strong, and important in maintaining the Myanmar-NZ links (medium-term outcome). The NZ Embassy in Myanmar also has strong links with alumni. However, links between alumni and other New Zealanders (eg host families, volunteers, and mentors) were tenuous and varied, although contact was made if there was a specific purpose to do so.

The programme has been very effective in contributing to peaceful development in Myanmar (long-term outcome) through projects that alumni undertake on their return to Myanmar, and alumni's ongoing development work. Evidence for this effectiveness was from examples of the alumni's projects, examples of alumni's most important development work (described in Focus Groups) and from the case studies of organisations and the alumni that worked there. Some of the development work, and the way it is being implemented by alumni, can be directly attributed to the programmes. Examples of learning from the programmes being used in Myanmar by alumni and their employing organisations include: teaching and training approaches and methods, practices to engage Myanmar citizens with organisations and in development issues, democracy in practice including visits to parliament, collaboration between organisations, and processes to include men and those in power (as well as women) in gender-based violence programmes.

There is also an alumni network of skilled leaders in Myanmar (long-term outcome) as a result of the programmes. The alumni network within 'batches'<sup>11</sup> is generally stronger than alumni network between batches, with social media being the key communication method. Although the level of networking varies between alumni the network can be quickly activated as needed, and is often used by alumni for work and social interaction. The

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<sup>11</sup> 'Batch' is the term used to describe each annual intake of young leaders.

annual conference is important for alumni of different batches to meet, and for upskilling. However, the percentage of alumni attending the conference has fallen over the past three years, and some alumni from remote areas do not attend the conference if the time needed for travel results in long absences from work.

### **Management of the programme is efficient**

The programme has been efficiently and well managed by UnionAID since its inception. The programmes' intended outcomes have been achieved with minimal financial resources. The cost of human resources is minimised by extensive use of volunteers, and highly dedicated programme personnel. It is unlikely further financial efficiencies could be gained by increasing the number of young leaders in the programme, because most of the more significant costs (for example VUW fees, travel and living costs) are fixed for each young leader. The Manager of MYLP is currently a volunteer, which poses a risk should this volunteer wish to reduce their workload. Should the programme personnel change and/or there is less volunteering, it would cost more to achieve the same outcomes.

### **The programme is impacting on Myanmar's peaceful transition to democracy**

In terms of impact, the goal of the programme is 'to build human capacity and leadership in Myanmar to support its peaceful transition to democracy and strong links to NZ'. The programme has built the capacity of the young leaders, who have then developed capacity in communities in which they work. Alumni's development activities in Myanmar have empowered communities to collaborate, engage in their own development, and to influence to political outcomes of their country, contributing to democracy in Myanmar.

### **The outcomes and benefits of the programme are sustainable**

The knowledge, skills, attributes and values the alumni gained are sustainable, and have been used and further developed as alumni have progressed in their careers. The alumni network, and links between NZ and alumni are sustainable as these networks are useful and socially beneficial to alumni, and important for the NZ government and UnionAID. However, it is challenging to keeping alumni information up to date to enhance the sustainability of the NZ-alumni links. This could be helped by developing a cloud-based data base.

### **Alumni suggested some improvements to the programme**

The programme is regarded by most alumni as extremely relevant and useful, with no improvements needed. However, it was suggested that MYLP could include young government leaders, as well as Civil Society Organisation (CSO) leaders, to enhance collaboration between CSOs and government, and support young government leaders to understand democracy and think critically. Alumni also suggested the tailored course to be too much and 'exhausting' and that the content should be reduced. The Results Framework was reviewed as part of the evaluation – improvements could be made to better support monitoring and evaluation, particularly at the medium and long-term outcome level.

### **Opportunities were identified**

There is an opportunity to benefit other ASEAN countries, through similar programmes. Mixing with young leaders from other ASEAN countries would also benefit Myanmar young leaders. There are a number of different options for how this could be implemented including: all young leaders from selected ASEAN countries in the same programme at the same time with some topics presented separately for each country; the young leader programme for each selected country is presented separately but the timing of the programmes allow for amalgamation into one group for some topics; or the YLPs for each country are run entirely separately with the young leaders meeting at a conference or other event.

### **In conclusion**

The programme is relevant to Myanmar and NZ governments, effective, efficient and outcomes and benefits of the programme are sustainable. Alumni of the programme are strongly contributing to peaceful development and democratic transition in Myanmar. The teaching methods, the dedicated programme personnel, and the relationships between staff, volunteers, host families and alumni have been important elements of the success of the programme. In addition, the calibre, determination, and sense of purpose of the young leaders themselves has been a key success factor. The work of the alumni and potential young leaders in Myanmar, which is important to both Myanmar and to NZ, is still needed. It is important this programme continues.

The MYLP needs to continue to evolve and adapt to the changing Myanmar context. It is also important that the effective approach to teaching and learning, and the essence of the programme, are not lost should programme personnel change, or if there are additional programmes for different ASEAN countries.

#### 1.4 Summary of recommendations:

No.	It is recommended that:	Recommendation for:
1.	the MYLP is continued to the end of the 2021 (current phase) and beyond.	MFAT
2.	the MYLP curriculum be reviewed and adapted to ensure continued relevance. In the short term (2017-2021 phase of MYLP) this would be to consider increasing gender, environment and youth, and decreasing human rights (particularly theoretical aspects of human rights). Visits should be reviewed to ensure they are relevant, and that the speakers are fully aware of the objective of the visit. The contact hours for the tailored course should be reduced if possible, and not increased. The curriculum should be fully reviewed for a new phase of MYLP beyond 2021.	UnionAID
3.	the current focus on adult learning through new experiences, and development of attributes and values (in addition to developing skills and knowledge) continues in the MYLP, and for any new young leaders' programmes that are developed, and is included as an intended outcome in the Results Framework.	MFAT and UnionAID
4.	strong links continue between MYLP programme staff and alumni – funding for MYLP should take into account the time involved to keep up contact with, and mentor alumni (eg for field work projects), and travel costs for visits and further informal mentoring of alumni.	MFAT and UnionAID
5.	further and stronger links between host families, MYLP mentors and volunteers, and alumni, are encouraged and facilitated perhaps through competitive programme funding for New Zealander(s) annually to travel to Myanmar for the annual MYLP conference, or to support alumni in their work.	MFAT and UnionAID
6.	a 'cloud-based' database be set up that can be updated by alumni themselves. This data base would be accessible by password, perhaps on a website. Reminders be sent regularly by email for alumni to update the data base, and it is also be updated after each conference.	UnionAID
7.	proposal writing continues as a key topic in MYLP, and funding for the field work projects is maintained or increased to ensure the alumni continue to be sufficiently supported.	UnionAID and MFAT
8.	the annual BYCLP/MYLP alumni conference is maintained, and funded sufficiently. Organising committees give consideration to the location of the conference being Yangon or Nay Pyi Taw to ensure alumni from remote areas can attend with reasonable travel times. More information on the conferences be provided for those that could not attend perhaps by having a 'login' website for the conference with conference papers, photos and videos of presentations (if this is not already in place).	UnionAID and MFAT
9.	assuming the same very effective methods of implementing the MYLP are retained in the future, more resources (more funding) should be provided if levels of volunteering decrease, and/or staff needs change.	MFAT
10.	programme budget should be sufficient to allow for the role of Manager of the MYLP (currently a volunteer) to be a paid position in case the current volunteer wishes to reduce their workload.	UnionAID and MFAT
11.	the Results Framework (Results Diagram and Results Measurement Table) be revised to better reflect the reality of the programme, and provide	UnionAID and MFAT



	better guidance (indicators and targets) for monitoring and evaluation.	
12.	young leaders continue to be hosted by families. Monitoring the host family situation continues but with an independent person doing interviews with the young leaders about their host family situation (not an alumni or programme staff member) in order that issues are identified early. Young leaders are given the option to find accommodation (for example in a hostel) if they wish after 3 months.	UnionAID
13.	selection of young leaders in the future specifically targets more different ethnicities and young people from remote areas. If necessary, specific English language training be offered to upskill such candidates for future selection.	UnionAID
14.	consideration be given to including a small number of government young leaders in MYLP from 2020 as a trial. If successful MYLP include a small number each year.	MFAT and UnionAID
15.	MFAT introduces programme(s) for young leaders from other selected ASEAN countries (eg Cambodia and Laos) similar to MYLP, but tailored for the individual countries.	MFAT and UnionAID
16.	UnionAID be the preferred implementing organisation for ASEAN young leader programme(s) given their experience, and organisational knowledge of the programme, but that funding is sufficient to cover an overall director for the YLPs, financial and administration support, as well as individual managers for each country's YLP, and staff for managing host families and accommodation, providing mentoring support for young leaders for special interest topics, proposal development and implementation, and other requirements if volunteer support is not available.	MFAT and UnionAID

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 The programme being evaluated

The programme<sup>12</sup> (Burma Young Community Leaders Programme (BYCLP) and Myanmar Young Leaders Programme (MYLP)) has been managed and implemented by UnionAID<sup>13</sup> since 2009, and funded by the NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). The programme has brought potential young leaders from Burma/Myanmar to Wellington, New Zealand (NZ) for a 25-week course of study<sup>14</sup>, with the aim of developing a strong network of civil society alumni with the skills, knowledge and leadership to support peaceful development and democratic transition in Myanmar. Although the language describing the overall goal, objectives and outcomes of BYCLP and MYLP have evolved over time, the concept and aim of the programme is largely unchanged.

UnionAID has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Victoria University of Wellington (VUW). The VUW English Language Institute (ELI) manages and teaches the English Proficiency Programme (EPP) where the young leaders mix with students from other countries. The tailored<sup>15</sup> course for the Myanmar young leaders is managed and supported by UnionAID staff and volunteers, with input from VUW. A VUW staff member oversees the young leaders' learning in the tailored course. A large number of NZ organisations and individuals have been involved in the programme through visits and other activities. Further details of the programme can be found in Section 4.

### 2.2 Context and background

The context of the programme has changed considerably over the years since the initial BYCLP cohort of six students came to New Zealand (NZ) in 2009.

Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, s6(a)

Myanmar has been a member of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) since 1997, and chaired ASEAN in 2014. However, the country's development continues to be challenged s6(a)

s6(a) . In 2010, general elections were held.

Elections in 2015, with victory for Aung San Suu Kyi's NLD party, was a step toward civilian governance. s6(a)

In 2020 a third election in this new era for Myanmar will be held s6(a)

In 2009, the NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) engaged UnionAID to design and implement the BYCLP which was implemented from 2009–2012, with six students per year. The programme targeted young civil society leaders who could become catalytic individuals in organisations working for change in Myanmar. s6(a)

<sup>12</sup> BYCLP and MYLP are referred to as 'the programme' unless there is a reason to differentiate between them.

<sup>13</sup> Formerly UnionAID managed the programme on behalf of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions.

<sup>14</sup> Apart from one day briefing before leaving Myanmar (by Alumni) introduced in 2016 on the suggestion of 2015 students.

<sup>15</sup> The tailored part of the course follows the EPP (in which Myanmar young leaders mix with students from other courses and countries) and consists of topics specifically for the Myanmar young leaders (such as in 2019 curriculum) democratic processes, human rights, research and proposal writing, economics, international relations, international conflict resolution. The tailored course is tailored for the group of Myanmar young leaders to meet the outcomes of the programme. It has more recently been referred to as 'Democracy in Action' but the term tailored course is used in this report as the alumni referred to it in that way.

BYCLP was succeeded by the first phase of MYLP (2014<sup>16</sup>-2016) with eight students, and a refocus on knowledge and skills relevant to a country in transition to democracy, and to participants' work in development on their return to Myanmar. MYLP has since been renewed for another phase (2017–2021) with twelve students per year. By 2012 groups of more than five people were able to meet for training and education purposes, meaning that Civil Society Organisations (CSO) and the programme alumni have had scope to openly implement community development projects.

### 3. The Evaluation Purpose and Design<sup>17</sup>

#### 3.1 Evaluation purpose, scope and objectives

The purpose of the evaluation is to examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the programme, and assess or identify areas for improvement. The evaluation questions that guide this evaluation are listed under each objective in Appendix 1: Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Evaluation.

The findings of the evaluation will be used by MFAT to inform decision-making to potentially expand Young Leaders Programmes (YLPs) to other ASEAN countries, and inform any changes or improvements to be made to MYLP and other current or future YLPs.

The time period for the evaluation is 2009-2019 (since the start of the BYCLP), and geographic scope for activities is Myanmar and New Zealand. Programme stakeholders targeted are MFAT, BYCLP and MYLP alumni, relevant Myanmar organisations, UnionAID, Victoria University of Wellington, and host families.

#### 3.2 Approach and Methodology

There is detailed quantitative and qualitative monitoring information available in UnionAID reports and documents. Given the number of surveys and quantitative data to date, this evaluation took a mainly qualitative approach. Focus Groups, in-depth interviews and case studies verified monitoring data, combined data gathered from this evaluation with the monitoring data, and provided new knowledge and understanding to describe findings and draw conclusions.

Monitoring by UnionAID has included:

- Alumni surveys immediately after the NZ component of the programme, and a year after returning to Myanmar.
- On-line surveys of young leaders to assess (for example) changes in the curriculum, and other aspects of the programme.
- Assessment and a report for each of the annual alumni conferences.
- Assessments of the host family situation of the MYLP participants.
- Focus groups discussions (facilitated by an independent researcher) at the end of the programme in NZ in recent years.
- UnionAID publications describing alumni's careers since they were in NZ, and the projects they have implemented on return (recently this is included in the annual report).
- An annual newsletter is published by the alumni of each batch<sup>18</sup>.

The MYLP review (commissioned by UnionAID) in 2015<sup>19</sup> addressed the achievement of Medium-term Outcome 'Improved leadership, knowledge and skills demonstrated' with a survey of

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<sup>16</sup> s6(a)

<sup>17</sup> A detailed Evaluation Plan has been prepared for the BYCLP/MYLP Evaluation and was agreed with MFAT on 7th November 2019.

<sup>18</sup> 'Batch' is the term used to describe each annual intake of young leaders.

<sup>19</sup> s9(2)(a) and Khin Maung Htwe. 2015. Building skills, building links: Mid-term review of NZ Myanmar Young Leaders Programme (commissioned by UnionAID).

employers (supervisors of alumni), follow up discussion at the alumni conference and other interviews.

The Myanmar field work was conducted 7 – 16 November to coincide with the annual alumni conference (held in Bagan) which provided an opportunity to meet with alumni through focus groups and individual interviews, and to observe the annual conference. After the conference evaluators travelled to Taunggyi and Yangon to conduct case studies. There were phone calls and emails to nine alumni potentially 'less engaged' in the alumni network, and follow-up phone interviews with UnionAID and a host family in the weeks after the main field work.

All interview and focus group questions were open ended and flexible to allow for participant-led prioritisation of issues, unintended outcomes to be explored, and other important issues to emerge. The MYLP Results Framework informed the evaluation of effectiveness of the programme. The key methods used in the evaluation to gather data were:

1. Document review of UnionAID monitoring and review reports, MFAT policy documents, and other relevant documents. Monitoring information was used to inform the findings.
2. Case studies of seven purposefully selected employing organisations, and the alumni who have worked there (Appendix 4: Case Studies). The evaluators chose Taunggyi as the town outside Yangon with the most alumni (and accessible during the limited time in Myanmar) and visited all of the alumni and their organisations there. In Yangon the organisations chosen were those that have consistently employed young leaders. Evaluators visited the organisations and spoke with staff, line managers of the alumni, and alumni. Findings from the case studies have been used to describe outcomes, and provide evidence of contribution, and attribution of outcomes to the programme. Three of the case studies were organisations based in Taunggyi: Theik Khar Myanmar Institute (TKMI), Taunggyi Youth Center (TYC), and Pa'O Women's Union (PWU). Four organisations were based in Yangon: Myanmar Responsible Tourism Institute (alumni/board member interviewed in Taunggyi), CARE International, ActionAID, Comprehensive Development Education Center (CDEC)
3. Focus Groups with alumni at the conference: All alumni at the conference were invited to the focus groups. Alumni who attended completed a questionnaire with four open-ended questions (Appendix 5: Focus Group Questionnaire), as well as engaging in open ended discussion about their questionnaire answers. Results are in Appendix 6: Focus Group Results. For Question 3 (most and least useful aspects of the programme) the answers were ranked during the Discussion Group. The most and least useful aspects of the course (generated by the alumni on their questionnaire forms) were written on sticky papers which were arranged on a white board, grouping the same or similar ideas together. The alumni then ranked the grouped ideas (most useful, and then least useful) using sticky dots. Results of the Focus Groups are in Appendix 6: Focus Group Results. The Focus Groups questionnaire results and discussion findings were used throughout the evaluation report.
4. Individual interviews with alumni at conference were purposefully selected - those living in isolated places, and those who have worked at selected 'case study' organisations in Taunggyi or Yangon but weren't available for interviews at those locations. Phone interviews were also held during the conference with those we intended to interview but failed to turn up at the conference (although they were registered). Results of the alumni interviews contributed to findings throughout the evaluation, particularly effectiveness, and details of alumni networking.
5. A sample of 9 alumni who had not registered for the 2019 conference, nor the past two conferences (2017 and 2018) were contacted after the field work as these alumni were potentially less engaged with the alumni network, and (it was thought) could be more critical of the programme. Seven responded to phone calls and emails (results are in Appendix 7: Results: Follow up with alumni not 'engaged' during the field work). Alumni were questioned to assess whether they were still part of the alumni network, whether they were still engaged in development work, and about suggestions for improvements of the MYLP.

6. Interviews with two alumni who are currently resident in Wellington.
7. Interviews – UnionAID, host families, VUW representative, MFAT Activity Manager, Myanmar Development Manager, MFAT M&E, and NZ Embassy in Myanmar staff.

Evaluation participants gave permission to list their names in Appendix 3<sup>20</sup> and use information they provided. In addition, case study participants gave permission to use their names and their organisation's name in the report. Written case studies were emailed to those named in the case studies to check and correct details.

The table below provides a summary of the numbers of alumni participating in the evaluation.

**Table 1: Alumni participating in the evaluation**

Method of participation	Number of alumni	Male/female	Percentage of alumni
Alumni attending Focus Groups at the 2019 alumni conference	34	15 male and 19 female	77.3% those at the conference 41.0% of all 83 alumni
Number of alumni that attended Focus Groups and <u>were not</u> also interviewed individually	20	9 male and 11 female	24.1% of all 83 alumni
Individual face to face alumni interviews at the conference	11	4 male and 7 female	
Individual alumni phone interviews during the during the conference	5	2 male and 3 female	
Individual alumni interviews in Wellington	2	1 male and 1 female	
Individual alumni interviews Yangon and Taunggyi (before and after the conference)	6	4 male and 2 female	
Individual phone interviews/email responses after the Myanmar field work (those not attending the last three conferences)	7 out of 9 contacted	1 male and 6 female	
TOTAL individual alumni participants	31	12 male and 19 female	37.3% of all 83 alumni
TOTAL ALUMNI PARTICIPANTS	51	21 male (41%) 30 female (59%) <sup>21</sup>	61.4% of all 83 alumni

### 3.3 Limitations to the evaluation and effect of these on the evaluation

1. Finding suitable times for Focus Groups and interviews during the conference was challenging, and interviews/Focus Groups were short to avoid conflicting with alumni networking and socialising which is a key purpose of the conference. While the conference was a good opportunity to meet with alumni, it was not the best context for in-depth enquiry.

<sup>20</sup> Where permission was not granted to list their names in the participants list, the name is not included.

<sup>21</sup> More female alumni were engaged in the evaluation than male. This was largely due to there being more females than males who had not attended the last three conferences and were engaged after the field work, and more females than males attending the focus groups.

2. The alumni that the evaluators engaged with were mostly those that were at the conference, or had registered for the conference, and/or were individually interviewed. Ten alumni (22.7% of those at the 2019 conference) chose not to attend the Focus Groups. Almost half of alumni did not attend the conference. This may have affected the outcomes of the evaluation as those that did not come to the conference, or did not come to Focus Groups may have been less positive about the programme than those we interviewed. We attempted to rectify this limitation by contacting a sample of alumni who had not attended any of the last three conferences.
3. Due to time limitations, and the evaluation scope, the evaluation excluded unsuccessful MYLP applicants, and young people who were unable to apply because their English was insufficient. It also included only two homestay parents, and one person from VUW. There may have been new information or a broader range of perceptions if the evaluation was broader in scope.
4. It was not possible to observe development projects, or meet with the communities receiving benefits from the BYCLP and MYLP alumni. It was a public holiday the day the evaluators were in Taunggyi, and there was insufficient time to travel to other locations. It was assumed that the development activities being undertaken by organisations and alumni were contributing to 'peaceful development' in Myanmar. A more in-depth study of communities could have provided more examples of impact.

## 4. The programme

The information in this section is from existing UnionAID monitoring data and reports, and describes what the programme is doing (and has done), and for whom, providing a background to the evaluation.

### 4.1 Programme goals, objectives and outcomes

The purpose of BYCLP (2009-2012) was to assist young leaders to contribute to policy-making and practice within their organisations, and to build greater cohesion between Myanmar-Burma non-government organisations (NGO). Students were expected to draw on their learning in NZ, to contribute to development in Myanmar through their work, and their leadership. In 2009, the programme was also intended to contribute to better understanding between the peoples of Myanmar-Burma and New Zealand.

The language of the goals and objectives of the programme has become more open (for example with regards to the focus on democracy) as the political situation in Myanmar has eased, s6(a)

<sup>22</sup>. However, the basic concept has remained largely unchanged. The long-term outcome of the most recent phase of the MYLP is 'a network of 60 highly skilled leaders who will contribute to the peaceful development of Myanmar'. The goal of the 2017-2021 MYLP is to support Myanmar's peaceful transition to democracy and strong links to NZ.

### 4.2 The curriculum

See also Appendix 2: Summary: UnionAID Annual Progress/Completion Reports. The programme provides English language and computer skills, and knowledge and understanding of development, politics, economics, democracy and international affairs<sup>23</sup>. Young leaders stay with host families for the 25-week duration of the programme in NZ.

The format of the 25-week programme has been essentially the same for the BYCLP and MYLP apart from the one-day pre-departure workshop which was introduced in 2016:

<sup>22</sup> UnionAID. MYLP Progress Report 2014. Annual report for MFAT.

<sup>23</sup> MYLP Activity Design Document (ADD) 2017-2021, and the 2019 Curriculum.

- One day pre-departure Foundation Workshop held in Yangon (since 2016);
- Two-week Orientation on arrival in Wellington;
- 13-week English Proficiency Programme in Wellington;
- Nine-week course tailored for the Myanmar group on development, human rights, democratic processes, economics, conflict resolution, and research and proposal writing in Wellington.
- One week of English language testing, evaluation, preparation for home and presentations of project proposals.

During the 10-week tailored course the young leaders select a special interest topic which allows the young leader to choose their field, and develop a theme specifically suited to them. The focus on special interest topics has strengthened over the years, with volunteer mentors for each young leader<sup>24</sup> introduced in 2018. The young leaders also complete a proposal for a project that they implement on their return to Myanmar, with the special interest topic, and other learning in the course being used to inform this project. Funding for this project started in 2011 (not all were funded), and since 2014<sup>25</sup> all those projects that meet the criteria set by UnionAID are funded. A topic on research was introduced in 2014, and in 2018 research, the special interest topic and the proposal writing were further integrated<sup>26</sup>. The programme has always used an experiential approach to learning, with visits and experiences to encourage discussion, critical thinking and analysis. UnionAID reports noted that the programme has strengthened the adult education pedagogical approach in 2015<sup>27</sup> in response to feedback from young leaders.

The programme has adapted over the years s6(a) in response to surveys and monitoring of the students<sup>28</sup>. The rigorous monitoring of the programme by UnionAID (qualitative and quantitative, in-house and independent) has allowed for lessons to translate into new ideas, and evolution of the programme. MYLP's first phase built on the BYCLP, with the second phase of MYLP building on the first.

### 4.3 Selection of young leaders

The selection process has changed over the years. For BYCLP, the programme s6(a) and selection was with assistance of the Community development and Civic Empowerment (CDCE) course, and the Director of Foreign Affairs Training (FAT) in Chiang Mai, Thailand. s6(a) Currently the application form is circulated widely by email and through social media by alumni and others. According to UnionAID staff the number of applications received far exceeds those that can be selected (recently approximately 140 applications for 12 places).

To be eligible for selection applicants must be:

- Citizens of Myanmar, currently living and working in Myanmar.
- Aged between 24 and 35 (although candidates may be considered).
- Currently working for a CSO/NGO in Myanmar with the intention of returning to work for that organisation for a minimum of a year on completion of the programme.
- English language proficiency greater or equal to 5.0 IELTS (or equivalent).

Criteria used for selection are:

- demonstrated leadership and future potential
- commitment to development and community work

<sup>24</sup> UnionAID. MYLP Progress Report 2018. Annual report for MFAT.

<sup>25</sup> UnionAID. MYLP Progress Reports 2011, 2012 and 2014. Annual reports for MFAT.

<sup>26</sup> UnionAID. MYLP Progress Reports 2014, 2017 and 2018. Annual reports for MFAT

<sup>27</sup> UnionAID 2014-16 Completion Report for MFAT.

<sup>28</sup> Appendix 2: UnionAID Annual Progress Reports.

- commitment to working with other ethnic/religious groups
- degree of open-mindedness and maturity
- support from employing organisation
- ethnic and gender mix of the group

There have been 42 men (50%) and 42 women (50%) in the programme between 2009 and 2019<sup>29</sup>.

**Table 2: Gender breakdown BYCLP and MYLP**

Year (Batch)	Number of men	Number of women	Total
2009 (1)	2	4	6
2010 (2)	3	3	6
2011 (3)	3	3	6
2012 (4)	3	3	6
2014 (5)	4	4	8
2015 (6)	5	3	8
2016 (7)	4	4	8
2017 (8)	6	6	12
2018 (9)	6	6	12
2019 (10)	6	6	12
TOTAL	42	42	84 (83 alumni)

A component of the programme is that young leaders learn about tolerance, conflict resolution and peace through mixing with different Myanmar ethnicities and religions. There are 135 ethnicities in Myanmar, and the table below shows that young leaders of at least 19 ethnicities have been included in the programme. Each batch has had a mixture of ethnicities. Christian, Buddhist and Muslim young leaders have been in the programme<sup>30</sup>.

**Table 3: Ethnicities of BYCLP and MYLP alumni**

Ethnicity	Number of alumni	Percentage	Rank
Bamar, Burman, (and one stated as Burmese)	14	16.9%	1
Chin	6	7.2%	4=
Chinese,/Shan/Burman	1	1.2%	
Danu	1	1.2%	
Dawei	3	3.6%	9=
Indian/Burman	1	1.2%	
Indian/Kayin/Mon	1	1.2%	
Inn-Chinese	1	1.2%	
Kachin	11	13.2%	2
Kachin-Chinese	1	1.2%	
Karen	4	4.8%	8
Karen/Burman or Burmese	3	3.6%	9=
Kayar/Karen	1	1.2%	
Kayin	2	2.4%	11=
Lautu/Chin	1	1.2%	
Mon	5	6.0%	6=
Mon/Burmese	1	1.2%	

<sup>29</sup> s6(a)

<sup>30</sup> Records are not kept of the religions of young leaders. This comment is from an interview with UnionAID staff.



Myanmar	1	1.2%	
Palaung	1	1.2%	
Pa'O	2	2.4%	11=
Rakhine	5	6.0%	6=
Rawang	1	1.2%	
Shan	8	9.6%	3
Tamil	1	1.2%	
Tavoyan	6	7.2%	4=
Wa	1	1.2%	
TOTAL	83		

## 5. Findings

### 5.1 Relevance

#### Relevance to policy priorities of the Myanmar and NZ Governments

The Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP)<sup>31</sup> (2018-2030) describes Myanmar's national development vision, which aligns with the global sustainable development agenda. MSDDP lists as Pillar 1: Peace and Stability, and as Goal 1 (of Pillar 1): Peace, National reconciliation, security and good governance. Within this goal, strategies include securing Union-wide peace; promoting equitable and conflict sensitive socio-economic development; promoting greater access to justice, individual rights and adherence to the rule of law; enhancing good governance; and increasing the ability of all people to engage with government. Furthermore, Pillar 3: People and Planet, seeks to 'improve equitable access to high quality lifelong educational opportunities'. The MYLP outcomes and goals align with the Myanmar governments recent vision and strategies for the future according to the MSDP (2018-2030).

For the New Zealand Government, the MFAT document 'Strategic Intentions 2019-2023'<sup>32</sup> describes MFAT's purpose as 'The Ministry acts in a world to make New Zealanders safer and more prosperous'. MFAT delivers the New Zealand Aid Programme to achieve this purpose, including effective international development in South East Asia. The first three Short term Outcomes (STO) of South East Asia Official Development Assistance (ODA)<sup>33</sup> are:

1. Increased, stronger and strategic people to people linkages with current and future leaders and key influencers that recognise New Zealand's value proposition.
2. Strengthened, inclusive and democratic governance (leadership and systems) across ASEAN.
3. Improved workforce skills and capabilities supporting development in South East Asia.

The MYLP clearly aligns with MFAT's strategic direction, and the first three STOs of the South East Asia ODA. The Joint Commitment for Development for Myanmar (2017-2021)<sup>34</sup> (JCfD) was agreed and signed by the Myanmar and New Zealand governments in 2017. The JCfD states 'knowledge and skills'<sup>35</sup> as one of its four priority areas for NZ-funded assistance to Myanmar. The JCfD specifically names the Myanmar Young Leaders Programme in a statement that notes that NZ will provide 'short term training opportunities for leaders and potential leaders' with an outcome of increasing workforce skills and capability to contribute to Myanmar's development.

<sup>31</sup> Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP) 2018-2030. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Ministry of Planning and Finance. August 2018.

<sup>32</sup> MFAT. Strategic Intentions. 2019-2023. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

<sup>33</sup> South East Asia ODA Short term Outcomes. Document provided by Jonathan Lee. MFAT.

<sup>34</sup> Myanmar- New Zealand Joint Commitment for Development. 2017-2021. Myanmar Ministry for Planning and Finance (MOPF) (for the Myanmar Government) and New Zealand Government.

<sup>35</sup> Increased knowledge, skills, and capability to contribute to Myanmar's development ...'

## Relevance of the programme to alumni

Although the context of Myanmar has changed since 2009 when BYCLP began, the course has remained largely valid and relevant, with the content and teaching adapting to feedback and the changing context. The first group of alumni in particular strongly influenced the programme in 2009, and following groups of students, through their feedback to UnionAID and suggestions, have further influenced changes<sup>36</sup>.

Peacebuilding and democracy remain relevant - their value has not changed over time. Furthermore, young people from Myanmar still gain from travelling outside their own country to learn about democracy, human rights and government. <sup>37</sup>In some ways MYLP is more relevant now than during the early years of BYCLP. Some ideas and practices earlier (BYCLP) alumni experienced in NZ were so different, or 'far away' from the situation in Burma at the time, that they could not easily introduce these new ideas on their return. **s6(a)**

. Now it is easier to put ideas and learning from the programme into practice.

## Relevance of specific aspects of the programme to alumni

The relevance of specific aspects of the programme was determined by identifying the most and least useful aspects of the programme to alumni's work. See Appendix 6. Focus Group Results, for details. Academic subjects in the tailored course did not feature much in the most or least useful, although economics was ranked by one person as most useful and by a few alumni as least useful.

The aspects of the programme for the alumni's work<sup>38</sup> ranked as most useful to their work were English language, critical thinking, special interest<sup>39</sup>, and proposal writing. Visits (especially to parliament and democratic organisations) were also ranked highly. Aspects of the programme cited as most useful, along with personal confidence developed during the programme and experience of different ways of learning, remain valid and relevant to alumni, including those from early batches<sup>40</sup>.

English was ranked highly because it is important for communication (especially for INGOs), but also because the teaching methods used in the EPP, which were considered creative and enjoyable, are replicated in Myanmar<sup>41</sup> (a positive unintended outcome). Proposal writing is very important and relevant for professional life with many alumni writing proposals in their work - it is very important for organisations to get funding to be able to operate. Several alumni were successful in applications for the NZ Embassy in Myanmar 'Head of Mission' (HOM) funding. Most alumni found their special topics very useful, and relevant to their work. Volunteer mentors for the special interest topics were considered to be dedicated and helpful. There were many examples of how the special topic visits and connections to organisations have been instrumental in changing the way that the alumni have approached their work (see Section 5.2). Alumni in Focus Groups said they learned about collaboration between organisations, how youth are included in democracy, law, and how law works in NZ, inclusiveness, and ideas for activities and projects. The parliamentary visit was noted as useful to the alumni because they learned about democracy in NZ and see a parliament working. One organisation, Taunggyi Youth Center (TYC), replicated the idea of a visit to parliament taking their youth trainees to Nay Pi Taw (see Section 5.2).

<sup>36</sup> UnionAID reports, and this was also mentioned at the Focus Groups.

<sup>37</sup> Mentioned by three alumni and one of the organisations in the case studies.

<sup>38</sup> Results from Focus Group ranking exercise for most and least useful aspects of the programme for their work.

<sup>39</sup> Special interest and projects were not a focus in the earlier young leader programme, the group of earlier alumni identified 'critical thinking' as most useful.

<sup>40</sup> From focus groups and interviews.

<sup>41</sup> Focus Group discussion.

Alumni<sup>42</sup> also identified less tangible aspects of the programme as particularly useful and relevant. For example, the attitude of New Zealand to cultural peace, and Maori land issues, and that New Zealanders 'care about other people'. For example, one young leader said that interaction with Maori had inspired them to search for their own cultural heritage when they returned to Myanmar. Alumni also valued meeting with different ethnicities from their own country. One alumni said that MYLP is very relevant to them because there are very few programmes where there is such as mixture of Myanmar ethnicities, and opportunities to meet ethnic minorities (including Maori) -they said NZ citizens 'are very close'.

For all the four Focus Groups, the highest ranked least useful aspect (for one group this was the only ranked least useful aspect<sup>43</sup>) was that there were 'no least useful aspects of the programme'. This indicates that alumni were generally very happy with the programme, and time had not changed the relevance of the programme to their work.

Visits were ranked as the least useful for one Focus Group because they were far away, the visit location was difficult to find, or reach (in 2018 the bus service was changed). Sometimes the visits were 'boring', and the speakers on the visit didn't understand the background of the young leaders (or ask what they wanted to know) so much of the content of the visit was irrelevant. Shadowing Members of Parliament (MP) was not useful for some alumni. MPs were too busy and alumni did not know enough about the MPs before they shadowed them, although in contrast, one alumni found shadowing an MP who was 'an environmental activist' very useful.

Human rights was ranked third least useful by a group of mainly 2017 and 2018 alumni, and for this group film watching was the least useful aspect of the programme. s6(a)

### Implications for MYLP

Alumni mentioned<sup>45</sup> that the amount of time spent learning about different topics in the tailored course was not right given the change in context in Myanmar, and importance of crosscutting issues. A comment<sup>46</sup> was: 'change topics in accordance with Myanmar context for example there is more emphasis in Myanmar now on public policy and administration'. The relevance of economics in the programme was also questioned by a few alumni in Focus Groups.

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<sup>42</sup> Focus Group and interviews.

<sup>43</sup> This was the Focus Group of earlier alumni.

<sup>44</sup> Focus Group discussion. Two alumni were the main speakers in this this discussion and another also joined the conversation.

<sup>45</sup> Focus Groups and interviews.

<sup>46</sup> Focus Group questionnaire response

Some alumni from 2017 and 2018 batches considered there was too much on human rights, particularly theoretical aspects, indicating that some alumni from recent batches are not as wholly satisfied with the human rights aspect of the programme as earlier batches of young leaders have been<sup>47</sup>. Some alumni considered human rights not to be such a 'big issue' in Myanmar as it was in 2009 and 2010. An alumni<sup>48</sup> said (of human rights) 'for early batches human rights was important because there had been 50 years with no human rights, but now...?'.

Human rights is a key focus of the programme, and took up at least 6 days in the 2019 curriculum as a separate topic, closely linked to the topic of democracy. Human rights topics in 2019 include: Introduction to human rights; Making human rights a reality: NZ mediation and dispute processes; Rule of law; Human Rights Commission; Youth parliament. **s6(a)**

Even if the concept of democracy is not new to more recent alumni, in NZ the young leaders see democracy in practice<sup>49</sup>.

The time period of the programme (six months) is just about right<sup>50</sup> – the young leaders do not lose contact with their families and careers, but have enough time to develop an understanding of what they can achieve, and the skills, knowledge and attributes needed for this. Travelling overseas is motivational for the young leaders who see things they would like to change in their own country on their return.

However, although aspects of the tailored course were relevant and useful, the alumni said the tailored course<sup>51</sup> 'was exhausting', 'there was too much in it' and they didn't have time to think about anything in depth because there was so much. One alumni thought an extra two months in NZ would be beneficial due to the intensity of the course.

### **Relevance of host families to the programme and to the alumni**

Students stay with host families during the 25 weeks they are in New Zealand. The host families are considered to be important, and very relevant to the programme and the young leaders. Host families are considered an integral part of the programme<sup>52</sup>, and can have a significant positive impact on the young leaders. Host families can help develop young leaders' English language, and understand life in NZ. Host families learn about Myanmar, and are expected to support young leaders during their time in NZ, and sometimes on their return to Myanmar, contributing to ongoing communication and links between the alumni and NZ (see also Section 5.2 under Medium-term Outcomes). However, every year getting sufficient host families is a challenge.

UnionAID is very concerned about pastoral care of the young leaders and are conscious of the importance of harmonious and fruitful host family relationships. <sup>53</sup>UnionAID make efforts to engage host families who have hosted young leaders before, who support the programme and will provide the required and appropriate care. Those families that continue to take young leaders, and where young leaders are happy, are highly valued. UnionAID prepares information for host families about what is expected of them, and cultural and other issues that may arise are discussed before the programme starts. Young leaders are warned that food is different in NZ<sup>54</sup>. Host families are also encouraged to provide food that students can cook themselves either for themselves or as part of the household arrangements.

<sup>47</sup> This may be related to viewing of the human rights film that the alumni in Discussion Group 4 were unhappy about.

<sup>48</sup> Individual interview.

<sup>49</sup> Interviews (case studies) with Director of one of the organisations where alumni have worked, and also with one of the alumni's line managers, in Yangon.

<sup>50</sup> Interviews with alumni and staff of organisations in which they work or have worked.

<sup>51</sup> Focus Groups and interviews.

<sup>52</sup> Host families join in activities, pot luck meals and are generally part of the experience for the young leaders.

<sup>53</sup> Feedback from UnionAID

<sup>54</sup> Food is one of the major issues that young leaders have in adapting to life in NZ.

The host family situation is closely monitored with young leaders after the first four weeks and then at around 10 weeks. UnionAID has engaged alumni of the programme who are in Wellington for further study to interview the young leaders in the Myanmar language. Hosts are contacted soon after the first monitoring of the students to check if there are issues from their perspective and to raise with them anything that a student may have raised. If UnionAID were aware of a host family issue programme personnel took steps to resolve it immediately. Survey and focus groups have researched the student and host families' perspectives, and have indicated the host family experience has generally been very positive with no major issues<sup>55</sup>.

Alumni had mixed perceptions of host families<sup>56</sup>. In Discussion Groups host families were not ranked as highly useful by alumni. For one Focus Group host families did not feature as most or least useful, for one group 'host families' were ranked third equal (with two other aspects) as most useful. One group ranked host family as third least useful. Appendix 6: Focus Group results.

The majority of alumni had a very good experiences with their host family. Those that had stayed with good host families were very outspoken about how helpful these host families were. Examples of support from host families included learning about NZ culture, introduction to different sectors and other cultures in NZ society, support for English language learning, learning social skills, learning to cook, eat healthy food and grow vegetables, support with public speaking by asking alumni to speak at their private functions, and young leaders feeling welcome and cared for. For some the support continues as host families help alumni with proposals and keep in touch through Facebook. Learning about flexible gender roles in the household has also been useful to the young leaders.

However, there was also a few bad experiences mentioned (some were of friends' experiences, and some related to the interviewee or Focus Group participant). Two alumni felt they were treated unreasonably strictly, one host family with 'rules for everything', and one host family did not join the programme activities and meals at all. Several alumni mentioned that the host families did not understand the Myanmar culture or food. One said there was not enough time to talk with their host family as the host parent was busy with work and their own activities, so their English did not improve. One alumni felt their privacy was invaded by a host parent searching through their room, and felt they were treated as a child although they had been away from home since a young age. This alumni said they would have rather stayed in a hostel. One felt generally uncomfortable in the house, and usually did their homework outside to avoid meeting with the host family.

Two of the host families were interviewed. One family had had an experience with a young leader who they 'could not understand' and did not 'fit' with their family, although another young leader they hosted fitted in well. UnionAID resolved the issue by moving the young leader who did not 'fit' the host family to another family. The other host family had very positive experiences with all 15 young leaders (18% of all young leaders) that they had hosted, and enjoyed the interaction with them and continuing contact once they had returned to Myanmar.

UnionAID does everything possible to prepare young leaders and host families. It is inevitable that there will be some issues with home stays over cultural or personality differences and/or mismatch of expectations. These can usually be resolved if UnionAID are aware of them. However, some bad experiences alumni had with host families were not communicated to UnionAID or only communicated after the programme was completed. The young leaders may not have felt comfortable to express their situation to the host family or UnionAID at the time, or to the person who was monitoring their home stay situation (for example an alumni contracted by UnionAID). Sometimes young leaders do not mention issues for fear of making the host family situation worse<sup>57</sup>. If young leaders are unhappy, or the host family is not fulfilling the expectation of providing a caring

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<sup>55</sup> For example, UnionAID. MYLP Progress Report 2015. Annual report for MFAT.

<sup>56</sup> In Discussion groups and individual interviews.

<sup>57</sup> Interviews with UnionAID personnel.

and supportive environment, the benefits and positive outcomes from staying with host families will not be realised. Monitoring needs to identify issues early through appropriate measures. If issues cannot be resolved, and if it is the wish of the young leader, the young leader may be better off to stay (for at least some of the time) in other accommodation where they feel comfortable and are better able to learn from the programme.

### Cross cutting issues

Cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment and/or youth are relevant to alumni's development work and a priority for MFAT. These cross-cutting issues may be covered in depth for some young leaders as part of their special interests. However, in the 2019 tailored course (for all young leaders) youth has a low profile. There is a day of learning about the Youth Parliament.

Gender and women's rights had a one-day gender analysis workshop in the 2019 tailored course, and one day on 'democratic processes and women's rights'. The women's rights day included<sup>s9(2)(a)</sup>

Public Service Association (on equal pay); CEDAW (s9(2)(a)), and a session on reproductive and sexual freedom, and speaker s9(2)(a), National Co-ordinator, New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective.

In terms of gender, <sup>s8</sup>alumni said that 'all young leaders (including the men) should have more on gender during MYLP', and that 'the programme should cover gender mainstreaming and gender stereotyping'. One said that the young leaders could have an introductory lecture on gender mainstreaming, see how gender is mainstreamed in NZ, see how the NZ government supports women's NGOs and debate gender issues. Another said 'this is not just about women's issues, it is about gender' and 'if it is not part of the core curriculum, some will miss out'. One alumni said that the information on CEDAW was not useful as it was too theoretical and not something that could be used in their work in Myanmar<sup>s9</sup>. Four alumni wrote about improving gender in the MYLP in Focus Group questionnaires, for example: 'Gender and feminism concepts included and use of practical relevant examples in context of Myanmar'; 'It would be useful to put the lesson 'gender' with more field experience in the future'.

Gender concepts are relevant to, and permeate through every aspect of development. With a long-term outcome of 'peaceful development in Myanmar', every young leader returning to Myanmar should be motivated, and able, to mainstream gender into their development work. In addition to gender analysis (as in 2019 curriculum), the gender topic could also involve NZ organisations promoting practical gender equality and gender mainstreaming in NZ to demonstrate how women have been mainstreamed in development in NZ. The alumni want to see practical examples and understand how gender equality comes about, not just learn about theoretical aspects (eg CEDAW report). Speakers who can talk of the history of how women have gained equality in aspects such as family law and land ownership would add value, as would Maori women's groups, and other women's groups, that demonstrate ongoing struggles for equality. Interaction with such groups has been part of special interest topics but not part of the tailored course.

The only mention of climate change/environment in the 2019 curriculum is on Climate Change and Refugees, a 1.5-hour session. One alumni said 'climate change is a trend that is important for all development' - young leaders need to discuss global issues and climate change is a global issue<sup>s60</sup>.

Several alumni did not think that gender or climate change should be part of a core curriculum for MYLP, and thought these topics would be better as special interest topics. All of these alumni also said that they would not be dealing with gender or climate change in their work (ie not relevant to them), despite all of them being involved in development work. However, this shows a lack of

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<sup>s8</sup> Individual interviews.

<sup>s9</sup> Individual interview.

<sup>s60</sup> Individual interview.

understanding of the crosscutting nature of such issues as gender and climate change in development, and in itself is a reason that these topics should be included to a greater extent.

## 5.2 Effectiveness

### Introduction

This section addresses the extent to which the BYCLP and the MYLP have achieved planned outputs and outcomes. The most recent Results Framework is used as a guide to 'what is intended', with the indicators and targets in the Results Measurement Table a guide as to what results are expected. However, in the Results Framework for the latest phase of MYLP, there is cross-over in the medium and long-term outcomes between the outcomes themselves, and in the indicators and targets. Some indicators were quantitative and not useful for the evaluation. Furthermore, the evaluation is for the BYCLP and MYLP, not just for the recent phase of the MYLP.

Thus, for the purposes of assessing effectiveness in this evaluation, higher-level outcomes, and 'what success looks like' for the outcomes have been adapted (as in the table below) from the MYLP Results Framework, and from interviews and reading.

**Table 4: High-level outcomes and what success looks like (for this evaluation)**

Original Outcome	Rewritten Outcome (for this evaluation)	What success looks like (for this evaluation)
<b>Ultimate outcomes (long-term outcome (LTO))</b>		
LTO: A network of sixty highly skilled leaders who will contribute to the peaceful development of Myanmar	LTO 1: Alumni are contributing to the peaceful development of Myanmar	Successful development work by alumni which is (or has been) contributing to Myanmar's peaceful development. The development activities, or the way the activities are undertaken, can be directly attributed to knowledge skills, attitude and personal attributes gained from BYCLP and MYLP. If attribution is not possible, there is evidence that BYCLP and MYLP contributed to the activities and/or way the activities have been undertaken.
	LTO 2: An alumni network of skilled leaders in Myanmar (supporting each other to contribute to Myanmar development)	Most alumni have regular professional engagement with other alumni. The alumni conference is fulfilling a role of networking, with most alumni attending the annual conference, or would attend if they could. Examples of how the alumni network is being used indicate that the network is supporting the alumni, and contributes to enhancing alumni's professional development, leadership, influence and/or development work (and in turn contributes to peaceful development of Myanmar).
<b>Intermediate outcomes (medium-term outcomes (MTO))</b>		
MTO 1: Improved leadership, knowledge and skills demonstrated	MTO 1: Alumni are demonstrating leadership, skills, knowledge, values and attributes learned (or acquired) in BYCLP and MYLP	Alumni are in leadership roles, have been promoted since returning to Myanmar. Alumni line managers and organisations provide positive examples of how (in development work): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alumni have changed in terms of leadership and abilities to fulfil their work since being in NZ, and</li> <li>• they have used the knowledge, skills attributes and values from BYCLP/MYLP.</li> </ul>



Original Outcome	Rewritten Outcome (for this evaluation)	What success looks like (for this evaluation)
		(Note that this outcome was covered in detail in the 2015 Mid-term Review)
MTO2: Strong and enduring links are established and maintained between New Zealand and Myanmar and between participants	MTO 2: Strong and enduring links between alumni and New Zealand, and between young leaders are established	Alumni attend NZ Embassy and other relevant functions, and meet with NZ visitors in Myanmar. Alumni are regularly in touch with, and seek advice from programme personnel, host families and other NZ people they met during the programme. Alumni return to NZ for further study. Alumni promote NZ in Myanmar due to positive experiences during their time in NZ. Alumni establish strong relationships with others in their batch in NZ and when they return to Myanmar.

### Outputs and short-term outcomes

See also Appendix 2: Summary: UnionAID Progress/Completion Reports. Monitoring has generally shown the programme to have been positively received by the young leaders.

The six outputs for the current phase of MYLP are: 13-week EPP delivered annually; alumni fieldwork projects undertaken; 10-week course<sup>61</sup>; one day foundation workshop, 25 weeks of NZ life and culture and annual three-day alumni development and evaluation conference in Myanmar.

Monitoring, as described in progress reports by UnionAID for the programme, have indicated that outputs have been achieved (the terminology used was different for BYCLP and MYLP). This was verified through interviews with alumni and UnionAID.

The two Short Term Outcomes are: Improved English language proficiency, and improved understanding of human rights, economics, democratic processes and basic research; development of proposal writing skills and basic understanding of project evaluation. The results of the before and after testing of the English indicate that the targets are consistently being met for English language proficiency (0.5 band improvement). Without testing of the topics in the 10-week programme it is difficult to ascertain quantitatively whether the outcome of 'improved understanding' is being met. However, the 'reflective journal' that the young leaders prepare is used to follow the 'journey' of the young leaders in their understanding. Furthermore, useful proposals are developed that are then implemented in Myanmar verifying the learning in the proposal writing skills.

UnionAID commissioned independent qualitative monitoring by Heathrose Research<sup>62</sup> in 2017 and 2018. In focus group sessions young leaders wrote of the 'most significant change'<sup>63</sup> story to describe the effect of the MYLP on them, and how this will change what they do in Myanmar. Overall in 2017 there were 'two strong themes to their stories: the development of new knowledge and skills, and the values change for them as their understanding of other's perspectives and ways of working has been drawn to their attention'. In 2018, the focus group findings were that all the young leaders have developed knowledge and skills that they can use in their work and personal lives in Myanmar. The strongest theme to come through was the importance of the development of their

<sup>61</sup> Focussed on human rights, democratic processes, and economics, delivered annually and including an introduction to research and proposal.

<sup>62</sup> Heathrose Research. 2017 (and 2018). Report from Myanmar Young Leaders Programme 2017 (and 2018). Independently commissioned by UnionAID. In: UnionAID. Annual Progress Reports for MFAT. 2017 and 2018 (note that the 2019 report is not yet available).

<sup>63</sup> Davies, R and Dart, J. (2005). The 'most significant change' technique: a guide to its use. <https://mande.co.uk/special-issues/most-significant-change-msc/>



English language skills. The concept of democracy was also another strong theme for the 2018 alumni.

## Medium- term outcomes

### MTO 1. Alumni are demonstrating leadership, skills, knowledge, values and personal attributes<sup>64</sup> learned (or acquired) in BYCLP and MYLP

A 2015 independent mid-term review<sup>65</sup> of BYCLP and MYLP specifically addressed the extent to which the medium-term outcome 'Improved leadership, knowledge and skills demonstrated' had been met for the BYCLP (2009-2012) and MYLP (2014). The review results were primarily based on a survey of employing organisations which sought responses regarding alumni's work responsibilities, communication and presentation skills, research skills, and leadership skills and knowledge. The 2015 review found that the programme was on track to achieve the medium-term targets for the 2014-2016 MYLP, as agreed with MFAT. Improvements in alumni effectiveness, and practical benefits of the programme for employers fell under six key areas:

- Enhanced leadership skills and impact linked to increased confidence to take initiative and responsibility.
- A stronger understanding of conceptual frameworks.
- More rigorous analytical skills and increased knowledge in technical areas.
- Improved English skills which built confidence and improved communication.
- Enhanced skills, for example in areas such as project and organisational management, research and training.
- A greater appreciation and concern for diversity and inclusive approaches.

This evaluation found similar results from alumni Focus Group results where alumni responded to a question on the most important change to themselves as a result of programme, that had been used in their development work (Question 2, Appendix 6: Focus Group Results). The change mentioned the most often by alumni in the Focus Group questionnaire (by far) was around **English language and communication** (mentioned 17 times). Some alumni also mentioned that this built confidence, and supported proposal and report writing. For example, alumni wrote 'language improvement gives confidence in work' and 'get the confidence to use English language to communicate'.

The second most often mentioned changes (11 mentions each) were **confidence**, and **improved leadership, more responsibility and improved professional skills**. Alumni wrote that they were 'more confident to deal with decision making leaders', and 'more confidence, dare to speak out' and 'improved my inter-personal skills – communication with others and self-confidence'. Another wrote 'able to take a leadership role, improved professional skill in my work'. **Personal values, attributes and understanding** (of themselves and others) featured strongly (mentioned six times, and also mentioned a lot in discussion), having respect for others, and building trust in others. For example, alumni wrote 'deeply understanding about multicultural society, critically analysing myself and found what kind of person I would like to be in life, responsible citizenship ...' and 'my attitudes, my confidence, my personal improvement, my work, the way I treat others and my students'.

Another aspect of change as a result of the programme that also featured strongly were **networking and building social capital through network**. For example, 'networking skills - more confident to communicate with different people throughout Myanmar, gained dynamic groups of social capital

<sup>64</sup> 'Values and personal attributes' is not stated in the current or 2014-16 MYLP Results Frameworks. It was added by the evaluator for the purposes of this evaluation.

<sup>65</sup> s9(2)(a) Khin Maung Htwe. 2015. Building skills, building links: Mid-term review of NZ Myanmar Young Leaders Programme (commissioned by UnionAID).

through MYLP network, not only for personal, but also for professional development'. A change in the **alumni's way of thinking and learning** (ie critical thinking) was also important. Alumni wrote 'critical thinking skill has improved' and 'how to learn '.

In the case studies (Appendix 4: Case Studies), line managers, in terms of alumni demonstrating leadership, skills, knowledge and personal attributes, spoke consistently about English language skills and confidence gained as a result of BCLP/MYLP and how alumni spoke out confidently, contributing to new ideas and new ways of development practice in the organisation. All those alumni in the case study were in more responsible positions after the BYCLP or MYLP, enabling them to have more influence on peaceful development in Myanmar.

One of the line managers in ActionAID said that before the NZ programme some of the alumni were 'quite timid' and had questioned whether their opinion was OK. However, after the NZ programme all the alumni were all confident to speak up, voice their opinions and connect with others. According to her line manager, one alumni changed from being 'timid and shy' to being 'bold, matured and able to handle stress'. After MYLP this alumni was able to adapt to different cultures, and to talk about sensitive Myanmar issues with confidence. The alumni was calm and could handle criticism well. The CDEC Director said all the alumni that worked at CDEC changed after being in NZ. The main changes were that they 'took leadership roles, and had more confidence. They could make decisions on their own, and had self-leadership in initiating tasks'. Of one alumni she said the alumni 'was already talented', but when they came back from NZ 'they shone', and of another after MYLP 'all their weaknesses had gone' they 'had confidence to take a leadership role and speak out ...'.

English language skills improved alumni's proposal and report writing and enabled one to be a spokesperson on women's rights for the organisation. In CARE, the MYLP alumni supports proposal writing even though it is not actually their job to do so because their English proficiency, and proposal working skills have improved so much since MYLP.

Overall, improved leadership, knowledge, and changed values and attributes (MTO 1), contributes strongly to the peaceful development of Myanmar (LTO 1), and a strong alumni network of skilled leaders in Myanmar (LTO 2).

## **MTO 2: Strong and enduring links between alumni and New Zealand**

For New Zealand to maintain links with alumni is critical<sup>66</sup>. For UnionAID this contact enhances the programme, strengthens the networking between alumni (LTO 2), strengthens the MYLP projects contributing to peaceful development in Myanmar (LTO 1), and enables UnionAID to contact any alumni if needed.

For the NZ government to keep in touch with the alumni network is also important. For the NZ Embassy in Myanmar, the links with alumni are strategically important, facilitating links to other projects and people<sup>67</sup>. The alumni can support the NZ government politically and for trade, likely even more so in the future as alumni move into more influential positions. The Embassy-alumni links are enhanced by having an alumni on the Embassy staff, who has also led the establishment of a NZ scholarships alumni network which includes BYCLP, MYLP and other NZ scholarship alumni. Two or three successful applications per year for the Head of Mission (HOM) funding from the NZ Embassy in Myanmar, are from alumni. The interest taken by the Ambassador in the alumni (for example visiting the young leaders' projects and attending the annual conference) is important in strengthening the relationship between alumni and the NZ Embassy in Myanmar.

<sup>66</sup> Note that the MTO 2 differs from that in the MYLP Results Framework in that it only pertains to the NZ-alumni links as the links between participants have been covered in the LTO 'a network of highly skilled leaders'.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with NZ Embassy in Myanmar staff.

The evaluation found that the links between UnionAID and the alumni were very strong, both on a personal level and as a group. All of the alumni spoken to had extremely high regard for UnionAID personnel, and UnionAID, and had regular contact with them. Alumni spoke very highly of the VUW staff member who is responsible for learning in the tailored course. Many regularly keep in touch with these programme personnel. There are at least two emails per year to all alumni from UnionAID. UnionAID inform alumni that programme personnel are coming to Myanmar (for example for the young leaders' selection process, or the conference). Application documents for the programme for the following year, are provided to the alumni by email. UnionAID also engage through Facebook. UnionAID contacts alumni from time to time out find out what they are doing. Only one alumni is not in touch with UnionAID (nor in touch with other alumni).

Some alumni keep in touch with their host families and a few are in touch with mentors and other NZ people they met during the programme. Often this is an occasional email or Facebook. A few host families had visited Myanmar and had emailed alumni when they were coming. Some alumni had been helped by their host family or mentor with proposals for funding. One mentor visited Myanmar for a research project and engaged with the relevant alumni. Alumni speak very favourably of NZ to others, and that they feel they 'promote' NZ<sup>68</sup>. However, for most alumni, the links between alumni and New Zealanders were not 'strong' but could be activated, if needed, or if an opportunity for connecting arose.

While in NZ, the alumni also bond very strongly with others in their batch. Most batches have their own Facebook group. This is a very important start to the networking process which is expanded when they return to Myanmar and meet other alumni through the annual conference and other networking.

## **Long-term outcomes**

### **LTO 1: Alumni are contributing to the peaceful development of Myanmar**

#### **BYCLP and MYLP projects**

The projects that are planned during the tailored course and are funded by the programme, have empowered community members and contributed to peaceful development. The projects give alumni confidence and skills to manage and carry out a project using their learning from the programme. The project demonstrates to alumni's colleagues well-researched, planned, and executed development activities. The projects, and resulting 'peaceful development' is directly attributable to BYCLP and/or MYLP.

The project has been, in some cases, a leverage point for promotion and/or more responsibility in alumni's jobs<sup>69</sup>. Alumni<sup>70</sup> consistently said they felt 'confident' and 'well prepared' to carry out these projects. In most of the training projects designed and planned during MYLP, alumni drew on teaching and learning methods used in the MYLP programme, particularly for teaching English, and democracy. Special interest topics, the research and proposal writing topics, and English language proficiency also influenced the quality of the proposals and projects. Examples of the proposals, and the outcomes of the projects are documented by UnionAID (more recently as part of the annual report). Some examples<sup>71</sup> of numerous individual projects are:

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<sup>68</sup> Interviews with alumni, and with line managers and organisations in the case studies.

<sup>69</sup> Individual interviews with alumni, and interviews with staff of organisations that alumni work or have worked in (case studies)

<sup>70</sup> Individual interviews with alumni.

<sup>71</sup> From Focus Groups, and individual interviews with alumni and their line managers, and/or from UnionAID documents (MYLP Field Work Projects 2014-2015).

**Table 5: Examples of MYLP and BYCL projects**

Alumni and MYLP batch	Project
s9(2)(a) 2014	s9(2)(a) State Civic Education during Democratic Transition. Three-day course educating 82 community leaders in s9(2)(a) State about the role of MP's the Constitution, the election process and the importance of democratic process.
s9(2)(a) 2014	Capacity Building and Youth Empowerment Project. Teaching English to 59 10-14 year olds, and a computer course for two colleagues.
s9(2)(a) 2014	Livelihood assistance (organic gardening skills and knowledge) for 35 students at s9(2)(a) Boarding School who were internally displaced by the conflict in Kachin State.
s9(2)(a) 2014	Democracy and leadership training (of trainers) for 20 young men and women from nine different s9(2)(a) community organisations. Several participants followed up with courses in conflict areas reaching 600 people from Buddhist and Muslim communities.
s9(2)(a) 2014	Three-day workshop on 'Do No Harm', an international framework to ensure delivering assistance in conflict areas does not exacerbate tensions or prolong conflict. The workshop reached 29 staff from seven NGOs in s9(2)(a) and s9(2)(a) states.
s9(2)(a) 2015	Workshop on mining law, conservation and farmers land rights for 49 farmers, lawyers and environmentalists to support resolution of pollution by mining in s9(2)(a) village in s9(2)(a) Division. This was followed up by formation of the s9(2)(a)s9(2)(a) s9(2)(a) and constructive dialogue with the mining company.
s9(2)(a) 2015	Brought together three key CSOs in s9(2)(a) in a four-day workshop for 30 member representatives to learn about leadership, management, rule of law, and identify common ground and building trust for collaboration and cooperation.
s9(2)(a) s9(2)(a) 2015	20 young people from community organisations and s9(2)(a) political parties attended a five-day training course on water and waste management, including a visit to s9(2)(a) Lake, to protect and improve the s9(2)(a) state environment that has been contaminated by poor waste management and mining.
s9(2)(a) 2015	Voter education for s9(2)(a) community members in southern s9(2)(a) state to encourage participation in the 2015 elections. Four s9(2)(a) leaders attended a three-day workshop and subsequently reached 2,000 people from 19 villages in sessions supported by monks and other leaders.
s9(2)(a) 2016	Five-day course on parenting skills, child rights and child-centred learning in s9(2)(a)
s9(2)(a) 2016	Strengthening local government: Training on governance to 34 key stakeholders, including municipal committee members, government officers, ward administrators, and CSO leaders. Town hall consultation meeting attended by 120 members of the public with issues of local concern, such as water management, identified and prioritised. Solutions discussed by the municipal committee at a Local Government Strategy Workshop and a two-year work plan developed. This has led to further involvement with local government at state level.
s9(2)(a)	Training course for five male and five female journalists to improve the

Alumni and MYLP batch	Project
2016	quality of journalism. Included ethics, media freedom, gender issues, investigative journalism, data use and conflict reporting.
s9(2)(a) 2016	Enhancing youth leadership in the isolated <sup>s9(2)(a)</sup> region: Five-day workshop with 22 youth from CSOs, charities, and political parties from five different townships learning about leadership and politics, CV writing and facilitation. These participants shared the learning with their communities. In total 99 youth from four different townships were reached.
s9(2)(a) 2017	Strengthening the local tourism chain in <sup>s9(2)(a)</sup> (for trekking): Brought together 12 trekking guides and 17 villagers to do a joint analysis exercise of the situation. Applied mediation skills learnt in New Zealand, to negotiate between villagers and guides.
s9(2)(a) 2017	Two-day residential youth leadership forum for 26 (13 men and 13 women) participants - leadership training exercises, career development and civic education workshops. Participants developed a small project to be carried out after the Forum - recycling awareness, media literacy, youth and diversity, vocational education awareness and a social enterprise start up talk benefitting over 800 people.

#### Alumni's 'most important development work'

In the Focus Groups, Question 1 asked the alumni to note the most important development work they had undertaken since they returned from NZ. Alumni were also asked in Question 2 for an important change in themselves as a result of the programme and in Question 3 for the most useful aspect of the programme for their work (Appendix 6: Focus Group Results). Some examples of important development work in Myanmar, are listed here. Some of these are the projects from the programme. The alumni's development work is strongly linked to the changes (attributes and values) alumni identified in themselves and/or the most useful aspect of the programme to them (in summary)<sup>72</sup> indicating that the programme has strongly contributed to the development work. It is clear that in addition to skills and knowledge<sup>73</sup>, attributes and values gained during the programme such as confidence, better communication, critical thinking, respect, and understanding of cultural aspects has highly influenced the development work.

**Table 6: Alumni's most important development work**

Alumni's most important development work	Important change in themselves and/or useful aspect of BYCLP or MYLP for alumni's work
Worked in the New Zealand Scholarships centre.	English, and critical thinking.
Working with youth research.	English.
Give public presentations with skill, and fund raised with an organisation with international donors.	Language skills and better communication.
Initiated Community Based Learning Centre and organised community-based activities.	English, and confidence.
Contributed and supported the Freedom of Association law programme in ILO, and	English proposal writing and critical thinking.

<sup>72</sup> Some of these may also have been projects planned and designed during the BCLP/MYLP. Alumni in Focus Groups were free to write on their questionnaire forms about any activity they had undertaken since they returned from BYCL/MYLP which was important to development of Myanmar.

<sup>73</sup> Leadership, skills and knowledge are mentioned in the original MTO 1 but not attributes and values.



Alumni's most important development work	Important change in themselves and/or useful aspect of BYCLP or MYLP for alumni's work
promoted awareness raising of the law in the labour sector.	
Implemented an English programme for youth.	English and learning about the education system in NZ.
Facilitated dialogue between local authorities and local farmers in order to promote local economic development. As a result, we developed a strategic plan together for local economic development.	Proposal writing, reporting in English. Knowledge of understanding about public engagement in local government support. Facilitating the dialogue. Understanding the process of building trust in an organisation
Support to humanitarian and development organisation. Conflict sensitivity applications into their program and politics. Conducting analysis using a systems approach.	Confidence; English language; Critical thinking; cultural aspect of peace; attitude and mentality of respect for one another.
Research; engaging with international organisations; engaging with the government.	English Language. Analytical skills.
Applying for a small grant to build a school building.	My attitudes, my confidence, EPP.

#### Case study examples

There were also significant and powerful examples of development projects and activities, contributing to peaceful development in Myanmar, where the design of the projects or activities, or the way it is carried out, can be directly attributed to the programme.

The examples below are from case studies organisations, their staff, and the alumni that worked there (detail in in Appendix 4: Case Studies<sup>74</sup>).

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

<sup>74</sup> Permission has been given by the alumni and their organisations to use their names and identify them in the report. All case study participants have had the opportunity to review the case studies and make changes.

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

Proactively released by the  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

s9(2)(a)

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s9(2)(a)

Proactively released by the  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade



s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

## **LTO 2: An alumni network of skilled leaders in Myanmar**

An alumni network of skilled leaders in Myanmar is important so that alumni can support each other, be supported by NZ, and the network can support the peaceful development of Myanmar (LTO 1). A network (group) can have greater influence on development and change, than individuals. The network is also important to strengthen the NZ-Alumni links. Any alumni who are 'in touch' with other alumni, are assumed to be part of the network of skilled leaders.

The evaluation<sup>75</sup> found that there is a strong network of skilled alumni. Of all the alumni contacted by the evaluators, only two could not be reached<sup>76</sup>. The extent to which this network is active varies at any one time, but the ability for alumni to keep in touch through social media, phone and email means that the network can be activated very quickly if and when needed by alumni or NZ stakeholders.

### **Who makes up the network of skilled young leaders?**

There is only one alumni that no-one (alumni or UnionAID) is in touch with<sup>77</sup>. Several other alumni who were interviewed (five) said they rarely engaged with other alumni (although they said could follow on Facebook if they wished).

Around 43% of alumni are based in Yangon<sup>78</sup>, and 52% of those who attended the 2019 conference were also from Yangon. During the conference, evaluators interviewed nine alumni who were not from Yangon (five by phone as although registered, these alumni did not come to the conference) to discuss any challenges to networking resulting from living outside Yangon. Alumni in Sittwe (four) network together, and when other alumni visit Sittwe they catch up. Sometimes Sittwe alumni join

<sup>75</sup> Focus Groups and interviews with alumni, Information from UnionAID.

<sup>76</sup> Two out of the nine alumni who were contacted as they were potentially less engaged with the alumni network, and had not attended the last three conferences (2017, 20-18 and 2019), did not reply to phone calls or emails.

<sup>77</sup> UnionAID, and several alumni. Confirmed when evaluators were also unable to reach this alumni.

<sup>78</sup> Most recent UnionAID alumni list.

others' training in Sittwe. They share training material and information (for example on child rights). One said they link up with alumni from outside Sittwe mainly from their own batch, but also sometimes with alumni from earlier batches. Two Sittwe alumni said they were not active in the network as they were too busy with their own things. Most other alumni from outside Yangon keep up with other alumni despite their distance from Yangon, and distance to travel to the conferences. However, the time involved in travel meant that sometimes they could not attend the conference if they were busy. Only one found isolation particularly difficult, being based in Northern Rakhine and internet is not available - the notice for the conference was seen by chance during a visit to Sittwe.

After the conference evaluators also attempted to contact nine of 13 alumni who have not attended the last three conferences (2017, 2018 and 2019). Two could not be reached -one alumni that no one (alumni or UnionAID) is in touch with, and one who is in Thailand. All of the alumni reached are in touch with others through Facebook and Messenger. The reasons they had not attended the recent conferences were because they were too busy, overseas, or for family reasons. One said 'I did not attend 2018 and 2019 MYLP conferences held in Taunggyi and Bagan due to busy ... I attended some MYLP conferences held in Yangon' (Appendix 7: Follow up with alumni not 'engaged' during field work).

In summary: alumni both in Yangon and located in other regions are able to remain in the Alumni network. Most alumni keep up with the network at least on Facebook. Alumni use Messenger and email and phone calls (the extent varies from seldom to often) should they need to contact others. For Yangon people it is easier to meet face to face as there are more of them in close proximity, and they can attend functions (eg NZ Embassy) held in Yangon. A few alumni choose not to engage with other alumni, and others find themselves too busy.

#### **The type of networking and how it works**

There are different types of networking – social and professional, formal (eg conference, functions and UnionAID news and emails) and informal (visits, messaging, social media such as Facebook, phone calls and one to one emails). Most alumni<sup>79</sup> said that they kept in touch with others through social media. Facebook was consistently mentioned, both through closed groups (for example for some batches) or for all the programme alumni. This also included 'messaging'.

Some alumni mentioned the new network of all NZ scholarship students. Phone calls were most common within batches. Alumni from outside Yangon said that alumni visit if they come to their regions, and also that they visit alumni in Yangon should they visit Yangon. Often an alumni get-together will be arranged if an alumni visits a region, or if alumni from outside Yangon visit Yangon. Alumni also catch up at social functions, such as Embassy functions in Yangon.

#### **The annual conference**

The annual alumni conference is an important opportunity for alumni of all batches to network and learn. The registration is also important for UnionAID to update where the alumni are, their current work and their current phone number. The conference has been held annually since 2015. However, thirteen alumni (16%) have not attended any of the last three conferences. The percentage of alumni attending the conference is trending downward for 2017, 2018 and 2019.

**Table 7: Conference attendance over the past three years**

Year	Number of alumni attending	Percentage of alumni
2017	45	76%
2018	50	70%
2019	44	53%

<sup>79</sup> Focus Groups and interviews.

Alumni spoke very favourably of the conference as an opportunity to showcase their work, to learn from excellent speakers and other alumni, and to network with other alumni (including from other batches) and programme personnel (UnionAID and VUW). It is an important opportunity for more recent alumni to meet those with more experience and influence, and in senior positions. It was also fun and provided ideas for their work. The conference operates in an environment of high trust where alumni are able to speak their minds with the knowledge that discussion in the conference that is sensitive will not be repeated outside the conference. This is very important to allow for open and perhaps controversial expression of ideas. Evaluators observed the 2019 conference, and concluded that the questioning and critical thinking of the alumni was impressive. The Myanmar evaluator had not seen that level of critical thinking and questioning from Myanmar alumni of other similar international programmes.

However, the percentage of alumni attending has been dropping over the past three years, and ten of those registered for 2019 did not come. Evaluators phoned five of those who did not come. The time that would need to be taken off work was an issue for some (up to two days of travel each way plus three days of conference meant at least a week off work), especially as unexpected work commitments had arisen. For others it was due to work commitments or family issues. For some living in the regions they may need to take two buses, or a flight to Yangon and then a bus if the conference is outside Yangon. Two of the nine alumni phoned and emailed following the conference<sup>80</sup> said that they found it easier to attend conferences in Yangon as it was easier and quicker to get there from remote areas rather than to other locations such as Taunggyi and Bagan (Appendix 7: Follow up with alumni not 'engaged' during field work). Holding conferences in different regions has been deliberate strategy to allow alumni to learn more about those regions, and for alumni from those regions to feel ownership of the conference<sup>81</sup>. However, at the Bagan conference there was nothing specifically about that region. Furthermore, it is expensive to bring guest speakers to regions far away from major centres.

### **How networking amongst alumni is used**

Alumni<sup>82</sup> use networking for social reasons as well as for professional support. Examples of professional support included:

- Sharing opportunities for jobs, scholarships, funding, workshops and training.
- Sharing training material.
- Requesting and sharing knowledge and advice.
- Requesting information, and offering advice on consultants for specialist topics, or in particular regions.
- Sharing ideas and new knowledge through discussion.
- Sharing information about the alumni conference, application for MYLP.

The case studies (Appendix 4: Case studies) provide examples of how the alumni network was used to advance development in Myanmar.

### **Challenges for networking**

Keeping data on alumni up to date is important for alumni to network between themselves, and for strong links between NZ and alumni. The evaluators found it difficult to find the current locations and current employment of alumni for the evaluation. The most up-to-date alumni list was not accurate for many alumni. Keeping up to date telephone numbers, and where alumni are located, and what they are doing is difficult for UnionAID, with alumni constantly moving and changing jobs, and sometimes phone numbers and emails. Most of the up-to-date information comes from

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<sup>80</sup> Who had not attended the last three conferences 2017, 2-18 and 2019.

<sup>81</sup> UnionAID Annual Progress reports.

<sup>82</sup> Alumni interviews and Focus Groups.

conference registrations but this year only 54 out of 83 (65%) registered. It is likely that as more and more alumni join the group that it will be even more difficult to keep contact information up to date. Apparently, a database has been suggested before (at a Yangon conference) but has not been activated. A 'cloud based' data base of alumni is needed.

### 5.3 Efficiency and programme management

It is questionable whether there could be more 'efficiency' or 'value for money'<sup>83</sup> gained through different ways of managing the existing MYLP programme to achieve the same outcomes.

The way the MYLP is currently implemented requires a high level of dedicated human resource input. For example, the individual projects are very important for alumni's development work, but require young leaders to be supported in their proposals, mentored in the project implementation and the project results to be followed up. The projects are also judged for a prize each year. Special interest topics require individual mentors (currently through the UnionAID mentor programme of volunteers). Coordination of volunteers is necessary. The 'journal' that the students keep of their learning reinforces that learning, and encourages them to reflect critically. The journal is reviewed by staff weekly and adds to monitoring whether young leaders are improving their understanding (short-term outcome). Managing and monitoring host families requires regular interaction.

<sup>84</sup>However, UnionAID draws heavily on volunteers for MYLP's management and operation, reducing the overall real cost of the programme. BYCLP (2009-2012) was wholly managed on a volunteer basis. In 2014 UnionAID employed a paid staff member (20 hours per week) to support the management and logistics of MYLP, this was increase to full time in 2017. However, tasks such as pastoral care of young leaders, monitoring and evaluation and curriculum development have been carried out on a volunteer basis.

The programme is delivered in association with VUW, with a MOU in place between UnionAID and VUW. UnionAID contracts VUW for the EPP programme, rooms, University services and amenities, lecturers for the tailored course, and for one of the EPP teachers to 'sit in' the tailored course with the young leaders and oversee the learning processes. This EPP staff member also reviews the journals written by the young leaders and joins the young leaders in other programme activities. Her dedication to the programme, and support of the young leaders, is over and beyond her role.

<sup>85</sup> Since 2018, when the East Indonesia and Mindanao YLPs started, the UnionAID paid Executive Officer has taken the role of overall management of all three YLPs and has not been able to dedicate as much time to MYLP as previously. Management of MYLP is the responsibility of an experienced and competent volunteer. Tasks are shared, and the allocation of roles and responsibilities between programme personnel is documented. A paid support person is currently being recruited. If UnionAID were to be contracted in the future funding would be requested for a specific MYLP manager.

One way of achieving the same outcomes for less cost could be to increase the numbers of young leaders in the programme each year (from 12). It is likely that similar outcomes could be achieved by increasing the number slightly. However, as the group gets larger this may impact on the quality of the programme, and on outcomes, such as establishing a strong network between the alumni. Larger numbers of young leaders could mean host families cannot be found for all, likely impacting on the English language learning, and limiting learning about NZ culture, opportunities for confidence building in conversation and critical thinking. Also, should the number of young leaders per year

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<sup>83</sup> Value for money here is defined as achieving the outcomes (value) for the least possible cost.

<sup>84</sup> Information from UnionAID.

<sup>85</sup> Information from UnionAID.

increase, then the biggest proportion of cost (young leaders' accommodation and travel, and VUW costs per younger leader) would increase proportionally so there would be few efficiencies gained.

UnionAID is not adequately staffed should there be an expansion of young leader programmes for other ASEAN countries (see Section 5.5 where this scenario is discussed). For this there would need to be some rearrangement of current staffing, and individual managers for each new programme (as has been the case for the Indonesia and Mindanao young leaders' programmes).

The progress, completion and other reports from UnionAID are impressive and are evidence of a well organised, well managed and well monitored programme that takes lessons learned seriously and adapts to changing context and conditions. Alumni surveys in the monitoring reports are favourable in terms of the young leaders' general satisfaction with the programme. This aligns with evaluation findings (mostly) where many alumni in Focus Groups said there was no 'least useful' aspect of the programme.

The 2015 mid-term independent review<sup>86</sup> noted that 'although the overall management of the programme was not a specific focus of the review, feedback provided by MFAT and some alumni supervisors generally indicated a high level of satisfaction with the effectiveness, transparency and efficiency of UnionAID's management of the programme ...' This evaluation reconfirms this statement.

#### **5.4 Impact and sustainability**

Intended impact of the programme is indicated by the goal, ie 'to build human capacity and leadership in Myanmar to support its peaceful transition to democracy and strong links to New Zealand'. MYLP and BYCLP have successfully built human capacity, and links to NZ have been developed. Development activities that the alumni have, and are conducting is empowering women, men and communities to participate in projects, and influence their own lives. Projects have improved citizen's knowledge on the democratic processes, and given citizens understanding of their rights. The development work, projects and activities the alumni are engaged with is contributing to the transition to democracy in a peaceful way.

The ongoing benefits of MYLP and BYCLP are sustainable. Knowledge, skills, attributes and values that the alumni gained in NZ have continued to influence the alumni's development work, including for those who attended in the early years of the programme (Section 5.2). Alumni are in positions of responsibility and have become increasingly influential over the years since they were in NZ. This ensures that the benefits of MYLP and BYCLP are diffused amongst the alumni's work colleagues, further influencing development activities.

The network of alumni is active and sustainable. Factors contributing to this sustainability include the benefits the alumni gain from the network, the social media aspect of it (meaning it is easy to maintain), and the fact that the network can be quickly activated if and when needed.

In terms of the sustainability of MYLP itself, there is a risk that considerable experience, relationships and knowledge may be lost as some of the staff and volunteers of the programme reach retirement age and step back from the programme. The current personnel know the backgrounds of, and have strong relationships with almost all the alumni. Less input from these highly experienced and dedicated programme personnel could impact on the quality of the curriculum and programme in NZ, the level of personal mentoring of the young leaders, the motivation of other volunteers, and the strength of the network between NZ and the alumni. However, the structure and content of the programme has been developed over ten years with considerable input from alumni and programme personnel. It is sound and a strong basis for future batches of MYLP, as well as for other

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<sup>86</sup> s9(2)(a) and Khin Maung Htwe. 2015. Building skills, building links: Mid-term review of NZ Myanmar Young Leaders Programme (commissioned by UnionAID).

young leader programme. Furthermore, it is possible, and would be desirable, that current programme personnel continue to be involved, even should they 'retire'.

## **5.5 Improvements and alternative models of delivery**

### **Improvements to MYLP suggested by alumni**

A question in the questionnaire for Discussion Group members, and also raised in the individual interviews, was about improvements. Many alumni did not want to suggest any improvements and said the programme was good as it was. Some improvements suggested by alumni, and that have emerged during the evaluation, have already been integrated into previous sections of the evaluation report, including the need for more on gender and environment, improvement in the host family situation, a suggestion to have conferences in Yangon so that it is easier and quicker for alumni to travel to the conference from remote areas, and more information on the conferences for those that could not attend.

### **Include government young leaders in MYLP**

One suggestion that emerged from several individual interviews with alumni and a sponsoring organisation staff member was that young government leaders, as well as CSO leader should now be included in the young leaders' programme **s9(2)(a)** It

was perceived that young government leaders would benefit from the MYLP. One alumni said 'government people are highly influential and need to be thinking critically ...'. Also, collaboration and cooperation between government and CSOs could be promoted. The MFAT-funded English Language Training for Officials (ELTO) course<sup>87</sup> mixes government people and young leaders in NZ to an extent, but the focus of ELTO is different to MYLP.

### **Suggestions for improvement from Discussion Groups**

Some of the key suggestions<sup>88</sup> for improvement in the Discussion Group questionnaire were (see also Appendix 6: Focus Group Results). Some of these have been covered in previous sections:

- Four alumni mentioned that gender and feminism concepts should be included with practical relevant examples for Myanmar (or similar comments), and one wrote 'new topic – climate change'.
- Three mentioned that the host family could be improved and/or select a flexible host family (all in 2018 batch).
- Three said that the MYLP should reach out to even more ethnicities and minority groups and/or prioritise people from remote areas (or similar).
- Three asked for refreshers course, or a executive level modular course.
- Three specifically mentioned more time being needed for special interest or tailored course or research skills.
- Two mentioned exchanging, or having a forum, with participants from other UnionAID young leader programmes (Indonesia and Mindanao).
- Three mentioned shadowing MP could be improved – need more information on them.

### **Results Framework for monitoring and evaluating the programme**

The Results Diagram, and Results Measurement Table were challenging to use to assess the effectiveness of the programme at the medium and long-term outcome levels. The Results Measurement Table was more useful at the short-term outcome and output level.

Some improvements to the Results Diagram and Results Measurement Table that could help in the measurement of progress of MYLP include:

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<sup>87</sup> ELTO brings government officials to NZ for a residential English language course.

<sup>88</sup> Written by more than one alumni in the question on improvements in the Discussion Group questionnaire.

## Results Diagram and Program Logic

The Program Logic depicted in the Results Diagram could be improved to help to understand, and monitor and evaluate, the MYLP. For example:

- Separate the long-term outcome into two outcomes – a network of highly skilled leaders, and peaceful development of Myanmar. The number of the alumni in the network should be a target, not in the diagram.
- Consider whether strong and enduring links between NZ and Myanmar is actually a long-term outcome (not medium term), with NZ-Myanmar links, and links within the young leader in each batch established, being the medium-term outcome. Do not repeat the Myanmar-NZ links in the goal.
- Consider the wording of the outcomes, particularly in relation to recognising that changed attributes (eg confidence, communication, critical thinking) and values were consistently mentioned as important changes that have helped alumni in their work. Also consider whether improved 'understanding' is what is being sought or whether it is improved knowledge and skills.
- The outputs in the Results Diagram are arranged to reflect the goods and services delivered in the programme. However, the one-day foundation workshop is not a stand-alone output, and in fact this is amalgamated into Output 3 (10 week course...) in the Outputs/Inputs Table.

Indicators and Targets: The indicators are not written clearly as indicators, there is no baseline information and the targets are not clear, timebound or gender specific. Some of the targets for the medium and long-term outcomes (eg research conducted and results communicated) are unrealistic, or not appropriate. For example, many of the alumni who were asked about presenting at fora were unclear of why they were being asked as it was not part of their work or expected of them. Few were involved in research that could be reported (or if they were it was presented at the conference). The target that 'the majority of alumni make contact each year with teachers, host parents or NZ Embassy or other NZ contacts', is unclear and difficult to measure. While the majority make contact with teachers, not many make contact 'each year' with other New Zealanders. In addition it is often UnionAID that make the initial contact with the alumni. It is not clear which indicators will be assessed during monitoring and which are to be assessed in an evaluation.

## Opportunity for young leader programmes for other ASEAN countries

There is no doubt that other ASEAN countries would benefit from similar programmes. The evaluation has shown that developing the skills, knowledge and particularly the attributes and values of the young leaders has strongly contributed to development in Myanmar. Furthermore, the young leaders in MYLP (and the other young leader programmes) would also benefit from mixing, building relationships and learning from other ASEAN countries. The alumni network in Myanmar is extremely useful for the young leaders. As Myanmar integrates more and more into the global and South East Asian environments, networks and communication with young leaders in different ASEAN countries will also become important.

Currently there are two other young leader programmes for ASEAN countries being funded by MFAT and managed by UnionAID. One is the Mindanao (Philippines) Young Leaders Programme, (currently being delivered in Wellington), and the other the East Indonesia Young Leaders Programme (INSPIRASI) in Auckland. Two other YLPs for Cambodia and Laos are being considered.

All of the alumni who were asked for their opinion about integrating with young leaders from other countries were very positive. Alumni that had studied for Masters degrees outside Myanmar mentioned how useful it had been to build relationships with students from other countries.<sup>89</sup> Alumni could learn from ASEAN young leaders from other countries how their countries

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<sup>89</sup> Individual interviews with alumni.



had tackled gender issues, and education, and how their countries have achieved democracy. Other ASEAN countries also have been oppressed and poor, and have issues with climate change. Examples and practical ideas from other ASEAN countries could be very relevant for Myanmar.

The New Zealand AID Programme prioritises specific ASEAN countries, and these are the countries that would be targeted to support young leaders. However, curriculum needs of young leaders from different ASEAN countries vary due to the different country contexts. It would not be appropriate to have one overall programme for young leaders from a range of ASEAN countries that does not consider the curriculum needs of individual countries.

There are a number of options to integrate young leaders' programmes from other ASEAN countries as in the table below. Each of these comes with advantages and disadvantages.

**Table 8: Options for additional young leader programmes for other ASEAN countries**

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>1. <u>One young leaders programme</u> (for several ASEAN countries) in each NZ city running simultaneously. Some classes separated for the different countries to address specific topics relevant to that country.</p> <p>A conference held towards to end of the programme for all of the young leaders to mix together.</p> <p>Host families used for 12 of the 26 weeks, and for different alumni at different times. A hostel is also used.</p>	<p>Large number of young leaders can be accommodated.</p> <p>Young leaders from several different countries mix freely during the programme and all countries mix during the conference.</p> <p>Living in a hostel means that young leaders get to know each other better.</p>	<p>Young leaders from each country may not form such a strong bond with each other as is seen in MYLP batches.</p> <p>More difficult to tailor the programme.</p> <p>Staff may not be so familiar with three countries as the UnionAID personnel are with Myanmar, so the close relationships between staff and young leaders as seen in MYLP may not develop.</p> <p>May be more difficult to find host families for a shorter time and perhaps for two different young leaders.</p>
<p>2. The <u>young leaders from different countries are in separate young leader programmes</u>, two (or more) in Auckland<sup>90</sup> and two (or more) in Wellington). More countries could be considered if Christchurch or another city is included.</p> <p>The timing of the programmes is 'staggered' so that the programmes overlap but are separate (eg Feb-July, and May to October).</p> <p>Some common sessions arranged to be shared by the programmes (in each city).</p>	<p>Young leaders from each country are separate and the programme can be specifically tailored for them but they can meet with young leaders from other countries in some sessions that are common for each of them.</p> <p>The young leaders from each country have more opportunity to form strong bonds with those from their own country.</p> <p>Staff can focus on a country that they are familiar with.</p>	<p>Not as many young leaders can be catered for.</p> <p>Common topics for the two countries will need to be carefully selected.</p> <p>More staff may be needed as there is more separation of the young leaders from each country.</p>

<sup>90</sup> There are already two other young leader programmes (funded by MFAT and managed by UnionAID) – East Indonesia (in Auckland) and Mindanao (Philippines) (in Wellington).



A conference is held so that young leaders from all countries can meet. If there is an issue with the number of host families available then a hostel can be used for part of the time.		
3. <u>The young leader programmes for each country are entirely separate</u> , with the young leaders only meeting at a conference. Host families used for all participants.	Can tailor the programme exactly for each country. Young leaders from each country bond with others from the same country. Can accommodate only two young leader programmes in each city. Can have a manager for each country that is familiar with that country.	Staff are needed for each country's young leader programme. If all of the young leader programmes are at the same time there may not be enough host families. Young leaders do not mix as much with the young leaders from other countries.

Should more young leaders from other ASEAN countries be brought to NZ, it is important that the essence of the MYLP is not lost, as the advantages of mixing with young leaders from other countries is gained. Some of the key aspects of the MYLP that should be retained are:

- Excellent EPP, a tailored course including the project proposal and special interest topics, and a focus on experiential learning, building confidence and critical thinking.
- Host families (even if not for the full time of the programme).
- Young leaders building strong and enduring relationships with other young leaders from their own country.
- The mentoring and personal support for the young leaders by staff, volunteers and host families.
- Staff members' knowledge of the young leaders' country which helps with selection, support, mentoring and development of projects.
- Continued networking between staff and alumni after the young leaders return home.

UnionAID could be an overall implementing agency for other young leader programmes if they are adequately resourced. One way of implementing the programmes could be that UnionAID has a Programme Director for overseeing young leader programmes, with individual programme managers for each country young leader programme. Further administration and financial support would also be needed to support the Programme Director.

## 6. Conclusions and recommendations

### Overall

The programme is relevant to Myanmar and NZ governments, effective, efficient, and outcomes and benefits of the programme are sustainable. Alumni of the programme are strongly contributing to peaceful development and democratic transition in Myanmar. The important work of the programme alumni, and potential young leaders in Myanmar is still needed. It is important this programme continues.

**Recommendation 1:** the MYLP is continued to the end of the 2021 (current phase) and beyond.

### **Evaluation Objective 1: Relevance and crosscutting issues<sup>91</sup>**

The MYLP is relevant to the Myanmar government's recent policy priorities, and is aligned with policy and strategic interests of the New Zealand government. Alignment with the Myanmar government policy priorities means that selection of young leaders, and the young leaders development work, can now be open and without risk.

Although the context of Myanmar has changed over the 10 years the course has remained largely valid and relevant to the young leaders. **s6(a)**

#### **s6(a)**

Cross cutting issues such as gender and environment (eg climate change) are not covered sufficiently in the tailored course for all young leaders to be able, and motivated, to mainstream these issues into their development work. There is little in the curriculum specifically on youth despite many of the alumni being involved with youth in Myanmar, and youth being a high priority for MFAT. Furthermore, some alumni (Focus Groups) found 'visits' not useful if the speakers were not fully aware of the objective of the visit. The tailored course was considered by many alumni to be too much, and 'exhausting'.

**Recommendation 2:** the MYLP curriculum be reviewed and adapted to ensure continued relevance. In the short term (2017-2021 phase of MYLP) this would be to consider increasing gender, environment and youth, and decreasing human rights (particularly theoretical aspects of human rights). Visits should be reviewed to ensure they are relevant, and that the speakers are fully aware of the objective of the visit. The contact hours for the tailored course should be reduced if possible, and not increased. The curriculum should be fully reviewed for a new phase of MYLP beyond 2021.

The aspects of MYLP and BCYLP programme that were most useful to the Alumni such as English, proposal/report writing, exposure to new things, experiential learning, and critical thinking, remain valid and relevant. Alumni have found value in meeting with different ethnicities from their own country, and gaining self-confidence.

**Recommendation 3:** The current focus on adult learning through new experiences, and development of attributes and values (in addition to developing skills and knowledge) continues in the MYLP, and for any new young leaders' programmes that are developed, and is included as an intended outcome in the Results Framework.

### **Evaluation Objective 2: Effectiveness**

There is evidence that outputs and short-term outcomes are being achieved. Medium-term outcomes are also being mostly achieved – alumni are demonstrating leadership, skills, knowledge gained in the programme, and also values and personal attributes. The change in alumni's attributes (for example, increased self-confidence, being able to think critically, improved leadership), and values (for example changed personal values including respect for others, and the way they treat others) were particularly important for their development work (see Recommendation 3).

The links between programme personnel and the alumni are very strong, and important in maintaining the Myanmar-NZ links (medium-term outcome). Travel to Myanmar is important for this in addition to emails and social media. The NZ Embassy in Myanmar also has strong links with alumni (particularly those in Yangon). However, the links between alumni and other New Zealanders (eg host families, volunteers, and mentors) were tenuous and inconsistent, although contact could be made if there was a specific purpose for interacting.

<sup>91</sup> Conclusions and recommendations on cross cutting issues have considered under relevance rather than under Effectiveness (although the evaluation questions on crosscutting issues were under effectiveness) as the findings on crosscutting issues related to the findings on relevance.

**Recommendation 4:** Strong links continue between MYLP staff and alumni – funding for MYLP should take into account the time involved to keep up contact with, and mentor alumni (eg for field work projects), and travel costs for visits and further informal mentoring of alumni.

**Recommendation 5:** That further and stronger links between host families, MYLP mentors and volunteers, and alumni, are encouraged and facilitated perhaps through competitive programme funding for New Zealander(s) annually to travel to Myanmar for the annual MYLP conference, or to support alumni in their work.

It is a challenge to keep up with changes in alumni's details (current work, location, phone numbers and emails) and this is likely to become even more challenging as the number of alumni increases. The main way of keeping up to date is by UnionAID updating a spreadsheet from conference registrations, but the percentage of alumni attending conferences has been decreasing.

**Recommendation 6:** A 'cloud-based' database be set up that can be updated by alumni themselves. This data base would be accessible by password, perhaps on a website. Reminders be sent regularly by email for alumni to update the data base, and it is also be updated after each conference.

The programme has been (and continues to be) effective in contributing to peaceful development in Myanmar (long-term outcome). This is demonstrated by projects that alumni undertake on their return to Myanmar, alumni's perspectives of the most important development work following the programme, and the case studies that were undertaken during the evaluation. The project work completed by the alumni on their return to Myanmar is extremely important to the contribution to Myanmar development, and to providing confidence to the alumni to initiate other development work. Alumni feel ready, and well prepared to implement the projects using learning from NZ.

**Recommendation 7:** Proposal writing continues as a key topic in MYLP, and funding for the field work projects is maintained or increased to ensure the alumni continue to be sufficiently supported.

It is also clear that there is a strong network of alumni in Myanmar (long-term outcome), with almost all alumni being reachable through social media and email. The alumni network within batches is stronger than alumni network between batches (except for alumni who live and work in the same region, or have other connections). The annual conference is very important for networking of alumni between batches, as well as for upskilling and informing alumni. It is important as many alumni come to the conference as possible. However, some alumni from remote areas do not attend the conference if the travel time means they have to take too much time off work.

While the level of alumni's engagement in the network varies, if needed the network can be activated very quickly. The network is extremely useful to the alumni in their work, and is also used for social interaction. A cloud-based database of alumni would enhance the alumni network as well as Myanmar-NZ networks (see Recommendation 6).

**Recommendation 8:** The annual BYCLP and MYLP alumni conference is maintained, and funded sufficiently. Organising committees give consideration to the location of the conference being in Yangon or Nay Pyi Taw to ensure alumni from remote areas can attend with reasonable travel times. More information on the conferences be provided for those that could not attend perhaps by having a 'login' website for the conference with conference papers, photos and videos of presentations (if this is not already in place).

### **Evaluation Objective 3: Efficiency of MYLP**

The programme has been well managed by UnionAID, and monitoring and reporting at the output and short-term outcome levels is very good. Surveys show that alumni have been very satisfied, or satisfied, with the programme. The programme's intended outcomes have been achieved with minimum cost for human resources by having highly dedicated programme staff and volunteers.

Should the programme personnel change and/or there is less volunteering, it would cost more to achieve the same outcomes. The role of Manager of MYLP is currently the responsibility of a volunteer, which poses a risk should the volunteer wish to reduce their workload. Few efficiencies (less cost per young leader) can be achieved by increasing the number of young leaders from 12 as most of the costs are in the travel, living costs and VUW costs of each young leader.

**Recommendation 9:** Assuming the same very effective methods of implementing the MYLP are retained in the future, more resources (more funding) should be provided if levels of volunteering decrease, and/or staff needs change.

**Recommendation 10:** programme budget should be sufficient to allow for the role of Manager of the MYLP (currently a volunteer) to be a paid position in case the current volunteer wishes to reduce their workload.

#### **Evaluation Objective 4: Impact and sustainability**

The goal of the MYLP is 'to build human capacity and leadership in Myanmar to support its peaceful transition to democracy and strong links to NZ'. The programme has built the capacity and leadership qualities of the young leaders, which has impacted on the communities that they work with through BYCLP and MYLP projects, and subsequent development work. This development work has contributed to Myanmar's peaceful development and transition to democracy.

The benefits of the programme are sustainable in terms of the human capacity and leadership, and the resulting development work. The knowledge skills, attributes that the young leaders have gained in NZ are fundamental to their work, and to this end are sustained and further developed with time. The links to programme staff in NZ, and to the NZ Embassy in Myanmar are strong and sustainable as long as UnionAID has the resources to keep up the work involved with keeping in touch with the alumni. However, the links with former host families have not been sustained for many alumni (see Recommendation 5).

There is a risk that experience, knowledge, and relationships could be lost as programme staff and volunteers retire and/or reduce the time they spend with the programme. UnionAID's capacity to deliver MYLP alongside the other existing young leaders' programmes may not be sustainable on the current level of resourcing (see Recommendation 9 and 16).

#### **Evaluation Objective 5: Other areas for improvement<sup>92</sup>**

The Results Framework could be improved to assist with assessing results particularly at the medium and long-term outcomes level. The indicators and targets at the output and short-term outcome level are useful for monitoring. However, for the higher-level outcomes, the outcomes themselves, and the indicators and the targets could be better defined.

**Recommendation 11:** revise the Results Framework (Results Diagram and Results Measurement Table) to better reflect the reality of the programme, and provide better guidance (indicators and targets) for monitoring and evaluation.

The alumni responses to questions about host families were very mixed during the evaluation, most were OK about their host families, some were extremely happy with their host families and acknowledged the contribution of the host families to their learning and social development in NZ. In the Discussion Groups three alumni suggested improving the host family. Host families were not ranked highly as 'useful' in Discussion Groups. A few in individual interviews also had bad experiences. While there are clearly significant benefits of host families (young leaders' improved English language and understanding of NZ, and host families learning about NZ and remaining in touch with the alumni), if the situation is tense or the alumni are unhappy then the benefits will not

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<sup>92</sup> Improvements not already covered in the conclusion

occur. Inevitably there will be cultural or personality differences which cause issues. However, if these issues can be identified early then they can usually be resolved.

**Recommendation 12:** Young leaders continue to be hosted by families. Monitoring the host family situation continues but with an independent person doing interviews with the young leaders about their host family situation (not an alumni or programme staff member) in order that issues are identified early. Young leaders are given the option to find accommodation (for example in a hostel) if they wish after 3 months.

Alumni appreciated the number of different ethnicities in their batches. However, alumni suggested that young leaders from remote areas and of even more different ethnicities join the programme. Such young people may not hear about MYLP, may be less well educated and/or may not qualify for selection due to their lacking English language skills.

**Recommendation 13:** Selection of young leaders in the future specifically targets more different ethnicities and young people from remote areas. If necessary, specific English language training be offered to upskill such candidates for future selection.

It was suggested that MYLP include government young leaders as well as those from CSOs. This would benefit young government leaders (especially those new to the government after the 2020 elections) and would enhance cooperation and collaboration between government and CSOs.

**Recommendation 14:** Consideration be given to including a small number of government young leaders in MYLP from 2020 as a trial. If successful MYLP include a small number each year.

There was also a request from a few alumni for refresher courses or 'executive level modular course'. While this would be 'nice to have', the annual conference covers this to a certain extent and thus no recommendation is being made on it.

### **Opportunity for young leaders' programmes for other ASEAN countries:**

There is an opportunity for programmes for other ASEAN young leaders. Options for how the expansion of the young leaders' programmes could be implemented are in Section 5.5. However, if MFAT chooses to develop a further young leader programme or programmes, the implementing organisation must be adequately resourced to provide the level of experience that the Myanmar young leaders currently receive, and to ensure that the MYLP is not disadvantaged in any way by the introduction or expansion of programme(s) for young leaders from other ASEAN countries.

**Recommendation 15:** MFAT introduces programme(s) for young leaders from other selected ASEAN countries (eg Cambodia and Laos) similar to MYLP, but tailored for the individual countries.

**Recommendation 16:** UnionAID be the preferred implementing organisation for ASEAN young leader programme(s) given their experience, and organisational knowledge of the programme, but that funding is sufficient to cover an overall director for the YLPs, financial and administration support, as well as individual managers for each country's YLP, and staff for managing host families and accommodation, providing mentoring support for young leaders for special interest topics, proposal development and implementation, and other requirements if volunteer support is not available.

### **Overall conclusion**

The programme has been very successful enabling young leaders from Myanmar to learn and develop, and contribute to Myanmar's peaceful development and democracy. Each alumni who participated in the evaluation is very different, but each has contributed to peaceful development and democracy in Myanmar in their own way. Programme alumni have been promoted to positions of responsibility, leadership and influence where they can bring about real change, and development

for Myanmar. The alumni network has supported and enhanced individual alumni's opportunities and development activities.

The dedication of programme staff and volunteers is an important factor in the success of the programme. The relationships programme personnel build with the alumni, and the alumni build with each other, particularly in their year batches and between different ethnicities from different parts of Myanmar, is a key outcome of the programme, and also a reason for success.

An important success factor is undoubtedly the alumni themselves. The young leaders are smart, dedicated young people with a sense of purpose. Many have already engaged in other experiences and scholarships, and have worked in challenging environments where they have had to overcome challenges and test themselves. During the programme in NZ the young leaders gain the confidence, knowledge and skills needed to succeed, and influence change. The programme has been very relevant for the young leaders, and has used teaching methods which develop attributes and values, as well as skills and knowledge. The alumni have very high regard for the programme. One alumni said 'please keep this amazing course. It is precious ... the programme is very relevant'.

It is important that the programme continues to evolve and adapt to the changing Myanmar context. It is also important that the effective approach to teaching and learning, and the essence of the programme, are not lost should programme personnel change or if additional programmes are developed for different ASEAN countries.

## Appendix 1: Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Evaluation

### Evaluation Terms of Reference for the Burma Young Community Leaders Programme (BYCLP) and Myanmar Young Leaders Programme (MYLP)

*Prepared by: Jonathan Lee, Development Officer*

This document specifies the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the evaluation of the Burma Young Community Leaders Programme (2009-2012) and the Myanmar Young Leaders Programme (2014-2019).

This TOR has been developed to obtain proposals to meet MFAT's requirements for the selection of an independent and suitably qualified evaluation team. The final description of the Services that will be included in the contract will be confirmed through negotiation with the successful evaluation team.

### Background

In 2009, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade engaged UnionAID to design and implement the Burma Young Community Leaders Programme (BYCLP) which took place from 2009–2012, with six students per year. The BYCLP was succeeded by the Myanmar Young Leaders Programme (2014-2016, with eight students per year) which has since been renewed for another phase (2017-2021) with twelve students per year.

The goal of the Young Leaders Programme is to develop a strong civil society with the skills, knowledge and leadership to support the peaceful democratic transition and sustainable development in Myanmar. The programme targets young civil society leaders who can become catalytic individuals in organisations for change, and have a multiplier effect in Myanmar's society.

The Programme is designed to support participants to gain the knowledge and skills required to participate in and influence government and civil society processes in Myanmar. A more detailed description and background to the programme is provided in Appendix A.

The Programme is carried out in New Zealand and funded by MFAT over a 25 week course, comprised of:

- One day pre-departure Foundation Workshop held in Yangon;
- Two week Orientation on arrival in Wellington;
- 13 week English Proficiency Programme in Wellington;
- 10 week course on human rights, democratic processes, economics, conflict resolution, and research and proposal writing in Wellington.

During their time in New Zealand, the participants prepare a fieldwork proposal which, if it meets UnionAID criteria, is funded for implementation back in Myanmar upon their return.

To date, the BYCLP and MYLP have produced a base of 83 total alumni. The majority are either working locally in small CSOs or NGOs, making contributions to their wider community, or working with larger NGOs or INGOs across the country. Some others have pursued further studies overseas, all of whom - to date - have returned to Myanmar to contribute further.

## Evaluation purpose

The findings of the Evaluation will be used by MFAT to:

1. inform any changes or improvements, if any, to be made within MYLP and current or future YLPs; and
2. inform decision-making to potentially expand Young Leaders Programmes to other countries.

## Evaluation objectives, criteria and questions

**Objective 1:** Assess the relevance of MYLP.

- Is the MYLP design and content still aligned with the policy priorities of the Myanmar Government and the New Zealand Government?

**Objective 2:** Assess the effectiveness of MYLP.

- To what extent has BYCLP and MYLP achieved their planned outputs and progress towards the intended outcomes specified in the Results Management Framework (refer to Appendix B)?
- To what degree has MYLP been successful in addressing key cross-cutting issues, particularly human rights and gender equality? What changes, if any, could be made to MYLP's design/management to strengthen these issues?

**Objective 3:** Assess the efficiency of MYLP.

- Is the current design and implementation of MYLP the most efficient way of achieving its intended outcomes?
- How well is MYLP managed by UnionAid?

**Objective 4:** Assess the impact to date, overall likely impact, and sustainability of MYLP.

- How have alumni put the skills and knowledge gained from the programme to use?
- What has been the impact of MYLP on alumni, including their career progression, accomplishments professionally and personally, participation in additional civic fora, and influence on Myanmar civil society or in their communities?
- How do the homestay arrangements enhance the young leaders' connection to New Zealand? Is this a relationship that endures beyond their tie in New Zealand?<sup>93</sup>
- To what extent have alumni utilised the MYLP network and the network they developed during their time in New Zealand?

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<sup>93</sup> Additional question added by MFAT at Evaluation Plan stage



- What factors are enhancing or constraining the sustainability of MYLP?
- What is the sustainability of UnionAID's capacity to deliver MYLP alongside its other activities in its portfolio? What additional resources might be required if the YLPs are expanded<sup>94</sup>?
- Document any significant success stories that demonstrate the intended impacts of BYCLP/MYLP.

**Objective 5:** Assess or identify areas for improvement.

- Is the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) workplan, as specified in the Activity Design Document, realistic and appropriate to measure progress of MYLP? What changes, if any, could be made to streamline and strengthen reporting and M&E?
- Have any changes in the context affected the relevance of MYLP's design? What changes, if any, can be made to strengthen its relevance?
- What changes, if any, could be made to MYLP's design and/or implementation to strengthen its alignment to the Myanmar Government's policy priorities and/or the New Zealand Government's strategic priorities?
- What changes, if any, could be made to MYLP's design and/or implementation to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its delivery?
- What changes, if any, could be made to MYLP's design and/or implementation to strengthen the impacts and sustainability of its outcomes?
- Are there opportunities to further incorporate the New Zealand Government's priorities of climate change, gender, governance and youth into the overall programme?

**Evaluation scope**

The Evaluation will assess the entirety of both BYCLP and MYLP (2009-2019), in particular its impacts to date, sustainability of its implementation model and UnionAid's capacity to deliver.

The scope of the Evaluation will include:

- The time period of the Evaluation will cover implementation over 2009-2019.
- Its geographic focus is Myanmar and New Zealand.
- The following target groups: BYCLP/MYLP alumni, UnionAID, Victoria University of Wellington, homestay families, and MFAT.

**Engagement with key stakeholders**

In support of a consultative and participatory approach, the evaluation team will be expected to engage with a number of key stakeholders. These stakeholders could include:

- MFAT staff, including Country Programme and Activity Managers and other relevant staff, particularly at Post in Yangon;

<sup>94</sup> Second part of this question added by MFAT at Evaluation Plan stage

- BYCLP and MYLP alumni, their organisations (if relevant) and members of their communities;
- Government agencies or NGOs that had involvement with the BYCLP and/or MYLP; and
- Development partners, including implementing partners (UnionAID, Victoria University).

The results of the Evaluation will be reported and disseminated to MFAT, relevant partner government institutions and other key stakeholders.

## Evaluation deliverables

Anticipated key deliverables and delivery dates are as follows:

No.	Outputs	Description	Est. days	Due date
<b>Phase One</b>				
1	Evaluation plan	Undertake a literature review of the BYCLP and MYLP ADDs, Activity Monitoring Assessments, Activity Completion Assessments, annual reporting (including financial reporting), briefings by MFAT and a finalised evaluation plan	7	Week of 4 November 2019
<b>Phase Two</b>				
2	Field work complete	Field work complete	10	Week of 18 November 2019
3	Workshop / Findings presentation	To present key findings and conclusions to relevant MFAT stakeholders after field work	1	Week of 2 December 2019
4	Draft report	Preparation of the draft report and submission to MFAT	10	Week of 20 January 2020
5	Final report and Two-page Key Findings document	Acceptance by MFAT after any revisions of the draft are completed, and debriefing	7	Week of 17 February 2020

The above timeframe is indicative only and respondents' proposals should reflect their own availability, including the possibility of completing the Evaluation sooner. Note that it is MFAT's strong preference for an evaluator to be present during the Annual Alumni Conference occurring in Bagan, Myanmar on 9 – 11 November 2019 to conduct interviews and/or focus groups.

Respondents should submit a proposal and budget for the Evaluation. An indicative budget of up to NZD 100,000 is available for this Evaluation based on an estimate of up to 25 days for the desk-based research components and up to 10 in-country days.

The Evaluation Steering Group will approve the evaluation plan. This will reconfirm the delivery of all or some of the proposed Phase Two, or none if, for whatever reason, MFAT decides not to proceed.

## **Evaluation design**

In proposing an evaluation design, the evaluation team should identify the most appropriate approach, methodology and tools to generate credible evidence that corresponds to the Evaluation's purpose and the questions being asked.

We envisage that this evaluation will include a short literature and documentation review in Phase One. Phase Two would apply a mixed or multi-method approach, using both qualitative and quantitative methods. This will increase the credibility and validity of the results.

The final design will be confirmed in the evaluation plan and in consultation between the evaluation team and MFAT.

Relevant documents and data will be provided to the successful evaluation team. See Appendix B for a list of key documents along with other relevant information and data.

## **Culturally responsive methodological approaches**

There are a range of world-views and we encourage the use of culturally appropriate evaluation designs, methods and approaches to ensure the evaluation contributes to the body of knowledge of the country and its people which are the focus of the Evaluation.

## **The evaluation plan**

The evaluation team will develop an evaluation plan (using or being guided by [MFAT's evaluation plan](#) in Appendix B).

The evaluation plan should include the evaluation's design. It will also include: a stakeholder analysis; a communication plan; a high-level plan to disseminate the findings, conclusions and recommendations to promote take up of learning; an outline of the quality and ethical issues to be managed as part of the Evaluation; a schedule identifying key deliverables and timeline; identification of the risks and how they will be mitigated along with a brief outline of the Evaluation's governance arrangement.

It is anticipated that the evaluation plan will identify how the information needs can be met through current documentation (including undertaking documentary analysis), and what information gaps, if any, will need to be filled through fieldwork including an in-country visit. Data collection methods, for example, interviews (structured and semi-structured), focus groups, direct observation and case studies should be outlined.

The Activity's Results Framework (programme logic, logic model) should form the basis of the Evaluation.

The evaluation may be constrained by availability of key stakeholders and this should be considered in the design described in the evaluation plan.

The Evaluation Steering Group will approve the evaluation plan, following any required amendments. The evaluation plan **must** be approved prior to the commencement of any field work or other substantive work.

## **Reporting requirements**

The evaluation report must as a minimum meet quality standards as set out in Appendix C. It should be guided by the New Zealand Aid Programme evaluation report template (see Appendix B).

As this is an evidence-based evaluation, the findings, conclusions and recommendations must be based on clear evidence presented in a way that allows readers to form their own views on the validity and reliability of the findings, including assessing the vested interests of sources.

Where there is conflicting evidence or interpretations, the report should note the differences and justify the findings.

The report must contain an abstract suitable for publishing on the MFAT website. A one to two page evaluation fact sheet identifying the evaluation's key findings, recommendations and lessons learned will also be produced.

Before submission to MFAT, the evaluation team must ensure the final draft of the report is accurate, complete, and meets a good standard of English.

The draft evaluation report will be reviewed by MFAT staff, stakeholders and/or external experts. Further work or revision of the report may be required if it is considered that the report does not meet the requirements of this TOR, if there are factual errors, if the report is incomplete, or if it is not of an acceptable standard.

MFAT will develop a management response to the evaluation's findings, conclusions and recommendations. MFAT will publish the evaluation plan and report and its management response on its website.

## **Evaluation team**

We envisage that the evaluation will be undertaken by a small multi-disciplinary team of independent contractors. We encourage the inclusion of locally based expertise as part of the evaluation team where appropriate.

The attributes (knowledge, skills, experience) required of the evaluation team include:

- Evaluation expertise and experience, including undertaking evaluations;
- Knowledge and experience with culturally-sensitive and conflict-sensitive approaches, fragile states, working with local NGOs or civil society, and community development;
- Relevant technical experience and knowledge in civil society organisations and capacity development;
- A strong commitment to, and understanding of, gender and social inclusion, and other cross-cutting issues including the environment and human rights;
- Experience working with diverse cultural, religious, and ethnic groups in lower socio-economic communities;

- Strong communication skills, including excellent interview skills and cross-cultural communication;
- Appropriate research, report writing and presentation skills.

## Evaluation principles and standards

Consistent with the New Zealand Aid Programme evaluation principles, the Evaluation will deliver useful, credible findings relevant to the purpose of the Evaluation. The recommendations will be pragmatic and actionable, and presented in a way that promotes learning.

In conducting the Evaluation, the evaluation team will work with our partners to increase ownership and use of evaluations. The evaluation team will be transparent and independent. They must have no vested interest in the outcomes of the Evaluation and be independent of those responsible for policy making, design, delivery and management of the development intervention.

All evaluation processes and outputs are required to be robust and independent (carried out in a way that avoids any adverse effects of political or organisational influence on the findings) and transparent (process open and understood by all parties).

### Quality standards

A list of MFAT quality standards for evaluations is presented in Appendix C. These are based on the OECD-Development Assistance Committee (DAC) set of quality standards for development evaluation.

When conducting the Evaluation, the evaluation team will comply with the MFAT's Code of Conduct.

## Evaluation governance and management

The evaluation will be commissioned by MFAT and the evaluation team will be accountable for its performance to MFAT.

The Evaluation will be governed by the **Evaluation Steering Group** which will ensure the Evaluation is fit-for-purpose and delivered in line with the agreed evaluation plan. Key responsibilities of the Evaluation Steering Group will include agreeing the Terms of Reference, evaluation plan and evaluation reports.

MFAT (Global Development and Scholarships Division, Insights, Monitoring and Evaluation Division, South East Asia Division, and the New Zealand Embassy in Yangon, Myanmar) will form the Evaluation Steering Group.

The Activity Manager Jonathan Lee is responsible for day-to-day management and administration of the Evaluation. Their responsibilities include contracting; briefing the evaluation team; managing feedback from reviews of the draft report; and liaising with the Evaluation team throughout.

Post will be responsible for facilitating introductions to Myanmar stakeholders. Where necessary, Post will accompany the evaluator to meetings with identified stakeholders.

**Transparency**

It is MFAT policy to make evaluation reports publicly available (e.g. on the MFAT website) unless there is prior agreement not to do so. Any information that could prevent the release of an evaluation report under the Official Information or Privacy Acts should not be included in the report.

**Ownership of information**

All the key deliverables and the data/information collected will become the property of MFAT.

Proactively released by the  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

## Appendix 2: Summary: UnionAID Annual Progress/Completion Reports

2009 (report not provided)

Year	English Proficiency Programme (EPP) – achievement	Objectives of course met? Other important points. Risks, issues. (From the end of year progress report)	Course participant's feedback (from the end of year progress report)
2010 BYCLP	Numbers of students at each equivalent IELTS level over listening, speaking, reading and writing (note that 6.0 is an undergraduate level) 5 at 6.0 level 1 at 5.5 level	Six students The evidence in the report, and the report from the ELI confirmed that the objectives of the project were met in the fullest possible sense.	The students felt the structure of the programme, with orientation, EPP and the tailored course, was effective for their learning. All identified areas where their English had improved. Majority felt the tailored course provided them all with highlights. Group and individual visits were very worthwhile. Homestays were highly rated.
2011 BYCLP	All students demonstrated improvement in diction, vocabulary, C-test, reading comp, listening comp, writing and speaking. A chart was included to indicate individual student's progress.	Six students but a defection by one potential student had a negative impact. The evidence in the report, and the report from the ELI confirms that the objectives of the project have been met in the fullest possible sense.  Some field work pilot projects funded.	Students felt the structure of the programme, with orientation, EPP and the tailored course was effective for their learning. The EPP was worthwhile because of the variety of tasks and interacting with students of different language and cultural backgrounds.
2012 BYCLP	Pre and post testing undertaken. Improvement in the overall scores for dictation, vocabulary and C-Test would have seen the top three students placed into Class 1 of the English Proficiency Programme and the higher intermediate level student into Class 3. The two lower proficiency students would have placed at intermediate level.	Six students The evidence in the report, and the report from the ELI confirms that the objectives of the project have been met in the fullest possible sense.  Political situation in Burma easing. Restrictions on media coverage of the programme relaxed. However, there was still no overlap between this programme and the ELTO programme for Myanmar Government officials.  Some projects funded.	The majority of the students felt the structure of the programme, with orientation, EPP and the tailored course, was effective for their learning and that EPP teachers were friendly and helpful. Two students felt that while the EPP was good, it was too long to focus on English in a class-room setting. Homestay families were welcoming, caring and interested in what they were doing.
2014 MYLP	Numbers of students at each equivalent IELTS level) over listening, speaking, reading and writing 2 at 6.5 level	Eight students - new phase MYLP 2014-16 (3 years). MOU with VUW. MYLP officially notified to Myanmar government. The group mixed socially with ELTO students.	Evaluation processes were more independent and feedback is overwhelmingly positive.

	4 at 6.0 level 2 at 5.5 level	VUW Myanmar Students Association formed. Subject streams to be consolidated into blocks. Adult education methodologies to be used. Content to be more relevant to Myanmar. All approved field work projects funded.	
2015M YLP	Numbers of students at each equivalent IELTS level) over listening, speaking, reading and writing 1 at 6.5 level 5 at 6.0 level 2 at 5.0 level	Eight students First alumni conference (30 alumni). One-day briefing to be held in Yangon for the next intake of students (suggested by 2015 students). Stronger focus on Maori tikanga and social norms in NZ. Further development of outreach section. More participatory and peer to peer learning, different teaching methods. Funding of all approved field work projects	Evaluation and feedback confirms that this continues to be a successful programme and the alumni in Myanmar are developing a strong network and will have continued links to NZ.  Consolidation of programme sessions have had positive feedback.  2015 independent review of the BYCL/MYL programme surveyed employing organisations. Improvements in alumni effectiveness and influence were indicated.
2016 MYLP	Numbers of students at each equivalent IELTS level) over listening, speaking, reading and writing 3 at 6.5 level 3 at 6.0 level 2 at 5.5 level	Seven of eight field work projects funded. Second alumni conference held.	Short and medium outcomes are being met as described in the end of year progress report. Turnout for the Alumni Conference of the full group indicates a strong commitment to the programme. Many of the projects have had a significant impact on the people and communities in Myanmar contributing to the goal and outcomes.
2014-16 Completion Report	[Figures here cover 2014-16 students n=24] • 96% of students (12m, 11f) showed at least 0.5 band improvement in writing test scores after the MYLP • 96% of students (12m, 11f) showed at least a 0.5 band improvement in speaking test scores after the MYLP	24 students over the three-year phase. Each year the participants have been more and more connected nationally and internationally particularly through social media; some have a growing awareness and interest in politics, and some work/liase with international organisations. Each year there has been a more challenging, intensive, and relevant, tailored course including research, longer and better supported proposal writing course and an economics module. Teaching now takes an adult education pedagogical approach.	Survey indicated that the MYLP achieved its key objectives over the three years. All 24 young leaders returned to Myanmar with an improved knowledge of democracy, human rights and development after the programme. They have put their new knowledge and skills to work in a range of ways across the country, contributing to strengthening Myanmar's democratic processes and promoting development in their local community and, more frequently, at a regional, or even national level. Seven alumni of the 2014-15 programme participated in a focus group in late 2016 to explore their thoughts on the MYLP after 1-2 years back in the field. The group's feedback was positive with the majority of programme topics found to be useful on their return to work in Myanmar. Alumni said that



			they were more confident communicating with international organisations and outside experts, and that their colleagues had noted their improvement. The alumni stated they had better management skills, more critical thinking and better leadership skills than before. Asked to give a score of the programme's impact from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) the seven alumni gave scores ranging between 4.2 and 4.7.
2017 MYLP	<p>All students received at least a 0.5 band improvement in writing and speaking.</p> <p>Numbers of students at each equivalent IELTS level) over listening, speaking, reading and writing</p> <p>2 at 7.0+ (for the first time)</p> <p>4 at 6.5 or 6.5+ level</p> <p>3 at 6.0 level</p> <p>3 at 5.5 level</p>	<p>First year of the third phase of the programme. Number of participants increased to 12. The larger number worked well together, excellent attendance. Eleven of the twelve 2017 students attended the November alumni conference with two taking up roles in organising the 2018 conference.</p> <p>Potential improvements include integration of special interests, research and field work. Students will be matched with mentors.</p>	<p>Qualitative and quantitative evaluations were conducted on completion of the 2017 programme with very positive findings. Qualitative findings were that students learnt relevant new knowledge and skills; appreciated learning they can direct to their own lives; widened their understanding of people and cultures in Myanmar and NZ; reflected on their own values and beliefs. Eight students strongly agree that their work would be more effective as a result of MYLP.</p> <p>Outputs were delivered. It was too early to report on outcomes apart from short term outcomes which have been achieved to date.</p>
2018 MYLP	<p>All students received at least a 0.5 band improvement in writing (average 0.875) and speaking (average 0.79)</p> <p>Numbers of students at each equivalent IELTS level) over listening, speaking, reading and writing</p> <p>8 at 6.0 level (Undergraduate)</p> <p>2 at 5.5 level (Foundation Studies)</p> <p>1 at 4.5 level</p>	<p>12 participants – focus on diversity of ethnicities, regions and religion. Each student had a volunteer mentor.</p> <p>The research module was structured differently to integrate the preparation for special interest visits. There were some issues with the special interest topic (eg lack of time for depth and specifics) but improvements are planned for 2019. The special interest topic may also be run as a block in 2019.</p> <p>All proposals met criteria for funding of projects.</p>	<p>Evaluations were conducted on completion of the 2019 programme had very positive findings. All students agreed or strongly agree that their work would be more effective because of the MYLP ad that overall the MYLP met or exceeded their expectations. All students found their volunteer mentor very or extremely useful. Most students found working with peers from different ethnicities and religions extremely valuable or very valuable. Students rated the special interest extremely valuable (3) and very valuable 9).</p> <p>Strong links between teachers and alumni with requests for help and references for scholarships jobs etc. Links have also been maintained with volunteer mentors.</p> <p>Progress towards short and medium-term outcomes were on target as reported in the end of year MYLP report.</p>

## Appendix 3: List of Evaluation Participants

### Other Stakeholders

Name	Position/Stakeholder	Organisation
Jonathan Lee	MYLP Activity/relationship manager Development Officer	MFAT
Simon Webber	Myanmar Development Manager	MFAT
Melanie Martin	Monitoring and Evaluation	MFAT
Michael Naylor	Executive Officer	UnionAID
Helen Wilson	Volunteer and staff	UnionAID
Ross Wilson	Trustee, UnionAID	UnionAID
s9(2)(a)	Host family	
s9(2)(a)	Host family	
Karen Falconer	EPP	Victoria University of Wellington
Virginia Dawson	Head of Development cooperation	MFAT (NZ Embassy in Myanmar)
Khin Maung Htwe (Ko Htwe)	Policy Advisor (and Alumni)	MFAT (NZ Embassy in Myanmar)

### Alumni

#### Focus Groups (at the Alumni Conference): Group 1: Friday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2019 night

No	Name	BYCL/MYLP Batch (year)	Gender
1.	s9(2)(a)	2019	Female
2.	s9(2)(a)	2015	Male
3.	s9(2)(a)	2016	Female
4.	s9(2)(a)	2018	Female
5.	s9(2)(a)	2019	Male
6.	s9(2)(a)	2015	Male
7.	s9(2)(a)	2019	Female
8.	s9(2)(a)	2019	Female
9.	s9(2)(a)	2015	Female
10.	s9(2)(a)	2019	Male
11.	s9(2)(a)	2019	Female
12.	s9(2)(a)	2019	Male

#### Focus Groups (at the Alumni Conference): Group 2: Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2019 night

No	Name	BYCLP/MYLP Batch (Year)	Gender
1.	s9(2)(a)	2009	Female
2.	s9(2)(a)	2018	Male
3.	s9(2)(a)	2011	Male
4.	s9(2)(a)	2010	Female
5.	s9(2)(a)	2011	Male
6.	s9(2)(a)	2014	Female
7.	s9(2)(a)	2011	Male
8.	s9(2)(a)	2014	Male
9.	s9(2)(a)	2012	Female
10.	Did not sign to be named	2019	Male

**Focus Groups (at the Alumni Conference): Group 3: Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2019 night**

No	Name	BYCLP/MYLP Batch (Year)	Gender
1.	s9(2)(a)	2018	Male
2.	Did not want to be named	2018	Female
3.	s9(2)(a)	2018	Female
4.	s9(2)(a)	2016	Female
5.	s9(2)(a)	2018	Female
6.	s9(2)(a)	2017	Female

**Focus Groups (at the Alumni Conference): Group 4: Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019 night**

No	Name	BYCLP/MYLP Batch (Year)	Gender
1.	s9(2)(a)	2017	Female
2.	s9(2)(a)	2018	Male
3.	s9(2)(a)	2016	Male
4.	s9(2)(a)	2017	Female
5.	s9(2)(a)	2017	Female
6.	s9(2)(a)	2018	Male

**Phone interviews (working outside of Yangon but did not come to conference although registered)**

No	Name	Location	Gender
1.	s9(2)(a)	Tachilake	Male
2.	s9(2)(a)	Sittwe	Female
3.	s9(2)(a)	Sittwe	Male
4.	s9(2)(a)	Puteo (also ActionAID)	Female
5.	s9(2)(a)	Sittwe	Female

**Interviews (working outside of Yangon)**

No	Name	Location	Gender
1.	s9(2)(a)	Laikha	Female
2.	s9(2)(a)	Loikaw	Male
3.	s9(2)(a)	Magway	Male
4.	s9(2)(a)	Kyauktaw	Male

**Interviews (From Yangon/Taunggyi Organisations who we would not see on the visits)**

No	Name	Organisation	Gender
1.	s9(2)(a)	CDEC/ TKMI Taunggyi	Female
2.	s9(2)(a)	CDEC	Female
3.	s9(2)(a)	CDEC	Male
4.	s9(2)(a)	ActionAID	Female
5.	s9(2)(a)	ActionAID	Female
6.	s9(2)(a)	ActionAID	Female
7.	s9(2)(a)	TKMI Taunggyi	Female

**Others**

No	Name	Location	Gender
1.	s9(2)(a)	At the NZ Embassy in Myanmar	Male

2.	s9(2)(a)	Wellington	Male
3.	s9(2)(a)	Wellington	Female

**Follow up after the field work**

No	Name	Year	Gender
1.	s9(2)(a)	2010	Female
2.	s9(2)(a)	2014	Female
3.	s9(2)(a)	2012	Female
4.	s9(2)(a)	2017	Male
5.	s9(2)(a)	2011	Female
6.	s9(2)(a)	2011	Female
7.	s9(2)(a)	2014	Female

s9(2)(a)

	Organisation	Role
s9(2)(a)	TKMI	Director
s9(2)(a)	Taunggyi Youth Centre	
s9(2)(a)	Taunggyi Youth Centre	Teacher -Women's Rights, Gender, Leadership
s9(2)(a)	Taunggyi Youth Centre	Teacher -Environment
s9(2)(a)	PaO Women's Union	Exec Director
s9(2)(a)	PaO Women's Union	Admin and HR Officer
s9(2)(a)	PaO Women's Union	Women's Rights and Protection Programme
s9(2)(a)	PaO Women's Union	Grassroots Capacity Building Programme
s9(2)(a)	Myanmar Responsible Tourism	Board member

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)	Head of Program, Policy and Advocacy	ActionAid
s9(2)(a)	Manager of Child Rights and Development Unit	Action Aid
s9(2)(a)	Now at Christian Aid	Formerly ActionAid
s9(2)(a)	Program Coordinator	CARE International
s9(2)(a)	Program Manager	CARE International
s9(2)(a)	Founder, former Director	Taunggyi Youth Centre
s9(2)(a)	Director	CDEC
s9(2)(a)	General Secretary	WLB

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## Appendix 4: Case Studies

The information for these case studies is from interviews and meetings with organisations (line managers, Directors and staff), and interviews with alumni associated with the organisations. All of the people interviewed were asked for permission to use the information they provided, and use their names and the names of their organisations in this report. All agreed. Those named in the case studies were provided with the case study writeups to check and correct.

s9(2)(a)

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## Appendix 5: Focus Group Questionnaire

BYCL/MYLP Evaluation -Focus Group Questionnaire Paper

Year/batch of BYCLP/MYLP .....

### Question 1.

The most important activity, job, or project I have done to support Myanmar development since I returned from the Young Leaders programme is .....

Question 2. The most important change (or improvement) TO ME that the Young Leaders programme contributed to for my work is .....

### Question 3.

The aspect of the Young Leaders Programme that has been:

- Most useful to me in my work was .....
- Least useful to me in my work was .....

### Question 4.

Improvement(s) I would suggest for future Young Leaders programmes .....

## Appendix 6: Focus Group Results

### Questions 1, 2 and 3

Year	Q1 Most important activity/job/project to support Myanmar development (since BYCLP/MYLP)	Q2 Important change as a result of BYCL/MYLP	Q3 Most useful aspect of BYCLP/MYLP for alumni's work
2018	Working in a gender organisation. Able to work more widely in communities and influence. Gender equality, gender-based violence issues. Women, peace and security	Writing skills Confidence Job promotion	EPP Special interest
2018	UnionAID field work project (action on plastic very successful). Now doing another similar project about waste management and behaviour change.	Confidence	Special interest
2018	Facilitator in general Administration Department Reform process. Trainer in Gender Equality trainings.	Language improvement gives confidence in work Environment friendly living style	-
?	Initiated Community Based Learning Centre and organised community-based activities	Nature-related living style English Confidence	-
2017	Worked as centre manager at NZSC and supported Myanmar students since March 2018 with scholarships advice, subjects and University.	Can speak English confidently Critical thinking Networking due to MYLP	English
2018	Able to work on more research, especially youth.	English skill	Help me to work more effectively
2010	Public presentation with confidence, fund raising for organisation with international donors as language has improved. After I came back I took a leadership role in decision making level in the organisation.	Better time management, language skills and better communication with different allies.	
?	I contributed and supported the Freedom of Association law programme in ILO. I assisted and promoted awareness raising of the law in the labour sector.	Able to take a leadership role Improved professional skill in my work	English, Proposal writing, Observe parliamentary system, Critical thinking, tailored programme (organisational development), culture and concept of NZ people.
2014	English programme for youth. Organic farming knowledge (to implement)	Academic English Knowledge of democracy and community taking part in democratic process. Networking.	English, networking, learning about aspects of different organisations, education system in NZ.
2019	Most activities in private sector work. Commercial ethics environmental business. Internship in private sector – strategy and ? planning.	Confidence Critical thinking Respect each other	Economic concept. Homestay. Research and analysis skill.
2019	Working in land governance and natural resources. Also I have initiated MYLP small grant project in target area with my team members. Doing a lot of	More confident to deal with decision making leaders	Proposal writing and reporting Critically evaluating



Year	Q1 Most important activity/job/project to support Myanmar development (since BYCLP/MYLP)	Q2 Important change as a result of BYCLP/MYLP	Q3 Most useful aspect of BYCLP/MYLP for alumni's work
	coordination work with different stakeholders related to land issues.		
2018	I facilitated dialogue between local authorities and local farmers in order to promote local economic development. As a result, we developed a strategic plan together for local economic development.	Understanding the process of building trust in an organisation	Proposal writing, reporting in English. Knowledge of understanding about public engagement in local government support. Facilitating the dialogue.
2010	Established NZ Alumni association; project development/community workers skill building; Freedom of Association by ILO (Labour Union).	English; leadership and self-confidence; more social network.	English skills; networking; culture exchange; connection for professional development.
2014	Support to humanitarian and development organisation. Conflict sensitivity applications into their program and politics. Conducting analysis using a systems approach.	Confidence; English language	Critical thinking; English; good governance concept; cultural aspect of peace; attitude and mentality of respect for one another.
2011	Working with Mercy Corp to build up capacity of government and ethnic actors in Kayah (2015-16). Managing the Centre for Good Governance' and providing subgrants to civil society groups in Kayah (2018-present),	MYLP has enabled me to do my Masters degree, get senior level positions at INGO and company, be employed at NZ Embassy.	English skill; understanding about democratic process.
2009	Research; engaging with international organisations; engaging with the government.	English Language	Analytical skills.
2015	The programme I am working on is Humanitarian Programme. I have been working at the same organisation at the same programme for more than 4 years. Our programme provides humanitarian assistance to IDPs together with a gender-based violence programme and durable solution.	Before I worked as junior operation assistant – didn't take important responsibility. When I came back from the programme, I became a project coordinator (working as a project coordinator now). I have to take more responsibilities and taking part in senior management role.	EPP
2016	With ActionAid Myanmar on projects and programmes which focus on governance, youth empowerment, women's rights and M&E, financial and operational management. With Myanmar Institute of Gender Studies focussing on research projects including operation, technical and management.	Networking skills; More confident to communicate with different people throughout Myanmar, Gained dynamic groups of social capital through MYLP network, not only for personal, but also for professional development	Proposal writing, project management.
2014	Applying for a small grant to build a school building.	My attitudes, my confidence, my personal improvement, my work, the way I treat others and my students.	EPP

Year	Q1 Most important activity/job/project to support Myanmar development (since BYCLP/MYLP)	Q2 Important change as a result of BYCLP/MYLP	Q3 Most useful aspect of BYCLP/MYLP for alumni's work
2019	I have started a youth capacity building programme which is bigger project than my own project. I am also building good relationships with stakeholders of my organisation and my project.	Self confidence, research to find evidence, enthusiasm to do community development. More self confidence to do what I want to.	Smart working academically Proposal writing EPP
2019	Project is about complaints mechanism – developing complaints mechanism in the community for better accountability.	More confidence, dare to speak out, academic plans and research skills, future career.	Special interest programme and human rights study
2018	Teaching English to young people who need it for their work or for their study.	The networking ( <i>in NZ through an MFAT event</i> ) with the community leader from our society which gives me the opportunity that I have been longing for to move back to work in our community	The project – proposal writing and report writing as it helped to get me promoted.
2018	Responsible investment advocacy. Natural resource governance engagement. Youth development project.	Deeply understanding about multicultural society, critically analysing myself and found what kind of person I would like to be in life. Responsible citizenship, How to learn.	EPP
2019	Awareness using activities about deforestation.	Respect to everyone. The value of democracy. Awareness of climate change.	Research section with mentor visiting.
2015	Very important ( <i>course</i> ) for potential Young Leaders working on the ground. The programme helps young people not only in improving English but in understanding how a democratic world is operated.	Language skills, learnt how a developed country operates.	EPP – important for my further studies, Masters; Visiting parliament; staying with my host family; how basic infrastructure has been developed;
2019	As a youth adviser of Plan International for positive youth development as my special interest is in that topic.	My view on education, political and economic in terms of sustainable development; English proficiency; International networking.	English language skills for daily life. The concept of sustainable development.
2019	Planning to start the project that I got funded from UnionAID.	Critical thinking skill has improved. Working in professional ways.	Proposal writing skill, research skill, economic module. How to work for conservation by balancing with the community's economy.
2019	Promoting education opportunities for Myanmar students.	Improved my inter-personal skills – communication with others and self-confidence.	Tailored course.
2016	Sharing about the practices of local government and democratic institutions.	Get the confidence to use English language to communicate.	Developing project proposal. ? which is related with NZ society.
2018	Facilitating ethnic political parties maximising ethnic political	English and research skills	Special interest

Year	Q1 Most important activity/job/project to support Myanmar development (since BYCLP/MYLP)	Q2 Important change as a result of BYCLP/MYLP	Q3 Most useful aspect of BYCLP/MYLP for alumni's work
	representation in the respective parliaments.		
2018	Social enterprise model development project for CSO called Edulife.	Leadership skill. Proposal writing and report writing skills,	Proposal writing and report writing. Decriminalisation of sex work.
2017	English skills, leadership skills in a women's organisation	Advanced leadership skills.	Language, communication, organisational management skills.
2017	Proposal writing, project management, leadership, youth lead activities in my professional and volunteer work.	Importance of mutual respect. Leadership skills,	Project management and cooperation. Mobilising youth in terms of leadership and cooperation.
2017	I am working with the Asia Foundation to support the programme of economic governance especially to build awareness of sub-national governance, to facilitate the workshop in order to collect and feedback from government official, S/R to support MBEI research.	English skills, confidence and leadership.	Exposure visit to Chamber (of Commerce ?), Local governance, youth empowerment, space for CSOs, respect for diversity, host family.

#### Question 2: Summary of important changes as a result of BYCLP/MYLP

Changes	Number of times mentioned
English language, communication (in English), writing, (proposal and reports)	17
Confidence	11
Job promotion Leadership, more responsibility Improved professional skill	11
Personal values: Understanding about oneself and about respect for others, way I treat others, personal improvement, understanding multiculturalism Understand how to build trust in others	6
Networking and building social capital through network	5
Critical thinking, knowing how to learn	4
Environment, healthy eating	2
Democracy, how a developed country works, view on education, politics and economics	2
Research skills	2

### Question 3: Most useful aspects of BYCLP/MYLP – ideas from alumni (ranked with sticky dots)

\*Denotes the two aspects most voted for by the group (or three if the result is close)

	Numbers of votes (sticky dots (5 per alumni) placed beside group suggestions			
MOST useful aspects of programme	Group 1 (12) – Mixed Batches	Group 2 (10) Mostly 2009-14	Group 3 (6) Mixed Batches	Group 4 (6) Mostly 2017-18
English	15 (25% of group) Rank = 1	13 (27%) of group* Rank = 2	7 (24%) * Rank = 1=	6 (21%)* Rank = 3
Reason: Important for communication (especially for INGOs) and also the teaching methods (creative and enjoyable) extremely useful to replicate in Myanmar. Homework easy.				
Proposal/Report writing	14 (23%) Rank = 2	7 (15%) Rank = 4	4 (13%) Rank = 3=	5 (17%) Rank = 4
Very important for professional life – for example one alumni was successful in application from NZ Embassy funding. Many alumni write proposals in their work, very important for organisations to get funding and be able to operate.				
Special interest	10 (17%) Rank = 3		7 (24%) * Rank = 1=	8 (27%)* Rank = 1=
Reason: Most found it very useful to have the special topics and the volunteer mentors who many students noted were very dedicated and helpful. The special topic visits and connections to organisations have changed the way that some alumni have approached their work (eg case studies). Examples-learn about collaboration between organisations, how youth are included in democracy, law and how it works in NZ, inclusiveness and ideas for activities and projects.				
Visits/parliamentary visit/visit to democratic organisation	8 (13%) Rank = 4		1	8* (27%)* Rank = 1=
Reason: The parliamentary visit is useful to the students because they learn about democracy in NZ and see a parliament working. The idea of visiting parliament has been taken up by TYC (see Section 5.2).				
Tailored course	7 (12%)			
Reason: If anything is to be cut from the MYLP it could come from the tailored course with the students find exhausting and not all topics are useful to them.				
Host family	6 (10%)		4 (13%) Rank = 3=	
Reason: Some found the host families useful (eg example from case study, and those that stayed with s9(2)(a) - learned English, social skill, cooking, NZ culture, and were supported with their study (and in some cases their work back in Myanmar eg proposals). Some did not enjoy the host family experience and were uncomfortable.				
Democracy/			2 (6,5%)	
Research skills			4 (13%) Rank = 3=	
Economic session			1	
Critical thinking		15 (31%)* Rank = 1		
NZ government		8 (16%) Rank = 3		
Connections/links		5 (10%)		
Time management		2 (1%)		
Organisational management				3 (10%)
Total votes (168) 34x5=170	60	48	30	30



### Summary of most useful aspects of MYLP and BYCLP from ranking exercise

Academic subjects in the tailored course did not feature much in the most useful, with economics ranked by only one person as most useful. and by a few alumni as least useful.

The aspects of the BYCLP/MYLP for the alumni's work ranked as most useful to their work were English language, critical thinking, special interest, and proposal writing. Visits (especially to parliament and democratic organisations) were also ranked highly.

English language learning ranked first for Focus Group 1, first equal for focus Group 3 (both groups of mixed batches), second for Group 2 and third for Group 4 (mostly 2017 and 2018 alumni). For the group of earlier alumni (Group 2<sup>100</sup>) 'critical thinking' ranked the highest. Special interest was ranked first for Group 4, and first equal for Group 3 (mostly 2017 and 2018 alumni). Special interest was third for Group 1. Proposal/report writing was ranked as second, third or fourth most useful for all the groups. Visits featured as highly useful for Group 4 (2017 and 2018 alumni) being ranked first equal. Democracy/human rights learning was important for one group. Host families were not highly prioritised as 'most useful' for three of the groups but was ranked third equal (with research skills and proposal report writing) for Group 3.

### Question 3: Least useful aspects of BYCLP/MYLP

\*Denotes the two aspects most voted for by the group (or three is the result is close)

	Numbers of votes (sticky dots (5 per alumni) placed beside group suggestions)			
LEAST useful aspects of programme	Group 1 (12) Mixed batches	Group 2 (10) Mostly 2009-14	Group 3 (6) Mixed Batches	Group 4 (6) Mostly 2017-18
Nothing (there was nothing that was not useful)	31 (53%) Rank = 1	The group said nothing was 'least useful' Rank = 1	10 (33%) Rank = 2	7 (33%) Rank = 2
Knowledge about labour rights	3 (5%) 4=			
Host family	8 (14%) Rank = 3			
The host parent was strict, did not join in food and activities. But had to learn English, and learned to cook. Some host families did not understand Myanmar culture and food. Not enough time to talk with Host parents. If Host parents are not OK, then alumni don't want to go home. Found it difficult to talk with host parents.				
Visit to council/some site visits/business related visit	1 (1%)		11(37%) Rank = 1	1 (5%) 4
Reason Sometimes the visits were quite far and it was difficult to find the places, in 2018 the bus service changed and buses were unreliable. Some visits were boring and the people talking did not know what the students were wanting to learn about. They did not ask so the talks were not useful.				
Economics (and in Group 1 politics)	3 (5%) 4=		6 (20%) = 3	
The economics (in particular) was not useful to everyone. Some found it boring.				
Special interest topic	2 (2%) 6			
Shadowing the MP	11 (19%)		3 (10%) = 4	

<sup>100</sup> Special interest and projects were not a focus in the earlier young leader programmes.

	Numbers of votes (sticky dots (5 per alumni) placed beside group suggestions)			
LEAST useful aspects of programme	Group 1 (12) Mixed batches	Group 2 (10) Mostly 2009-14	Group 3 (6) Mixed Batches	Group 4 (6) Mostly 2017-18
	Rank = 2			
Reason: A lot of time wasted; MP was too busy. Needed to know more about the MP before they were shadowed. Another said it was useful – one shadowed an environmental activist!				
Human rights				5 (24%) Rank = 3
Reason: Group 4 (2017-18 alumni): s6(a)				
Film watching				8 (38%) Rank = 1
s6(a)				
Total votes (168) 34x5=170	59	48	30	21

### Summary of least useful aspects of MYLP and BYCLP

Academic subjects in the tailored course did not feature much in the least useful - economics was ranked by a few alumni as least useful.

For three out of the four Focus Groups<sup>101</sup>, the highest ranked (or for Group 2 the only rank) for least useful was that there were 'no least useful aspects of the programme'. This indicates that alumni were generally very happy with the programme. For most alumni, experience since the BYCLP/MYLP has not changed their positive view of the programme. However, for Group 1, visits were ranked as the least useful. Shadowing Members of Parliament was not useful for Group 1 (ranked second least useful) and also for some members of Group 3. Film watching was the least useful aspect of the programme for Group 4 with Human rights ranked third least useful by this group of mainly 2017 and 2018 alumni. Host families featured as not useful (ranked third) for Group 1.

Shadowing the NZ MPs was least useful for some alumni because the MPs were too busy and alumni did not know enough about the MPs before they shadowed them. IN contract one alumni found shadowing an MP who was 'an environmental activist' very useful. Visits were not useful for some because they were far away, the visit location was difficult to find, or reach (in 2018 the bus service was changed). Sometimes the visits were 'boring', and the speakers on the visit didn't understand the background of the young leaders (or ask what they wanted to know) so much of the content was irrelevant.

### Question 4 Improvements suggested

<sup>101</sup> Results from Focus Group ranking exercise for most and least useful aspects of the programme for their work.

	Improvement	Year of YLP	Number of alumni mentioning
1.	More on local government	2018	
2.	Host family was not good for my friend, but I understand it is difficult as everyone is different; Select a flexible host (host family was not good).	2018 (3)	3
3.	New topic climate change	2018	
4.	More information about MPs needed before they are 'shadowed'	-, 2018, 2015	3
5.	Nil/all good/maintain perfect programme; Carry on this course for future – Myanmar needs more leaders; Should still run for at least 5-10 years with more time in internship and University programmes; Continue programme inf future for many more years. Do not stop MYLP programme for MYLP.	2017 (2), 2018 (3), 2016, 2014, 2019 (3)	10
6.	Gender and feminism concepts included and use of practical relevant examples in context of Myanmar; It would be useful to put the lesson 'gender' with more field experience in the future	2010 (2), 2017, 2014	4
7.	Exchanging programmes between other young leader programmes by UnionAID; Regional forum for YLP between Indonesia Myanmar and Philippines	2014 (2)	2
8.	Reach out to every ethnicity or minority group; Prioritising people from remote areas who have less opportunities to join such programmes; Select more candidates from remote regional areas of Myanmar	2014, 2016 (2)	3
9.	To participate and take lead in business and management level	2018	
10.	Support students learning environment by comparing lessons and knowledge with Myanmar context	2019	
11.	More time for personal interest (during tailored course); Don't put a lot of subjects during EPP studying period. More time for research skills. Taught throughout the MYLP course not just one block.	2018x2, 2019	3
12.	Refresher course for MYLP alumni. Executive level modular courses maybe.	2010, 2014, 2009	3
13.	Bring alumni to NZ as guest speaker.	2009	
14.	Change topics in accordance with Myanmar context for example there is more emphasis in Myanmar on public policy and administration	2011	
15.	Consider new participants who do not have intermediate English level but have experience in their work.	2015	
16.	Have more detail on subjects than brief information (introduction) of topics in the tailored course	2019	
17.	Select the proposal design award carefully.	2015	
18.	More practical practice of project management	2017	

## Appendix 7: Follow up with alumni not 'engaged' during the field work

The evaluators attempted to contact a sample of alumni who had not been at the 2019 conference. The purpose was to see whether there were differing views from alumni who may not be part of the alumni network, or may be 'less engaged' with the network. The sample was purposefully chosen by selecting nine of 13 alumni from batches prior to 2018, who have not attended the last three conferences (2017, 2018 and 2019). This 'sample' was considered likely to be the 'least engaged' in the alumni network.

Alumni who did not attend 2017 or 2018 alumni conferences, <u>and</u> did not register for the 2019 alumni conference.		
From before 2018 (9 contacted)	From 2018 and after (not contacted)	Total

0 from 2009 1 from 2010 3 from 2011 1 from 2012 3 from 2014 0 from 2015 or 2016 1 from 2017	1 from 2018 3 from 2019	13 (15.6% of alumni)
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On the first attempt to phone five alumni using numbers provided by UnionAID, only one, s9(2) picked up the call. Four alumni were not able to be reached (1- overseas number (Thailand), 2- turned-off and 1- not using this number any more). New phone numbers and/or information was obtained by phoning alumni in the same batch as those that could not be reached. Emails were also sent to the eight that were not reached by phone. A second follow up email was also sent to those who did not respond to the first email.

Phone or email responses have NOT been received from only two of nine (see shaded cells) in the table below.

Alumni contacted	Batch (year)	Response	Second email sent (or new phone number)
s9(2)(a)	2011	No response. Apparently now in Thailand.	Yes: Response to second email
s9(2)(a)	2014	No response. Apparently working on the Chinese border and her mobile number is not working.	Yes: Response to second email
s9(2)(a)	2011	No response. Apparently now in Thailand.	Yes: no response
s9(2)(a)	2010	No response	Yes: Response to second email
s9(2)(a)	2011	No response	Responded to new phone number
s9(2)(a)	2014	Responded by email	
s9(2)(a)	2014	No response	Yes: no response
s9(2)	2012	Responded to phone call	
s9(2)(a)	2017	Responded by email (now working in USA)	

The responses did not provide any information that changed the findings from field work interviews, and focus groups. Although two alumni were not able to be reached, one of these was apparently in Thailand, or on the border with Thailand where communication was difficult leaving only one that could not be reached with no known reason. The seven that were reached were still engaged and were enthusiastic and complimentary about the BYCLP/MYLP. One said it was 'an honour being a member of MYLP family from 2011 Batch. MYLP family is always in our heart and the program helps us shaping our lives through the knowledge and skills we learned. I was always grateful for having had opportunity to join MYLP/BYCL program'.

In terms of networking, the alumni were all in touch with others through Facebook. One said it was mainly through the new Facebook group set up for all NZ alumni (not just MYLP). This alumni had contributed to organising the conference in Nay Pi Taw for all NZ alumni in 2019. One alumni (2011) said Facebook was the only way they kept in touch with others. One batch (year group) catches up



once a month and one alumni mentioned attending special events such as at the Ambassador's residence or NZ Embassy. Three said they mainly keep in touch with their batch (2011, 2017 batch and 2014 batches) rather than other alumni.

Through the network of alumni and with UnionAID, they receive useful information (eg scholarship information MYLP application from) through the network which they can share with others in their network. They learn about, and share job opportunities and information. They can discuss and share their values and experiences. They can ask for help and 'talk about stress'. One said they meet with Ross and Helen (Wilson) when they come to Myanmar

The alumni contacted said they had not attended the conferences for various reasons including being 'busy' (for example with political agenda, or with activities 'which were run even in weekend'). One was completing a Master's degree in New Zealand, or was overseas for family reasons. One was in the transition of new job and I cannot take leave to finishing my work while there was a conference. One said 'the schedule was in conflict' or they were 'out of Myanmar'.

Two alumni said it was easier for them to attend conferences that were in Yangon. One said 'I did not attend 2018 and 2019 MYLP conferences held in Taunggyi and Bagan due to (being) busy ... I attended some MYLP conferences held in Yangon'. Another said 'in 2018 and 2019, I really wish to join the conference but it was taking place in Taunggyi and Bagan which is quite difficult for me to manage travel... there is no direct transportation so that it would take some days (approximate 4-5 days round trip) for traveling....for me, Yangon can be more easy to reach and lower cost for transportation.

One alumni who responded is a Member of Parliament through the 2015 election. Another is a debate moderator, and filming. Another is working in USA. One is working with an education foundation which is trained the youth leadership based in Northern Shan State, another is a National Consultant for the Forced Labour project at ILO, and one is a project coordinator for the UK funded Jinghpaw Education Program. Another is currently working with the NGO - International Rescue Committee as an interpreter based in Mae Sot, Thailand - mainly working with refugees and asylum seeker who fled from Myanmar.

The only new suggestions for improvement of the MYLP was that handouts from conference speakers' would be useful for those that can't attend the conference. Another said 'I think it will be good to give opportunity for some people who could not participate in the conference, to be able to join some sessions of the conference through online in order to keep in touch with the alumni' network. I also appreciate to receive updates information from the conference and alumni network newsletter'.