

MFAT Management Response to *Young Leaders  
Programmes Evaluation* -

Evaluation Report Recommendation	MFAT Response and Action (Agree, Partially Agree, Reject)
<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> Develop medium-term funding agreement to extend YLPs in Mindanao and Indonesia.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> <b>Action:</b> MFAT intends to consolidate future International Development Cooperation (IDC) support to UnionAID for the Young Leaders Programmes (YLPs) into one medium-term (5 year) funding arrangement. This will require a new Activity design, including an overarching Theory of Change and coherent MERL framework across the country programmes to support achieving development outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> Funding to be informed by an independent review of UnionAID's systems and process within 12 months to identify opportunities to strengthen and enhance YLP implementation</p>	<p><b>Partially Agree</b> <b>Action:</b> UnionAID will develop a workplan, in agreement with MFAT, that responds to the evaluation findings. Prior to entering into a consolidated funding arrangement, MFAT will need to be assured that UnionAID has taken sufficient steps to strengthen and enhance YLP implementation.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> Lift core resourcing for management per priorities identified in next programme design. Fund adequately staffed management and administrative positions in each country team and appoint a portfolio manager to oversee governance, budget and risk.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> <b>Action:</b> MFAT and UnionAID will coordinate to agree on a programme budget that reflects the scope, complexity and ambition of the programme.</p>

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<p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> Enhance coherence across YLPs through an integrated MEL framework and consistent programming approaches</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> <b>Action:</b> See above, MFAT will work with UnionAID to revise the Theory of Change and the MERL frameworks in the YLPs to increase consistency and alignment.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> Establish a more formal governance arrangement between MFAT and UnionAID (and, if appropriate, local partners). This could include an annual reflections workshop</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> <b>Action:</b> The consolidated funding arrangement will set out a more formal governance arrangement between MFAT and UnionAID. This includes establishment of a Working Group and a Programme Steering Committee, as well as consideration for an annual reflections workshop. MFAT and UnionAid agree on the establishment of an interim management and governance mechanisms in the activity extension period to ensure strategic engagement on the development of a consolidated funding arrangement.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> Consider opportunities to embed comprehensive psychosocial support within YLP, including a specialist service to deliver pre-departure briefings, in-programme counselling and on-call assistance (with a capped session allowance) for participants and alumni.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> <b>Action:</b> Identification and mitigation of risks is a priority for both MFAT and UnionAid, and a risk management strategy will be developed by the MFAT-UnionAid Working Group.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 7:</b> Resource a central MEL function. Fund a MERL adviser embedded within UnionAID or other implementing partners to design and maintain a</p>	<p><b>Partially agree</b></p>

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<p>unified results framework, quality-assure data, and coordinate periodic impact evaluations.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> MFAT is supportive of UnionAID taking responsive action to this recommendation. In considering financial proposals submitted by UnionAID, MFAT will look to see what provision for MERL support is provided for.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 8:</b> Establish a dedicated system to monitor and evaluate action projects. Issue clear guidance on theory-of-change, safeguarding and community feedback; track outputs, outcomes and any unintended effects; and commission light-touch evaluations of a sample of projects each year to verify benefits and mitigate risks.</p>	<p><b>Partially agree</b> <b>Action:</b> MFAT accepts the risks identified in the Evaluation in respect of Action Projects. Prior to entering into a consolidated funding arrangement, MFAT and UnionAID will need to agree on suitable adjustments to the Action Projects that mitigate risks identified. As part of that workstream, consideration will be given to the points raised by recommendation 8, if applicable.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 9:</b> Develop a GEDSI strategy to guide its GEDSI programming, complete with indicators in the MEL framework to measure progress on GEDSI.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> <b>Action:</b> MFAT will work with UnionAID to support UnionAIDs GEDSI programming and revise the MERL frameworks in the YLPs to measure progress, including the integration of GEDSI mainstreaming across the programme.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 10:</b> Establish and integrate an independent SEAH and complaints reporting mechanism.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b> <b>Action:</b> The risk management strategy to be developed by the Working Group (refer to response to recommendation 6), will integrate the independent SEAH and complaints reporting mechanism.</p>

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<p><b>Recommendation 11:</b></p> <p>Strengthen safeguarding and risk management, with a specific focus on action-project delivery and child-protection standards. Introduce portfolio-wide protocols for “do-no-harm” checks, child protection, PSEAH, and protection of vulnerable groups. Resource safeguards &amp; risk officer to verify sufficient risk management assessments and compliance in each setting.</p>	<p><b>Agree</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> The risk management strategy to be developed by the Working Group (response to recommendation 6), will integrate strengthened safeguarding and risk management.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 12:</b></p> <p>Develop cohesive policy for making action projects more flexible; including opt-out options or group activities to better respond to personal circumstances.</p>	<p><b>Partially agree</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> MFAT accepts the risks and issues identified in the Evaluation in respect of Action Projects. A joint MFAT-UnionAID deep dive on Action Projects will be part of the development of a consolidated funding arrangement.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 13:</b></p> <p>Consider introducing a livelihood-protection mechanism or flexible fund for participants who lose work and face financial hardships because of YLP commitments.</p> <p>Offer stipends or per-diem for alumni leading action projects. Stipends offset income loss that currently stalls some initiatives and improve sustainability, particularly when projects extend beyond the</p>	<p><b>Reject</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> MFAT accepts the risks and issues identified in the Evaluation in respect of Action Projects. Prior to entering into a consolidated funding arrangement, MFAT and UnionAID will need to agree on suitable adjustments to the Action Projects that mitigate risks identified. At the outset, MFAT considers stipends to be out of scope.</p>

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<p>predetermined period. Per-diem could be made available specifically for alumni who are unemployed or underemployed.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 14:</b></p> <p>Consider longitudinal alumni tracer study. Survey each cohort at 2-, 5- and 10-year intervals to track career pathways, community engagement and sustained project outcomes. This provides hard evidence of medium- and long-term change.</p>	<p><b>Partially agree</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> MFAT agrees the sustainable management of alumni network needs consideration, MFAT and UnionAID will work together on a sustainable approach and assess the value of a longitudinal alumni tracer study.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 15:</b></p> <p>Consider drawing on elements of a negotiated partnership model when consolidating delivery of YLPs, in particular due diligence checks and an organisational capability assessment and appropriate resourcing for locally-led implementation.</p>	<p><b>Partially agree</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> MFAT agrees that there are elements of the Negotiated Partnerships approach and process that could be useful in strengthening UnionAID's operations. MFAT will work with UnionAID to support access to good practice examples and capacity-building resources.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 16:</b></p> <p>Consider offering YLP Alumni the opportunity to connect with Manaaki New Zealand Scholarship Programme (MNZSP) alumni networks (facilitated by MFAT posts), ensuring expectations and potential sensitivities are clearly communicated</p>	<p><b>Agree</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> Further internal discussion by MFAT is needed to ensure that opportunities to connect YLP Alumni with MNZSP alumni networks can be managed in an effective, flexible and sensitive way.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 17:</b></p>	<p><b>Agree</b></p>

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The next design should consider how to manage an ever-growing alumni network and whether annual conferences will be feasible in future years.	<b>Action:</b> MFAT agrees the sustainable management of alumni network needs consideration, MFAT and UnionAID will work together on a sustainable approach.