



**Final Evaluation of the
Regional Youth Project on
*Leadership, Innovation and
Entrepreneurship* (Youth Co:Lab)**

Jan 2017-Jan 2022

Final Evaluation of Regional Youth Project on Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Youth Co:Lab)

(Evaluation period January 2017 – January 2022)

For UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub

by

**Dana Peebles
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Drafted on the traditional territories of the:
Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Mississaugas
Covered by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant

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| Project | Regional Youth Project on Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship | |
| Atlas ID | 00110753 | |
| Corporate outcome and output | <p>Contributing to RPD Outcomes RPD for Asia and the Pacific 2018-2021: Outcome 2 Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development</p> <p>Indicative RPD Outputs: RPD Output 2.3 Institutions, networks and non-state actors strengthened to promote inclusion, access to justice, and protect human rights (Strategic Plan 2018-2021: 2.2.2 and 2.2.3)</p> <p>RPD Indicator 2.3.1: Number of policies and initiatives that strengthen the enabling environment for youth empowerment (disaggregated by sex)</p> | |
| Region | Asia-Pacific | |
| Project dates | Start | Planned end |
| | January 2017 | December 2022 |
| Total Project Budget (USD) | USD 10,530,000 (total resources required 13,560,000) | |
| Project Expenditures at the time of evaluation (USD) | USD 6,447,163.00 | |
| Funding Sources | UNDP BRH (TRAC), Baoshang Bank, Citi Foundation, CVC Philanthropy Ltd., Islamic Development Bank | |
| Implementation Modality/ Implementing Partner | United Nations Development Programme (Direct Implementation) | |

Evaluation information

| | | |
|---|---|-------------------|
| Evaluation type (project/outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.) | Project Outcome | |
| Final/midterm review/ other | Final | |
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| | January 2017 | January 2022 |
| Evaluators | Dana Peebles (Lead Evaluator), Yamei Du (Interviewer) | |
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- Sun Qian, Strategic Planning, Risk Management, M&E Officer, UNDP China
- Belinda Hlatshwayo, Project Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub (Business and Human Rights Team)

Yamei Du, a regional consultant also provided highly capable assistance in the interview and Focus Group Discussion facilitation process.

This is the time YCL/UNDP needs to ramp it up. It is a hard time around the world, and people are trying to be innovative and to stand on their feet. If you can encourage innovations, it is going to be a blessing for our planet and our future.

Thank YCL for the constant support and keeping me on the radar. They always remember you and support both your professional and personal development too.

Young Social Entrepreneur
Ei8ht Sports

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report represents the final evaluation of UNDP's Regional Youth Project on Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Youth Co:Lab) which has operated in the Asia-Pacific and designed to foster youth social innovation, leadership and social entrepreneurship and strengthen the related ecosystem in the region. The project was co-designed with Citi Foundation which also served as the project's lead funder and partner in an innovative partnership between UNDP and the private sector. The project started in 2017 and will end in December 2022.

Youth Co:Lab's Theory of Change is that strategic supports are needed at 3 different levels:

Downstream – support for young people (21st Century skills peer learning and teaching model called the Movers program and for young social enterprises through its innovation challenges and Springboard capacity building support)

Mid-stream – through alternative financing solutions, the Youth Empowerment Alliance, a broad and flexible partnership arrangement at the regional and national levels, and the holding of regional summits every year in which diverse partners and youth participants come together to exchange ideas, showcase their work and network.

Upstream – the production of regional level knowledge products and support for national level

youth entrepreneurship ecosystem diagnostics.

Scope: The evaluation covered project activities and results at regional level and through deep dives in specific countries, as well as data analysis available from the 28 countries and territories that have participated in the YCL project to date. It assessed the project's progress against the expected outputs and outcomes as defined in the results and resources framework (RRF) from a qualitative perspective and assessed the validity of the project theory of change.

Evaluation Purpose: to support accountability and facilitate learning and knowledge sharing. The evaluation's findings are designed to inform UNDP, Citi Foundation and other key stakeholders of Youth Co:Lab results of the project, consolidate lessons learnt. It also aimed to provide forward-looking

and concrete recommendations and critical evidence-based information to guide the project's design future strategy and support UNDP and Citi Foundation's continued efforts to empower and invest in youth to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs in Asia-Pacific.

The key objectives of the final evaluation were to:

- Assess the project's performance in terms of achieving the intended project output results and a contribution to outcomes according to the project's theory of change
 - Assess the project's unique value proposition and sources of comparative advantage relative to other initiatives
 - Assess the project's partnership strategies and performance in achieving intended results through collaboration with ecosystem partners
 - Assess the relevance, coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of the project activities and the sustainability of the results achieved towards the intended output and outcome level results at:
 - **Downstream level:** directly empowering young people
 - **Midstream level:** strengthening the ecosystem to support youth entrepreneurship, innovation, and leadership
 - **Upstream level:** working with governments to enhance the enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship, innovation, and leadership
- Identify challenges and factors that have affected project results achievement and assess the effectiveness of the approaches the project has adopted to address these challenges
 - Assess to what extent the project has adopted human rights-based, gender responsive and leave no one behind (LNOB) / diversity and inclusion approaches
 - Identify lessons learnt from the project and provide concrete and forward-looking recommendations to inform the design of the next project cycle
 - Assess the project's alignment with UNDP's RPD and Strategic Plan and the UN Strategy on Youth and the project's contribution to mainstreaming of the youth empowerment agenda.

Methodology

To this end the evaluation used a combination of a simplified Outcome Harvesting and Appreciative Inquiry methodology combined with Empowerment Analysis to frame the data collection and analysis approach. The primary data collection process

included:

- **Key Informant Interviews** with UNDP staff (from the regional Asia Pacific office, selected Country Offices, regional and national partners, government officials in five countries, Youth Co:Lab staff, Citi Foundation staff, funders/donors, civil society organizations, private sector actors, and academics.
 - **Focus discussion groups** with youth participants from the YCL Movers Program, Springboard program, Regional Asia-Pacific Forums on Youth Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (APFYLIE), Youth Co:Lab Summits and the Regional Dialogue on Youth Indigenous Social Entrepreneurship, Young Entrepreneurs ensuring that there was a balanced and proportionate representation by gender, and diverse groups of vulnerable and minority youth as well as those that have dropped out of these programs or were not selected for higher levels of participation in the project's national Innovation Challenges. All the evaluation instruments included questions related to the inclusion of diverse genders and LNOB groups and the related analysis was disaggregated by these categories of analysis to the degree possible to determine if there were any differential patterns. The FGD and KIIs with YSE participants also asked participants to identify projects results related to their social enterprises.
 - **Online surveys** sent to 8,000 project's participants and 18 of YCL's partner organizations.
 - **1 video interview case study** with a Young Social Entrepreneur from an indigenous community (presented separately from this report).
 - **4 additional short case studies** focused on the project's Midstream strategies and Youth Empowerment Alliance partnerships and the Upstream Approach on the project's national entrepreneurship ecosystem diagnostics approach and thought leadership.¹
- The combination of FGDs and KIIs also covered 22 national partners, 18 national UNDP CO staff, 18 UNDP regional staff (5 Regional Thematic Advisors and 13 YCL regional staff), and 10 regional partners (15 people). Except for the YCL staff at the national level there was a gender balance among these other stakeholders consulted. These regional and national KII and FGD processes reached an additional 73 people, supplemented by an additional 13 partners who responded to a partner survey. Combined with 62

¹ One of these 4 case studies is still pending the interview with the key partner which was delayed due to COVID.

youth participants consulted this brings the total number of participants in the evaluation to 269. The FGDs and KIs at the national level were drawn from youth participants, UNDP CO staff and partners predominantly from Bangladesh, China, Samoa, Singapore, Viet Nam, and Thailand.

Key Findings

The project surpassed the initial expectations that it would work in 9 countries and focus on building youth leadership and social innovation through promoting the establishment of youth social enterprises in the region. As of December 2021, YCL had supported young entrepreneurs in 28 countries and territories and had added a youth 21st Century skills training component for youth in general to its Movers portfolio (the Movers program) and had found effective ways to weather and overcome the challenges generated by COVID-19 restrictions.

Downstream successes: The Movers program has reached close to 26,000 youth who are now more aware of the SDGs, gender equality and inclusion issues, the possibility of social enterprises as a form of employment and diverse soft and digital skills. The Springboard suite of activities has trained 9,500 young people who aspire to establish social enterprises in the region and 1,240 have at the regional and national levels. However, as YCL has not yet been able to develop an effective system for tracking progress at

the national level the evaluation process could not confirm how many YSEs were established and are still in operation at the national level. There is strong anecdotal evidence that a high proportion of them are sustainable, and this was confirmed in the evaluation's FGDs and KIs with a wide range of youth participants.

Nevertheless, this represents a serious gap in the M&E system arising from the downside of YCL's flexible approach at the national level. While this flexibility is a major key to the project's success since it allows each Country Office to take on and find funding for the YCL components that best meet individual country priorities and is also a key factor in its partnership building success, this same flexibility also presented some M&E challenges at the national level. This was since each CO identified its own priorities for action within the YCL model and approach. The existing M&E system was not set up to capture this wide range of approaches and results in a systematic way, although the project did request regular monitoring reports at the national level. What was not as clear was how this wide range of results would be aggregated.

At the **mid-stream level** YCL has worked effectively to find ways to work with the private sector as a partner – amongst other groups. This was a challenge as UNDP is not accustomed to working directly with the private sector and its rules and regulations do pose

some challenges for private sector partners that are accustomed to making fast paced decisions. YCL has also reached out to and made partnerships with diverse regional partners – to collaborate on knowledge products, help reach members of LNOB groups and to provide technical support and funding for young social entrepreneurs. This has been possible in part as YCL has been able to identify many organizations that share the UN and YCL’s strategic priorities related to youth leadership and entrepreneurship and in part due to the flexibility of the partnership arrangements made. A third factor has been the credibility and cachet that the combination of working with UNDP and Citi Foundation bring to the partners at both the regional and national levels.

The youth participants have also found this distinction of working with a UNDP and Citi Foundation sponsored process to be helpful for them on multiple fronts. For the Movers participants this adds some weight to the training certificates they receive and has helped build their CVs. For the young social entrepreneurs, it has opened doors for some with other UN agencies, governments and other businesses and helped them secure contracts despite being start-ups. The regional summits have also facilitated this type of partnership connection as well as have increased awareness of other stakeholders in the region of just what young social entrepreneurs can do.

At the **Upstream level** the knowledge products produced on specific themes related to youth and youth entrepreneurship in the region have proven popular and are starting to influence key stakeholders in the region. The national youth entrepreneurship ecosystem diagnostic processes carried out in Indonesia and Bangladesh have created a model for an analytical and consultative process involving multiple stakeholders, including young people, that is also starting to influence policy in these countries.

A key behind some of YCL’s overall success has been the project’s championship of youth. The project, with Citi Foundation’s generous support, was able to hire Youth Focal Points at the national level who work from UNDP’s Country Offices. Their work and that of the regional YCL staff team have been instrumental in mainstreaming youth issues in UNDP programming at both the regional and national levels and have modeled the importance of youth inclusion in the leadership of any kind of youth-related process.

As the project is regional, most of its resource materials are in English. This has meant that it has been easier for young people who speak English and are university educated to take advantage of the opportunities the project offers. For the young social entrepreneurs, in particular, if they want to take part in the regional summits and to compete for markets beyond their borders they

need to speak English. This has added a somewhat elite reach for the project although even many of these young people would not have had access to the kinds of opportunities YCL affords if the project did not exist. YCL is very aware of this challenge and has actively reached out to new partner organizations to find ways to reach young people from LNOB groups. It has had some success with this approach, particularly with young people from indigenous and rural communities.

The project has also made a conscious effort to ensure its programming is gender balanced regarding participation and has funded a gender and entrepreneurship regional study as well as includes a gender equality module as a part of its 21st Century skills training. Despite this, the youth participant survey results show significant gender-based differences in its empowerment indicator results. The project thus needs to reflect on how to go beyond increasing participation from a gender perspective to one that increases the quality of the participation and addresses some underlying causes of these differential results for the diverse genders. The project has also faced some challenges adapting its program model to work effectively in the Pacific Islands, in part as the private sector in these countries is small. Some national partners have also encountered a few challenges related to UNDP procedures and regional team expectations.

All this being said, however, this is a highly unusual project. There is a sense of a buzz and excitement among not only the youth participants the evaluation team consulted but also among the different stakeholder groups, especially the private sector. The YCL team is credited with providing inspired leadership and support for both youth participants, partners and UNDP COs across the region. They are open to collaboration, responsive, communicate effectively and many of the youth participants the evaluation team consulted credited them with much of their success.

The YCL team provides ongoing encouragement and access to new opportunities to the young social entrepreneurs and Movers peer volunteers. There is a high level of commitment on this team at both the regional and national levels. Their average age is 27 and they bring a dynamism and energy to the project that is contagious. If the project can make their M&E system more systematic and rigorous at the national and regional levels, continue building their outreach to LNOB groups and move towards a more gender and LNOB transformative as opposed to sensitive or responsive model and only expand further once they have consolidated their human resource structure, there is no reason why the project should not continue to succeed.

Recommendations

Recommendation Group 1: Inclusion and Targeting of LNOB Groups

As the project moves towards a stronger focus on targeting LNOB groups, YCL will need to consider:

1. Conducting an LNOB analysis to identify the constraints affecting and opportunities possible for specific groups within the LNOB designation to determine how to adapt or change the YCL program components to make them more accessible to these diverse LNOB groups. This analysis would need also need to include consideration of relevant gender equality issues.
2. Hiring an LNOB expert/coordinator on the regional team to support both regional and national LNOB efforts. This role could potentially be combined with a gender advisor role to create one position that focuses on the achievement of different aspects of equality for the project.
3. The project should also model its commitment to LNOB group inclusion through its future hires in other positions, and not only as experts in LNOB representation but also in more general positions such as Youth Focal Points. UNV, for example, is working to help find placements for UNVs with disabilities and could potentially be tapped to help identify qualified candidates.
4. Ensure the project document and RRF includes explicit, overarching LNOB results objectives and statements and that the project's indicators are disaggregated by the diverse types of LNOB groups and by gender as much as possible at both the regional and national levels. This would include setting more proportionate targets for the participation levels of LNOB groups and realistic timelines for how long it may take for different LNOB groups to get to the same level of achievement as YCL YSEs and Movers Volunteers from more elite groups. It also may entail defining success in different ways and consulting with the different LNOB groups to help develop a mutually agreed success vision and indicators for both the YSE and Movers components for LNOB groups that take their different challenges and enablers into account.
5. Discuss the provision of ongoing translation services with UNV's online resource team to increase LNOB group access to YCL training materials in countries where English is not the national language.

Recommendation Group 2: Mainstreaming Gender to Promote Gender Equality

6. Conduct a gender analysis as a part of the project design to determine the factors that have contributed to the gender differentials in empowerment levels for diverse youth from YCL activities and what are the comparative success levels for diverse genders of YSEs at both the regional and national levels to help guide YCL future actions to reduce these gender-based differentials in project results. This analysis also needs to integrate an intersectional analysis and could therefore be combined with the LNOB analysis.
7. To achieve gender equality results beyond the participation level, ideally the project should hire at least a half-time mid-level to senior Gender Advisor to support the regional YCL team and national Youth Focal Points. As indicated in recommendation Group #1 - 2 above this position could potentially be combined with the LNOB Advisor position. The alternative is to rely on support from the regional and sub-regional Gender Team supplemented by gender consultants for specific gender analysis and curriculum review tasks. However, generally a project of this size has its own dedicated Gender Advisor.
8. Ensure that project's design is informed by the gender analysis and includes explicit gender equality objectives with clear quantitative and qualitative targets and indicators in the RRF, accompanied by an adequate budget to achieve more transformative change from a gender equality perspective. The project design also needs to outline which strategies it will use to reduce the gender-based differentials in the project's success rates on diverse metrics beyond stating that gender will be mainstreamed.

Recommendation Group 3: National Partners and Approaches

9. To avoid on-going contracting bottlenecks at the national level which national partners found quite time consuming, YCL could work with the COs to develop a multi-year contracting process where this is possible.
10. Develop support systems (grants, guidelines, access to UNV online resources, etc.) to assist national programs localize the YCL approach.

Efficiency

Recommendation Group 4: M&E

11. Revise the M&E system overall to ensure a consistent approach to data collection and monitoring at the regional and national levels at different stages of implementation and to ensure the project captures all results to which it is contributing both directly and indirectly. This will require careful reflection on what constitutes a result for the project related to all three areas of intervention, namely: Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship as well as what should the project's key aggregated benchmarks should be. It will also require adequate full-time human resources to both redesign the M&E system and to help maintain consistent and standardized data collection at both the regional and national levels.
12. YCL's final report needs to report on both the total number of workshop attendees (i.e., seats filled) in the Movers program as well as the total number of unique workshop participants and to apply this distinction in its monitoring indicators moving forward.
13. The project's Theory of Change should be revised to add in the assumptions related to the internal and external factors that are contributing to change at each stream level as well as to integrate key cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and addressing LNOB groups.

Recommendation Group 5: Human Resources and Contracting

Sustainability

14. Currently YCL has too many staff reporting directly to one Project Manager and to the Team Leaders. The project needs to consider developing a more efficient management structure in which there are no more than 5 direct reports to each management position. As a part of this internal review the project team needs to consider what would be the most effective and efficient management and operational structure and optimum size for the regional team with existing and anticipated future project resources to support both the current workload and anticipated areas of expansion given that the project is shifting from a start-up phase to more established business model. This would also involve not taking on any new program components until the project has conducted its internal human resource review and has assessed what is reasonably possible with the project resources and with regard of what YCL can ask of its partners as well as what level of support YCL can provide to these partners.

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List of Acronyms

| | |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| COs | Country Offices |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organizations |
| EQs | Evaluation questions |
| FGDs | Focus Group Discussions |
| IsDB | Islamic Development Bank |
| GoB | Government of Bangladesh |
| LNOB | Leave No One Behind |
| NAPs | National Action Plans |
| ProDoc | Project Document |
| RPD | Regional Programme Document |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SIDS | Small Island Developing States |
| TORs | Terms of Reference |
| YCL | Youth Co:Lab |
| YSEs | Young social entrepreneurs |

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Introduction

This report outlines the findings of final evaluation of UNDP's Regional Youth Project on Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship also known as Youth Co:Lab (YCL) (2017 –2022) in the Asia-Pacific region. It is designed to help inform the future planning of the project's next phase. The first phase of the project ended in January 2022 and UNDP needed an assessment of how well the project worked as a part of this process. This is particularly important as the project has introduced multiple innovation approaches and there is a need to document which ones have worked well and why as well as which ones have not. The evaluation was conducted from mid-January to the end of June 2022.

The primary end users for the evaluation are UNDP's Bangkok Regional Hub, the YCL staff team, YCL's myriad regional and national partners and YCL's youth participants.

1.1 Report Structure

The report structure is set up as follows:

- An introductory section describing the project as well as the evaluation scope, purpose and objectives along with the evaluation methodology and sample size and approach and limitations
- It also includes a section outlining the data analysis processes followed.
- This is followed by a summary of the evaluations key findings based on a review of each of main programming element in the project's theory of change and of the evaluation questions (EQs).
- It then uses these findings to summarize lessons learnt and to make final conclusions about the findings for each evaluation question.
- Based on all of these, the report ends with a set of recommendations and then presents the report annexes.



Description of the Intervention

2.1 Evaluation Scope and Objectives

| 2.1.1 Scope

The evaluation covered project activities and results at regional level and through deep dives in specific countries, as well as data analysis available from the 28 countries and territories that have participated in the YCL project to date. It assessed the project's progress against the expected outputs and outcomes as defined in the results and resources framework (RRF) from a qualitative perspective and assessed the validity of the project theory of change (ToC) from January 2017 to January 2022.

The final evaluation also assessed the project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability and the extent to which the project adopted human rights-based and gender responsive approaches plus related lessons learned. Additionally, it provides recommendations to expand and enhance project activities and ensure the sustainability of results.

| 2.1.2 Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this final evaluation is to support accountability and facilitate learning and knowledge sharing. The evaluation's findings are designed to inform UNDP, Citi Foundation and other key stakeholders of Youth Co:Lab results of the project, consolidate lessons learnt and provide forward-looking and concrete recommendations. This includes documenting and assessing how the project has scaled up and evolved while responding to changes in the operational context caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim is to provide critical evidence-based information to guide the project's design future strategy and support UNDP and Citi Foundation's continued efforts to empower and invest in youth to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs in Asia-Pacific.

The key objectives of the final evaluation are to:

- Assess the project's performance in terms of achieving the intended project output results and contribution to outcomes according to the project's theory of change
- Assess the project's unique value proposition and sources of comparative

advantage relative to other initiatives

- Assess the project's partnership strategies and performance in achieving intended results through collaboration with ecosystem partners
- Assess the relevance, coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of the project activities and the sustainability of the results achieved towards the intended output and outcome level results at:
 - **Downstream level:** directly empowering young people
 - **Midstream level:** strengthening the ecosystem to support youth entrepreneurship, innovation, and leadership
 - **Upstream level:** working with governments to enhance the enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship, innovation, and leadership
- Identify challenges and factors that have affected project results achievement and assess the effectiveness of the approaches the project has adopted to address these challenges
- Assess to what extent the project has adopted human rights-based, gender responsive and leave no one behind (LNOB) / diversity and inclusion approaches
- Identify lessons learnt from the project and provide concrete and forward-looking recommendations to inform the design of the next project cycle
- Assess the project's alignment with UNDP's RPD and Strategic Plan and the UN Strategy on Youth and the project's contribution to mainstreaming of the youth empowerment agenda.

2.2 Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The evaluation Terms of Reference (ToRs) included a list of 44 guiding questions. During the Inception this was consolidated to 17, although there is still some overlap between the questions on partnership and regional value-added and on the gender equality and LNOB questions. For this reason and as a means of testing and validating the project's Theory of Change, in the evaluation findings, the report groups several of these evaluation questions together. They are separated out again in the evaluation conclusions.

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria and Proposed Evaluation Questions

| Evaluation Criteria | Key Questions |
|----------------------------|--|
| Relevance | 1. What are the strengths and potential gaps in terms of project design and implementation advancing youth empowerment and addressing their priority needs in the Asia-Pacific? |
| | 2. To what extent and in what ways has the project evolved to respond to changes in the operational context due to the COVID-19 pandemic? |
| Coherence | 3. To what extent is the project aligned to the strategic priorities of its key stakeholders, including key UN strategies such as the SDGs and UN Youth Strategy and private sector partners? |
| Effectiveness | 4. What are the results achieved against the project RRF indicators? |
| | 5. Which key internal and external factors have contributed to, affected and/or impeded achievement of expected results? |
| | 6. What is the added value of the project's regional approach? |
| | 7. How effective has the Youth Empowerment Alliance and related partnerships been at the regional and national levels in building an enabling environment and strengthening the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship and social innovation leadership in the Asia-Pacific? |
| | 8. How effective have the project's communications activities been in terms of increasing visibility of the youth empowerment agenda and influencing decision making among the key stakeholders in the region? |
| | 9. How effective has the project been in mainstreaming youth empowerment in UNDP at the national and regional levels and in its different thematic areas of work? |
| Efficiency | 10. Have sufficient resources (financial and human) been strategically allocated for the achievement of project results? |
| | 11. Is the partnership structure used the most effective and efficient means to support achievement of the intended results? |
| | 12. To what extent did project M&E systems provide management with a stream of data that allowed it to learn and adjust implementation accordingly? |
| Sustainability | 13. To what extent can the achieved results be expected to be sustainable? |
| Gender | 14. To what extent has the project been able to mainstream gender throughout the intervention, including in its design, implementation and monitoring? |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| | 15. To what extent have the project's actions to strengthen the capacities of the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem been gender-responsive? |
| Human Rights/ LNOB | 16. What have been the most effective strategies to empower young women and vulnerable and minority youth? |
| | 17. To what extent has the project been able to promote structural/ institutional changes to advance the inclusion and empowerment of minority youth (e.g., influence policies or regulations) |

2.3 Project Context

There are 700 million young people living in the Asia Pacific region. However, as YCL project documents outlines more than one fifth of young people are neither in employment, nor in education or training. It also notes that young people are a tremendous source of innovation, ideas and solutions who contribute to the resilience of their communities, and are advocating for climate action, inclusive and just societies and who are driving innovation and social progress. Youth 2030 – the UN Strategy on Youth launched in 2018 recognizes that to realize this agenda, young people must be empowered to lead. Thus to respond and contribute to this to this global agenda since 2017, Youth Co:Lab has sought to establish a common agenda for Asia-Pacific countries to empower and invest in youth to accelerate implementation of the SDGs.

The project document notes that 60% of the world's youth, live in the Asia Pacific and that,

The region's rate of youth unemployment (10.4%) is more than twice the rate for the labour force at large (4.1 %). The rate of youth unemployment also hides key deficits in terms of job quality. More than two in three workers (68 %) in the region are in informal employment and a quarter of workers in the region are in working poverty. The challenges of securing decent work are even greater for vulnerable and marginalized youth including young women, youth living in humanitarian settings, youth with disabilities, migrant youth, indigenous youth and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth."

Much of the Asia Pacific also operates in a context of fast-paced environmental, technological and societal change and there is a strong need to work with youth to both help them address these diverse challenges as well as to see their contribution as a part of the solution. YCL sought to do this by helping young people in the region develop what they refer to as 21st century skills and to serve as a catalyst for the launch of and scaling up of youth-led social enterprises. The idea was position young people front and centre to address the region's most pressing challenges and at the same time better equip them to build their own futures. YCL consciously and actively worked to ensure that there was a gender balance among its participants and to increase representation of young people from LNOB groups. Their focus was equality and equity of participation.

YCL has had to implement the project in this rapidly changing environment as well as the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The project also had to devise ways of working effectively with private sector partners when UNDP systems and regulations were not set up to do this readily. The project also had to deal with its own rapid growth as the demand for YCL's services ballooned quite quickly and the project had to find funding and operational models to meet this demand.

2.4 Youth Co:Lab Theory of Change

YCL is a complex regional project that spans 28 different countries in the Asia Pacific. The project's Theory of Changes is based on the premise that change to support youth social entrepreneurship and social innovation leadership within the region requires strategic supports at three levels of the entrepreneurship ecosystem. YCL defines this ecosystem as one which:

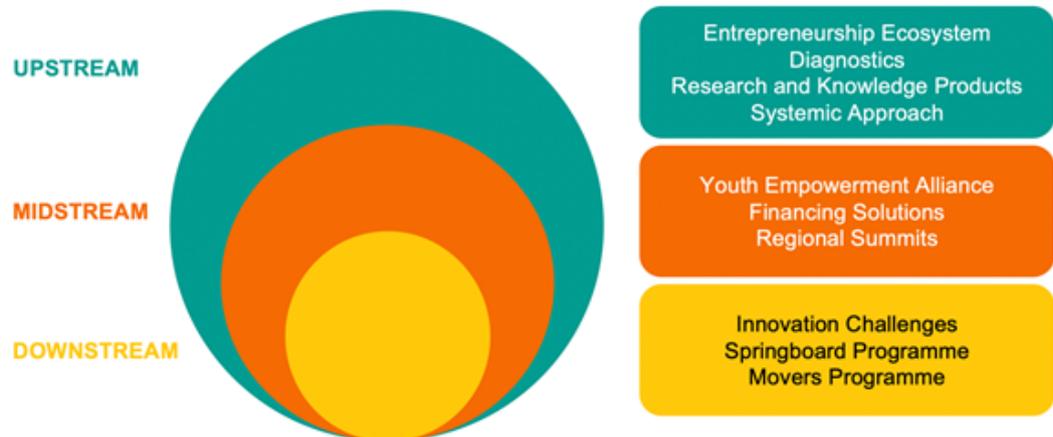
consists of various institutional and structural factors, policies and programmes and stakeholders that influence and contribute to the operating environment of young entrepreneurs and young, aspiring entrepreneurs. The ecosystem stakeholders and ecosystem builders include, but are not limited to, national and local governments, academia, educational and financial institutes and organisations, business support services, investors, non-governmental organisations, and development partners.²

Youth-led social enterprises and start-ups are at the centre of this ecosystem.

The Theory of Change diagram below outlines the key strategies and approaches used at each level of this ecosystem and assumes that change needs to take place at all three levels using different but inter-related strategies for significant change to take place. The Key Findings section reviews each type of strategy outlined at each level of the three levels of the Theory of Change to document the effectiveness, and sustainability of each as well as the extent to which they are gender-responsive and address Leave No One Behind (LNOB) groups. This allowed the evaluation to provide both a summary and analysis of YCL key results as well as provided evidence to test YCL's Theory of Change.

² YCL, 2022, State of the Ecosystem for Youth Entrepreneurship in Indonesia, p. 24.

THEORY OF CHANGE



The key assumptions in this model are that at the downstream level there is a need to work with young people in three different ways. The first, the Movers program, is to provide them with access to knowledge and leadership training related to 21st Century skills (digital literacy, soft skills and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)). This combination is expected to provide diverse groups and genders of youth with increased employability skills, exposure to and greater commitment to promoting the SDGs as well as learning about the fact that it is possible to do this by setting up social enterprises. If they choose to do so, young people in the region also have the opportunity to learn how to deliver the Movers training program themselves as volunteer trainers using a peer training and mentoring model. YCL staff also assumed that the Mover program would act as a feeder program for its social entrepreneurship programs at the downstream level.

Young people can also choose to come together in small teams to compete for funding and intensive mentoring and coaching opportunities related to the launch of their own social enterprises in a competitive innovation challenge process that takes place primarily at the national level. Both the winners of these annual, national challenges and the other teams who did not win can take part in any of the Springboard suite of activities which provides coaching and training related to social enterprise development. The key assumptions here are that these competitive processes help identify the teams of young people who are most ready and able to launch a social enterprise and that the success rate of the social enterprises that they establish will be higher with the access to coaching and mentorship and other opportunities than is typically the case for young entrepreneurs trying to do this on their own. Another key assumption is that it is the dynamism, energy, commitment and innovativeness of young people themselves that will convince decision-makers and stakeholders to start taking them more seriously – and in turn that this will influence change at the more systemic level.

At the midstream level these nascent social entrepreneurs are also given the opportunity to take part in regionally based forums to showcase their work and engage with as well as learn from governments, private sector companies, donors, academics and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working in the region. It is assumed that these regional opportunities will both broaden their horizons and perspectives as well as their markets.

The midstream level also works on developing alternative financing solutions to help the young social entrepreneurs (YSEs) raise investment capital. To date these financing solutions have included helping them gain access to regional accelerators and angel investors as well as support with developing crowd-funding and ecommerce strategies.

This is complemented by the Youth Empowerment Alliance (YEA). This is the key partnership structure YCL uses across all its project components. The YEA members are national program partners who:

- Work with YCL on research and other 'upstream' level activities
- Support the Movers program
- Support the Springboard program
- Or are otherwise involved in ecosystem development and bridging opportunities to young people and youth-led enterprises with Youth Co:Lab.

The YEA currently includes 202 national and regional partners. The assumption is that UNDP cannot deliver a project with this wide a scope by itself and that by drawing upon these diverse partners using a flexible partnership structure YCL broadens its reach, gains access to a lot of technical expertise and strengthens the sustainability of the project's results.

YCL also brings its diverse partners, donors and youth participants together in regional summits designed to increase awareness of youth social entrepreneurship issues and contributions at the regional level as well as provide networking opportunities for all summit participants. YCL holds a regional summit on an annual basis as well organizes thematic regional summits to address issues such as indigenous youth social entrepreneurship. The theory is that this regional and often international exposure helps the YCL supported YSEs to build their businesses, showcase their products and services and identify potential regional and international partnerships. It also provides a similar opportunity to showcase their work to YCL's partners. The premise is that by bringing together key actors in the ecosystem at this regional level, each group will gain a better understanding of the others and the high-level performance of the YSEs selected to participate will help influence decision-makers in the region, particularly governments, to integrate youth and social entrepreneurship issues in the work they are doing at the national level. It also, however, is intended to establish strong connections between the YSEs and diverse private sector actors.

³ YCL, Jan. 10, 2022, Final Evaluation Induction Ppt. The project also maintains an internal partner database tracker.

At the upstream level of this ecosystem approach YCL has been working with diverse regional partners and with UNDP's regional thematic teams in the Asia Pacific to develop knowledge products on strategic topics to both inform and influence key stakeholders and decision-makers in the region. This is a more generalized approach and also includes developing tools and resources which YCL is using to inform the YSEs of important issues to change business culture in the region, particularly related to business integrity and inclusiveness.

This is complemented by a national level deep dive youth entrepreneurship ecosystem diagnostic process which is highly participatory and brings diverse stakeholders and YSEs together in the analysis process. It seeks to directly influence government and other stakeholder policy and foster the increased participation of young people in government and other policy and regulatory processes. The assumption is that using a consultative process and exposing all groups to each other's perspectives will increase understanding on all sides but most particularly the perspective of governments regarding the importance of social entrepreneurship and YSEs' role in this sector. It is also based on the premise that having access to a system wide diagnostic of the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem in a country will contribute to policy change and inclusion of YSE issues in these policy changes.

2.5 YCL Links to UN Regional and Global Frameworks

UNDP designed the YCL project design to directly contribute to Outcome 2 in its Regional Program Document (RPD) for Asia and the Pacific: "Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development." Specifically, YCL was to contribute to RPD Output 2.3 with the indicative indicators being "Institutions, networks and non-state actors strengthened to promote inclusion, access to justice, and protect human rights (Strategic Plan 2018-2021: 2.2.2 and 2.2.3)" and RPD Indicator 2.3.1: "Number of policies and initiatives that strengthen the enabling environment for youth empowerment (disaggregated by sex)".

UNDP also set up the project to directly contribute to the four main objectives of the UN Strategy on Youth: 1) The UN will support youth leadership across the organization and build staff awareness and capacity on youth-related issues; 2) The UN will strengthen knowledge production and management systems; become a credible source of expertise on youth development and engagement; and facilitate evidence-based global awareness on the realities and needs of the world's young people.; 3) The UN will accelerate resource mobilization efforts and facilitate partnership solutions to advance the implementation of the UN Youth Strategy and strengthen the funding base and mechanisms for youth-focused programming and youth-led actions at all levels; and 4) the UN will seek to ensure UN entities successfully address youth issues through their programming; effectively and meaningfully engage young people in their work; and track budget allocations and expenditures.

2.6 Implementation Phase and Design Changes

While the plan is to continue the project, it officially ended its first phase of implementation in January 2022. YCL's leadership originally envisioned working in 9 countries across the region and primarily on providing supports to young social entrepreneurs at down and mid-stream levels with more limited work at the policy level of the youth social entrepreneurship ecosystem. However, the project rapidly evolved into a larger scale program, adding on the Movers component as well as expanding its Springboard suite of activities as well as growing to operate in 28 countries and territories. As the project grew in scope its original Results and Resources Framework was no longer fully applicable and it has been evolving to take more of a systems approach of progress measurement. In response, YCL also developed a detailed tracker system to determine how many young people it was reaching. However, the project was not able to develop a systematic way of measuring progress for the YSEs it supported at the national level, only regionally. This meant the evaluation needed to place a strong focus on documenting the project's results at all levels and could do this mainly from a qualitative perspective.

2.7 Project Partners

As of December 2021, Youth Co:Lab had 202 partners. The table below describes the type of partner and the roles they play as well as at which level.

Table 2: Partner Type and Role

| Regional Partners | Role Played |
|---|--|
| Other Multilateral Organizations (both UN and others) | Funding, collaborative regional research products |
| Private Sector – Citi Foundation | Lead funder, co-design of project, provision of mentoring support for young social entrepreneurs |
| Private Sector – other | Angel investors, mentoring support, accelerators, funding |
| CSOs | Increased access to specific LNOB groups at regional and national levels |
| Academic institutions | Collaborative regional research projects, collaborative thought leadership |
| National Partners | |
| Private Sector | Angel investors, mentoring support, accelerators, funding |
| CSOs | Increased access to specific LNOB groups at national levels, operation of Movers program in some countries, Springboard and Movers training, new resources and tools development |
| Academic institutions | Collaborative research projects, collaborative thought leadership |
| Government | Diverse ministries responsible for entrepreneurship, innovation and youth |

2.8 Project Numbers

Project Reach: Youth Co:Lab reports that the diverse project components have reached 200,000 young people. This includes through their Movers program, Innovation Challenges, Springboard suite of activities, regional summits and web-based learning system. This number includes 9,500 young social entrepreneurs. The total number reached may be approximately 20,000 lower as the Movers program automatic registration and certification process counts all workshop attendees as opposed to unique participants. YCL is in the process of adjusting this system to avoid this problem in the future. The numbers reached also includes approximately 101,000 reached through YCL last regional summit which was completely online. The findings section outlines in some detail what is the quality of the participation of young people in the different components.

Age Range and Background of Young People: The young people who have participated in the project generally range in age from 16 to 35. The specific age range of what constitutes a young person differs from country to country, with one common standard that can apply across the board being the age at which a young person can manage independently of their parents economically and socially. From 2017 to early 2022 Youth Co:Lab's programs were open to any young person from a country based in the Asia-Pacific. This includes countries considered to middle or high middle income. YCL has worked actively to include diverse LNOB groups in its programs such as vulnerable and minority youth such as young women, youth living in humanitarian settings, youth with disabilities, migrant youth, ethnic minorities, those living in remote areas, indigenous youth and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth. While the project has been successful in including these groups, given that much of the project's core training materials are in English, most of its participants are urban-based and university-educated.

Partner Engagement: YCL's partnership approach has meant that a wide range of partners have also been engaged in the project. The findings section provides details on the ways these different partners have both contributed to and benefited from their participation.

2.9 Project Resources

The budget outlined in the project document only pertains to its core funding. It states that the project's budget is US\$10,530,000 with the total resources required being \$13,650,000. By the time of this evaluation however, YCL had been able to leverage this core funding to a total of \$64,359,300 when taking in-kind contributions and national level support into account.

There are 10 project staff working as a part of YCL's regional team and an additional 51 working at the national level either directly for UNDP Country Offices (COs) or as National Movers Coordinators.

2.10 Implementation Constraints and Design Weaknesses

In addition, to the challenges created by COVID-19 restrictions, the main implementation constraints YCL faced was related to UNDP regulations. The project was not able to set up a youth investment fund that could disburse funds quickly within the UNDP procedural context. The project also has some gaps in its monitoring and evaluation data collection processes at the national level since YCL is also predicated on remaining quite flexible about letting each CO determine its own way of applying the YCL model. It also did not track gender participation systematically in its Movers component until recently. The project design itself indicates that it will mainstream gender equality in all project components but does not reflect this in its Results and Resources Framework (RRF).



Evaluation Approach and Methods

3.1 Methods and Analytical Approaches/frameworks

Given the scope and breath of the Youth Co:Lab project, the final evaluation used mixed methods to collect and analyze different types of data at all three of the project's stream levels and about the strategies and activities used to achieve results. Given the strong empowerment focus of the project, the analytical frameworks and approaches below incorporated different means of measuring changes in empowerment for all three streams.

The three primary approaches used included Outcome Harvesting, a modified form of Appreciative Inquiry and the use of an Empowerment Lens.

| 3.1.1 Outcome Harvesting

This approach involves linking everyday experiences to testing the theory of change. The evaluators asked the diverse stakeholder and beneficiaries to list/describe all significant changes they or their organizations had experienced due to their participation in the project. They were also asked to pinpoint what inputs or factors led or contributed to these changes. This allowed the evaluators to document all the changes that occurred during the project's implementation. Many of these were not included in the project's RRF since the project kept evolving or as they were results affecting partners and not solely project beneficiaries. This was important since empowerment-related results are often harder to define concretely and the Outcome Harvesting process helped capture different examples of what empowerment and innovation meant in different contexts and at the different stream levels for the different stakeholders and participants.

Ideally Outcome Harvesting is a process conducted using a workshop style form of data collection and analysis and can take from 2 to 6 hours to complete if applying a fully participatory process. However, given that the evaluation was conducting all its key informant interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions remotely we compressed this process to work within an hour long and a half a Focus Discussion Group format.

Table 3: Sample Outcome Harvesting Question Process

| What changes have you (or your organization) experienced since you have been involved with Youth Co:Lab? | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| Which of these are the most significant for you/your organization? | To what do you attribute these changes/ results? (Internal/External Factors) | How have any of these changes empowered you or your organization? | Which groups have benefited directly from these changes? | Which groups have not yet been able to benefit from these changes (and why)? |
| What lessons have you or your organization learned from these changes and the activities/processes used to help make them happen? | | | | |
| All these questions are closely linked to the core EQs. | | | | |

| 3.1.2 Appreciative Inquiry

This approach focused on identifying positive experiences that have taken place within an institutional context related to specific themes such as the mainstreaming of youth empowerment, entrepreneurship and innovation. It asked the key informants or focus group participants within specific institutions (predominantly, but not solely the UNDP) to identify positive experiences they have had related to specific themes as well as to which factors they attributed these experiences or changes. It was then possible to assess which processes and activities the institutions could reinforce, repeat or scale up in the future to build on these successes. Appreciative Inquiry uses a positive deviance approach but also is a process that uncovers areas in which there is a need for improvement.

Table 4: Sample Appreciative Inquiry Framework for Analysis

| What has worked well and what hasn't? For example: | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Contribution of Youth Co:Lab policy advocacy work to relevant policy change at the country levels | How have project strategies and activities at the upstream level helped build an enabling environment and strengthened the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship, leadership, and social innovation? | How effective have the project's advocacy and communications activities been in terms of increasing visibility of the youth empowerment agenda and influencing decision making among the key stakeholders in the region? | Organizational, strategic approaches and capacities to efficiently and coherently perform roles related to building of an enabling environment, ecosystem strengthening for youth entrepreneurship approaches, leadership and social innovation and processes | Incorporation of human rights, gender equality and inclusion of minority and vulnerable youth in efforts to build an enabling environment, strengthen the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship approaches, leadership and social innovation and processes |
| What lessons have emerged from Youth Co:Lab's processes related to the building of an enabling environment, ecosystem strengthening for youth entrepreneurship approaches, leadership and social innovation and processes? | | | | |

While ideally an Appreciative Inquiry process should place over the course of more than one meeting with key informants, it was possible to include questions based on this approach within a standard Key Informant interview format.

| 3.1.3 Empowerment Lens

The evaluator used an Empowerment Lens to assist in the analysis of evaluation questions related to the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of project strategies and activities to empower youth in different ways. This Empowerment Lens is based on a blend of several analytical frameworks: the Changes in Power Framework; Meaningful Participation Framework⁴ and the Hart Ladder of Participation⁵. An underlying assumption this evaluation makes is that meaningful participation is a key component of youth empowerment.

⁴ Gardner, Rebecca. Youth in Philanthropy Seminar. Session #19. 2 to 4 August 2004. Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre. Darling Harbour, Sydney. International Youth Foundation

⁵ Hart, Robert, 1997, cited in: "Ladder of Child Participation", Organizing Engagement. N.D. <https://organizingengagement.org/models/ladder-of-childrens-participation/>

Table 5 below outlines the key types of changes in empowerment and participation the evaluation assessed to determine the extent to which and in which ways young people are empowered due to their participation in project activities. The main evaluation processes used to collect this empowerment data were a survey sent to a random sample of YCL youth participants supplemented by FGDs.

Table 5: Empowerment Lens for Young People

| Changes in Power and Meaningful Participation⁶ | |
|--|---|
| Power Over | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do diverse groups and genders of youth have more power over decisions made that directly affect their lives 2. Have diverse groups and genders of young people become civically minded and wish to make a contribution of their time, ideas and talents to better their communities |
| Power Within | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Diverse groups and genders of young people have developed a sense of self-worth based on their ability to make choices and take the initiative |
| Power With | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Do diverse groups and genders of youth feel as if their opinions, needs and experiences are valued and acted on by other groups, networks, state actors, etc.? 5. Young people develop a positive sense of belonging to their community, to caring adults and to their peers. |
| Power To | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Do diverse groups and genders of youth feel empowered to take positive action? 7. Have diverse groups and genders of young people acquired a sense of responsibility and accountability, the ability to thrive despite adversity? 8. Have diverse groups and genders of young people been enabled to master sound leadership and/or entrepreneurial skills to either earn a living and/or act as social innovator in their communities, countries or globally? |

The four categories of analysis are drawn from the Changes in Power Framework commonly used in feminist analysis and the questions are adapted from that framework and the two meaningful participation frameworks. The Changes to Power framework typically looks for changes in power relations at four different levels:

⁶ Gardner, Rebecca. Youth in Philanthropy Seminar. Session #19. 2 to 4 August 2004 Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre. Darling Harbour, Sydney. International Youth Foundation

1. **Power over:** changes in subordination, exclusion, and inequalities.
2. **Power within:** a specific group's personal and collective self-reflection, self-recognition as subjects of rights and agents, and capacity development.
3. **Power with:** networking and coalition building at the local, national and transnational levels. This may be with both other organizations working with or on behalf of a specific demographic group as well as other social and even state actors.
4. **Power to:** vision and goal of empowerment, including a specific demographic group fully exercising all their rights as well as state actors implementing their role as primary duty bearers.

The other questions are adapted from a combination of Hart's recognize that forms of young people's participation vary according to their access to information, decision-making power and opportunities to take action to help determine if there was meaningful participation on the part of the young people involved in the project. Both models also acknowledge that children and young people may be subject a form of youth engagement that is adult-initiated and run and in which young people have no understanding of issues and actions, nor any input into organizing. As such, this form of engagement lacks the key elements of meaningful participation and while it may benefit young people in other ways, it does not empower them. The project's analysis therefore focused on assessing in what ways were young people empowered and to what extent.

3.2 Data Collection Methods and Triangulation Approaches

The evaluation triangulated data by looking at multiple sources of evidence for the same issues and program components and ensuring primary and secondary data compared similar themes.

| 3.2.1 Secondary Data Collection

The document review will include a review of all relevant documentation, including:

- Project documents
- Theory of change and results framework
- Project reports on quality assurance
- Annual workplans
- Activity designs
- Consolidated interim and annual reports
- Monitoring reports

⁷ Manuh, Takyiwaa. 2006. "Conceptualizing Women's Empowerment." Pathways of Women's Empowerment Research Programme Consortium, Ghana Scoping Workshop, Accra, 4-7 July, 2006.

- Beneficiary feedback data
- Training evaluation reports
- Event participant lists
- RPD ROARs
- Technical/financial monitoring reports
- Project website and communications
- Other relevant websites
- Websites of young entrepreneurs

| 3.2.2 Primary Data Collection

The primary data collection process included:

- **Key Informant Interviews** with UNDP staff (from the regional Asia Pacific office, selected Country Offices, regional and national partners, government officials in five countries, Youth Co:Lab staff, Citi Foundation staff, funders/donors, civil society organizations, private sector actors, and academics.
- **Focus discussion groups** with young people who have participated in the Movers Program, Springboard program, Regional Asia-Pacific Forums on Youth Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (APFYLIE), Youth Co:Lab Summits and the Regional Dialogue on Youth Indigenous Social Entrepreneurship, Young Entrepreneurs ensuring that there was a balanced and proportionate representation by gender, and diverse groups of vulnerable and minority youth as well as those that have dropped out of these programs or were not selected for higher levels of participation in the national Innovation Challenges.
- **Online surveys** sent to as 8000 project's participants and 18 partner organizations.
- **1 video interview case study** with a Young Social Entrepreneur from an indigenous community (to be developed and presented separately from this report).
- **4 additional short case studies** focused on Midstream – Financing Solutions, Regional Summits, Youth Empowerment Alliance and the Upstream Approach on the Ecosystem Diagnostics Approach

| 3.2.3 Sample and Sampling Frame

In consultation with the YCL team and evaluation reference group the evaluation identified six countries that provided a representative sample from the region looking at a combination of factors such as country income classification, types of YCL program components implemented in the country, population size, sub-regional representation. Based on these criteria and discussions, it was decided to conduct FGDs with youth participants and partners from 6 countries, **Bangladesh, China, Samoa, Singapore, Viet Nam and Thailand.**

The selection criteria for the youth participants included a purposive mix of young people from each program component, including those who had experienced less success through their participation and the inclusion of a representative sample of youth participants from LNOB groups. The focus was to be on the 6 countries identified for a deeper dive and was to include several FGDs with participants who did not speak English. National supporting partners were to be included in a combination of FGDs and KIIs also drawn from the 6 sample countries as were interviews with UNDP national youth staff along with a FGD with national UNDP youth staff from countries in which there had been challenges with staff turnover. Regional level interviews were to include regional partners, YCL regional staff and UNDP Regional Thematic Advisors.

The sampling size proposed in the Inception Report was to use a combination of 19 FGDs at the regional and national levels which would reach between 119 to 153 people, the majority of whom would be youth. There were also 53 KIIs recommended at the country and regional levels, targeting between 64 to 74 informants. The combined total of FGDs and KIIs is 72 and a total range of evaluation participants between 183 and 224 persons. The goal was to achieve a minimum of 200 evaluation participants to ensure substantive coverage for the 10,000 reported project beneficiaries. This included respondents from two on-line surveys for participants and partners.

Although the evaluation sent invitations to slightly more than the numbers targeted for youth participants only around 50% agreed to take part in the evaluation. Consequently, the evaluation consulted with 62 youth participants through 14 FGDs and 11 KIIs. Three-quarters of the way through the data collection process we observed that the numbers were a bit lower for women and members of the LNOB groups so we organized additional FGDs and KIIs to balance inputs from these perspectives. This included KIIs with 4 youth participants from Nepal, India and Timor Leste. When combined with the 121 respondents to the youth participants the evaluation consulted with 183 young people.

Table 6: Number and Types of Youth Participants

| | F | M | O | M/V+ | | F | M | M/V/O* |
|---|--|-----------|------------|-------------|--|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Youth Participants Consulted through FGDs or KIIs | 30 | 30 | 2 | 15 | Youth Participants Consulted through survey (1 skipped the gender question so n=120) | 58 | 62 | 45 |
| | % | % | % | % | | % | % | % |
| | 50 | 50 | 3.2 | 24.1 | | 48.3 | 51.6% | 37.5% |
| Overall Totals | 88 Women (48.3%) / 92 Men (50.5%) / 2 Other Gender (1%) = 182 | | | | | | | |

+ Minority, marginalized or vulnerable and includes gender minorities

*Detailed breakdown of the LNOB survey participants, including gender minorities outlined in Key Findings section.

The youth participant survey focused on youth empowerment issues. There were 121 respondents to the youth survey, with invitations to take part sent to 8,000 YCL youth participants selected randomly from participant lists across the range of YCL's downstream activities. There was a fairly equitable gender balance in the youth participant respondents and 37.5% of the youth respondents self-identified as belonging to either a gender minority and/or a marginalized or vulnerable group.

YCL sent partner surveys to 18 partners selected purposively to represent the downstream, midstream and upstream levels. The evaluation's original intent had been to send partner surveys to the remaining 181 partners but YCL did not have the capacity to reach this wide a group since they required individual invitations. There were 13 responses to the partner surveys which while a high response rate (72%) was too small a group for the evaluation to use the survey results for quantitative triangulation purposes. The report's analysis therefore used the survey partner data to triangulate the qualitative data from partners gained from the FGDs and KIs.

The evaluation also conducted 2 discussion chat groups with youth participants from the youth participant surveys focused on getting input from them on future strategies and recommendations for Youth Co:Lab. The evaluation sent invitations to take part in the discussion chat to the 80 youth participant survey respondents who indicated they were interested in doing so. We held one discussion chat for Movers participants and one for participants from the Springboard suite of activities. Ten youth took part in these chats but 2 had connectivity issues and were unable to fully join in the discussion.

The evaluators asked each FGD participant and key information variations of similar questions based on the evaluation matrix and directly linked the evaluation questions. This also assisted in the triangulation process. While the evaluation reached a significantly higher percentage of marginalized and minority youth given the future increased focus of YCL on LNOB groups the idea was to ensure that their voices, concerns, and successes were heard.

3.3 Ethical considerations

The evaluation applied core UNDP evaluation principles to ensure that it is conducted in a way that was responsive to gender equality and human rights as well as was in alignment with the UNEG norms and standards, the UNEG ethical guidelines. These core evaluation principles include:

- Fair power relations and empowerment
- Independence and impartiality
- Transparency
- Quality and credibility
- Intentionality and use of evaluation
- Application of ethics practices to ensure confidentiality for and the safety of evaluation respondents and participants

- Development of a data management plan for transparency of data storage principles
- A feedback and consultation processes and evaluation methodologies designed to foster ownership of the evaluation results and recommendations.

3.4 Background Information on Evaluation Team

YCL originally had allocated 50 days of work for a single consultant to conduct this regional evaluation. As a part of the inception process UNDP/YCL agreed to add additional resources to the evaluation team to assist with the interviewing process given the broad scope of the project and time zone and accessibility issues. The lead evaluator hired still had prime responsibility for managing and conducting interviews and FGDS and for drafting the report, with substantial logistical support from YCL's Monitoring and Evaluation staff.

The Lead Evaluator, **Dana Peebles**, conducted national level KIIs and FGDS as well as all the regional interviews and most of the UNDP staff interviews. Ms. Peebles has 40 years' experience in international development with a specialization in gender equality and youth participation. She has either led or been a team member in 30 global, regional and national level evaluations, three of which focused on youth participation. She also has expertise on women's economic empowerment, has run her own social enterprise for 26 years and has extensive experience in the Asia-Pacific.

The second member of the interview/facilitation team was **Yamei Du**, a regional consultant who was responsible for conducting 14 FGDS and 7 KIIs, primarily at the national level. Ms. Du is a Research and data analysis consultant who works in international development. For the last two years, she worked for the ILO focusing on labor economic research in Asia and the Pacific region as well as has worked in the private sector as a financial analyst for several years. She has an MSc in Public Policy and Human Development from the Maastricht University, the Netherlands.

3.5 Evaluation Limitations and Mitigation Strategies

We have outlined the main evaluation limitations and related mitigation strategies:

Table 7: Evaluation Limitations and Mitigation Strategies

| Limitation | Mitigation Strategy |
|---|---|
| Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions the data collection process had to be conducted remotely. This created a number of accessibility challenges for the evaluation process: | To ensure the full coverage proposed for the sampling required the data collection period was extended to a duration of six weeks and additional interviewers based in the region were added to the team. |

| Limitation | Mitigation Strategy |
|---|--|
| Use of internet-based communications platforms limited access to some potential participants based on connectivity and internet cost issues. | When connectivity was an issue, the interview team rescheduled the interviews. Youth participants also had the alternative of taking part in the online survey. |
| <p>The project covers a wide range of countries and a fairly complex set of strategies at multiple levels. The sampling process proposed while purposive in approach, may miss some significant project successes and/or challenges in the countries not included in the sample.</p> <p>Given the time difference between the lead evaluator's location and that of the potential evaluation respondents it would have been difficult to cover the full sample size agreed in the inception process with solely the lead evaluator in the time frame planned.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Youth Co:Lab team provided feedback on the country sample and project component selection and help identify any gaps that needed to be addressed by the sampling approach as well as provided substantial project documentation. • The online surveys allowed for participation of diverse groups and genders of youth participants from countries not included in the country study sample and regional KIIs. • The Evaluation Manager was able to find 3 qualified volunteers from UNDP offices in the region who assist with selected interviews. • Youth Co:Lab also hired a regional consultant to assist with the FGD and KIIs. |
| Another important limitation was that not all evaluation participants speak English fluently. | Youth Co:Lab/UNDP provided interpreters for FGDs and KIIs as needed. |
| Not all of the quantitative data needed to answer some of the evaluation questions credibly was available, particularly at the national level. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Co:Lab provided considerable human resource/logistics support to help obtain the data needed. • The evaluation used multiple lines of evidence process are proposed to help obtain the data needed from more than one source. • Where this data was not available the report has indicated this as a gap. • The evaluation also focused on qualitative analysis where quantitative data was not available. |
| Results are tracked at the country level but there are no country-specific annual/multi-annual targets for these results. This limits the evaluation's ability to assess effectiveness and efficiency at the national level in a comparable and systematic way to the regional results and it was not possible to confirm some of quantitative data outlined in the evaluation matrix. | The country studies focused on a more in-depth qualitative analysis of YCL approaches and results within the countries selected. |
| The partners survey was supposed to be sent to all partners not interviewed through KIIs and YCL was only able to send these to a small sample. | The analysis drew on the qualitative data provided in the partner surveys as well as used the surveys to triangulate feedback received from partners in the FGDs and KIIs. |



Data Analysis Approach

4.1 Theory of Change Mapping

The evaluation methodology drew upon the project's theory of change to help determine both the analytical approaches and which data collection methods to use. The Theory of Change also informed the development of the evaluation matrix which the evaluator has referenced through contribution analysis and multiple lines and levels of evidence as well as has provided a rating for the matrix indicators for each indicator (refer to Annex 2). This Theory of Change mapping is particularly applicable to address what have been the most effective project strategies to achieve Youth Co:Lab's key results at the downstream, mid-stream and upstream levels. The analysis has examined those in detail to determine whether the results documented confirm the Theory of Change assumptions and the extent to which these do so. The evaluation has also included a draft revised Theory of Change to reflect internal and external factors in the Conclusions section which highlights the factors that need to be in place for the different stream levels to interact and support each other effectively.

4.2 Contribution Analysis

The evaluation used contribution analysis to develop an overall 'performance story' for Youth Co:Lab's work on the empowerment of diverse groups and genders of youth social entrepreneurs and social innovation leaders and its work with its diverse partners. It has synthesized evidence from secondary sources, FGDs, KIIs and the case studies to assess plausible contributions observed and documented changes as well as explored alternative explanations (internal and external change factors). The evaluation used simplified Outcome Harvesting and Appreciative Inquiry methodologies as specific tools to both collect data and to inform the evaluation analysis.

4.3 Capacities Assessment

The evaluation used data from semi-structured interviews, FGDs and secondary document synthesis to identify stakeholder capacity, gaps, strategic opportunities and vulnerabilities. The capacity assessment focused on:

1. YCL ability to form strong coalitions or partnerships related to youth social entrepreneurship and innovation
2. Acquisition of 21st Century skills among diverse groups and genders of youth
3. Key stakeholders and diverse youth having access to a strong knowledge and research base related to youth in the region inclusive analytical tools
4. Ability of key stakeholders to adopt and implement inclusive youth social entrepreneurship and innovation policies and programs
5. Development of effective messaging related to youth social entrepreneurship and innovation.
6. Ability of the project to maintain the flow of positive benefits and services (efficiency and sustainability).

The evaluation presents this analysis in the Key Findings sections as well as summarizes its significance in the Conclusions.

4.4 Audience Analysis

The evaluation included an assessment of the audience for the project's knowledge products and tools. The evaluator collected this data using with targeted interviews, data from the online surveys, relevant website analytics and YCL's other social media analytic reports. The data from this analysis feeds into the final evaluation analysis (multiple lines and types of evidence). The analysis also assessed the extent to which the effect of YCL's communications activities could be assessed at the upstream level.

4.5 Empowerment Analysis

Based on these multiple lines of analysis and particularly drawing upon the data from the online youth participant survey, the evaluation also provided an empowerment analysis. This examined and assessed the different ways in which the Youth Co:Lab project has contributed to the empowerment of diverse groups and genders of youth in the Asia-Pacific region.



Key Findings

5.1 YCL Theory of Change

The report has grouped key aspects of the EQs in the review of the main strategies and approaches used at each level of the project's ecosystem to assist in the assessment and analysis of Youth Co:Lab's Theory of Change. You can find separate sections for the remaining EQs after this more in-depth programmatic review.

For each main strategy/approach outlined at each level of YCL' Theory of Change, the evaluation has sought to answer the following Evaluation Questions and has addressed the main conclusions related to each EQ based on these findings.

Effectiveness

EQ 3: To what extent is the project aligned to the strategic priorities of its key stakeholders, including key UN strategies and private sector partners?

EQ 4: What are the results achieved against the project RRF indicators?

EQ 5: Which key internal and external factors have contributed to, affected and/or impeded achievement of expected results?

EQ 14: To what extent has the project been able to mainstream gender throughout the intervention, including its design, implementation and monitoring?

EQ 15: To what extent have the project's actions to strengthen the capacities of the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem been gender-responsive?

Sustainability

EQ 13: To what extent can the achieved results be expected to be sustainable?

The following are the outputs against which YCL has been measuring its progress *(the evaluator has added the identification of at which stream level each takes place)*:

Output 1: Improved ecosystem on youth empowerment in Asia and the Pacific to achieve SDGs. *(Downstream, mid-stream and upstream)*

Output 2: Empowered Youth (with focus on marginalized groups) avail opportunities for expanding their leadership and entrepreneurship capabilities. *(Downstream)*

Output 3: Enhanced learning and skills development programmes for youth entrepreneurship and leadership are designed and delivered through regional dialogues. *(Downstream, mid-stream and upstream)*

Output 4: Advocacy, Research and knowledge exchange Initiative informs new youth entrepreneurship initiatives. *(Upstream)*

Output 5: Innovative financing solutions are leveraged for youth entrepreneurship. *(Midstream)*

Since YCL evolved into an iterative program its results and resources framework does not reflect all project results. For this reason, the evaluation conducted a qualitative data collection and analysis process using a modified form of Outcome Harvesting and Appreciative Inquiry to document and analyze what the project's key results have been from perspectives of youth participants, regional and national partners, UN partners, regional and national UNDP and YCL staff. It does this for each stream as well as compares these results against the project's RRF supplementing the Outcome Harvesting and Appreciative Inquiry data with additional information from YCL's tracking system and progress documents, amongst others.

Section A.

Downstream Strategies

5.2 Downstream Strategy: Movers Program

The Movers program was set up to make YCL more inclusive. YCL staff see the Springboard suite of activities as a “winner takes all” approach. It targets the best of the best and plays an important role in fostering the next generation of young social entrepreneurs. The Movers program allows for a wider range of participation of young people. YCL staff see Movers as a way to open doors for young people and for them to engage and practice their skills. The premise is that even if they do not become Volunteers, each participant takes their

knowledge and skills with them and shares these more informally with other young people. There is also some evidence from the evaluation's youth participants survey that Movers is acting as a feeder program for the Springboard suite of activities.

Key Finding 1:

The Movers program has been quite effective at reaching and engaging large numbers of youth of diverse genders and introducing them to the SDGs and core skills related to social innovation leadership.

The Movers program offers training to young people on multiple topics, including (but not limited to):

1. Sustainable development goals
2. Gender equality
3. Leadership skills (how to be an effective leader and inspire people)
4. Emotional regulation
5. Social entrepreneurship
6. Climate action
7. Presentation skills
8. Organizing online and offline events

The aim of the program is to teach **21st Century skills, i.e., digital literacy, soft skills and the SDGs** to build a sense of community social responsibility, foster social innovation leadership among diverse groups of youth as well as to enhance their employability skills. Feedback from both the Movers participants FGDs and the online survey indicated that they are definitely acquiring these skills as well as have found that the increased connectedness the program offers has been very beneficial. The Movers Volunteers were more likely to report having experienced a direct link between their participation in the program and finding employment than general participants and this latter group highlighted how much they had learned about time management, problem solving and facilitation skills. Both Movers Volunteers and participants indicated that they experienced increased confidence and awareness of how they could contribute to the SDGs in their communities.

Finding 2:

The total number of attendees in Movers workshops is not the same as the total number of participants.

Based on their automated workshop tracker YCL reported that 43,022 young people had taken part in Movers workshops by the end of December 2021. However, YCL staff also indicated that this figure represents the total number of attendees in the workshops as opposed to the total number of distinct/unique program participants and that on average each Movers participant takes part in 1.66 workshops⁸. Using that average as a guide, the evaluation suggests an estimated, adjusted total number of participants for Movers to the end of 2021 of 25,916 young people.

Finding 3:

Only a small percentage of those who take part in the core Movers training go on to become Movers Volunteers. Those who do, however, report significant positive changes in their lives and skills.

In evaluation interviews YCL staff reported that approximately 1% of those who take part in the first phase workshops go on to become Movers Volunteers. They based this figure on the fact that between 2019 and 2021 their automated registration tracker indicated that 506 young people were trained to be Movers facilitators. However, they calculated the 1% figure against total workshop attendances as opposed to based on the total number of unique participants. Using the estimated adjusted figure the percentage of Movers participants who went on to become Movers Volunteers may actually be closer to 2% (standing at approximately 1.95%) which is double YCL's calculation. Based on the premise that YCL needs to adjust the way in which they count the total number of participants, this likely means that there are higher rates of Movers trainees who go on to become Movers Volunteers.

| 5.2.1 Results Cited by Movers Volunteers and Trainees in Evaluation FGDs

SDGs are a life skill we should all know about. If there was more awareness among young people about this, including at the high school level, then we will all have a better world.

Iris –

Movers Program China

⁸ To establish this figure YCL collected data based on the tracking of youth participants using a trial methodology as follows: Youth 1 has attended Workshop A, B, C (3 workshops); -Youth 2 has attended workshop A (1 workshop); -Youth 3 has attended Workshop C (1 workshop); -Youth 4 has attended Workshop B, C (2 workshops). This showed an average of 1.75 attended by these 4 youths. YCL then applied the same process to a sample of 5795 youth, which gave them the average number of 1.66. Thus, the ratio is not based on the total number of attendances, but an estimate based on a smaller sample.

The evaluation conducted 6 FGDs with 28 Movers Volunteers and young people trained by the Movers Volunteers in Bangladesh (10), China (10) and Viet Nam (9). Of these, 5 (17.8%) were from minority or vulnerable groups. This included 1 indigenous participant, 1 who identifies as LGBTQI, 1 from a remote, rural area and 2 with disabilities (2 female and 3 male).

The most significant results and changes in their lives which the Movers Volunteers and trainees who participated in FGDs reported are summarized in the table below.

Table 8: Most Significant Results Reported by Movers Volunteers and Trainees FGDs

| Result or Life Change | Factors Leading to these Changes |
|---|---|
| Gained greater understanding of what sustainable development is and how to apply this to their lives and in their communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movers Volunteers training • Movers Volunteer mentoring by other Movers Volunteers • Ongoing support from Movers Coordinators |
| Gained greater sense of self-confidence and ability to speak in public effectively | |
| Learned how to apply innovative ways to solve problems | |
| Learned how to cooperate effectively in teams and are able to organize events both on and offline | |
| Developed personal skills such as how to manage anxiety | |
| Learned how to be leaders | The training offered and through observation of role models provided by other Movers Volunteers |
| Strongly increased sense of connection and belonging to a community, particularly during COVID-19 lockdowns | Online community developed through Movers program and follow-up mentoring and outreach by Movers Staff and Volunteers |
| Exposure to international perspectives and ways of thinking | |
| Went on to develop a social action project in their communities (over 50% of FGD participants) | Movers' training, examples and support provided by Movers Volunteers |
| Became aware of the possibility of creating social enterprises as one form of employment and community action | |

One FGD participant was also able to post information about sustainability and the SDGs on a WE Chat platform on which they have 1.5 million followers. Others indicated that they shared what they learned about gender equality, sustainability and disability inclusion, etc. on social media and through the community workshops they organized. One Movers Volunteer from a remote, rural indigenous community was able to organize multiple workshops in his community and successfully recruited and mentored another 10 indigenous youth to take part as Movers Volunteers. The Movers Volunteers with disabilities tended to focus on outreach to other youth of diverse genders with disabilities. However, their training initiatives were not restricted to this community. Another Movers Volunteer, although not from a gender minority, indicated that he actively works to reach the third gender community at his university. This feedback provides a small snapshot of how Movers is working to be inclusive.

| 5.2.2 Results Reported by YCL Staff

Eight YCL staff interviewed at the regional and national levels who work directly with the Movers program have observed the following as the main results among the diverse groups of youth involved with Movers:

- Creation of a self-sustaining community with 21st Century skills, including leadership, digital, communications, event planning and mentoring skills and finding ways to bring these skills to those who do not traditionally have access to these opportunities.
- Increased awareness of the SDGs and social impact and enterprise approach
- Increasing numbers of participants have learned how to use the skills they have learned to help find jobs
- Movers participants, especially the Volunteers are able to connect to other youth in the Asia Pacific which broadens their horizons. This has been especially important for them during COVID lockdowns and the related social isolation.
- Youth Volunteers are now bringing in new partners themselves.
- Once participants become part of the Movers community they can access many other opportunities such as the Springboard suite, green jobs fairs, etc.
- Some Movers participants have also set up their own social enterprises (confirmed in the Movers participants FGDs).

Builds Confidence and Presentation Skills

Pakistan: One young woman there was part of a group of participants from a masjid. Most were young men who were afraid to present in English. This young woman took part in a workshop with both aspiring and experienced Movers. She has gone on to conduct 10 workshops and is at ease talking to a room full of men who come from conservative backgrounds. Equally important is that they have been taking what she presents to them seriously.

Cambodia: One 16-year-old girl trained has gained so much confidence and skills that she is now serving as a sub-national coordinator for the Movers program there.

Another YCL staff noted that those who don't become trainers, still participate, and get a better understanding of what is entrepreneurship, what kind of entrepreneurship traits they might have such as being open minded and curious, etc. In the Movers training the young people do simulations as if they were a business owner and identify what challenges and issues they would work on, and who would be their customers. At the end of each workshop the facilitators ask the participants what their action plan is to use the knowledge they have learned. The Volunteers follow up with them to see if they have acted on these action plans and serve as mentors for any youth participants who are interested in staying connected and learning and doing more. This approach introduces the Movers participants to the possibility of alternatives to salaried employment as well as problem solving skills.

Table 9: Key Factors Supporting Significant Results of Movers program Reported by YCL Staff

| Factors Leading to these Changes |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of formal certificates from the UNDP helps keep trainees and volunteers motivated as it carries considerable weight with future employers and with the youth themselves |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The passion and energy of the youth to see achievements in their own communities and being given the tools and training to be able to do this. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Movers there is no UNDP branding for partners due to compliance issues to make it easier to be flexible in the project approaches, especially when working with private sector and CSO partners. There is, however, UNDP visibility and use of logos on the youth participant workshop certificates and this is regarded quite highly by them. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COs are acknowledging the extent of the program's reach, especially with LNOB groups. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The peer-to-peer approach Movers applies a no judgement principle which encourages the diverse groups of youth to speak out and makes them feel as if they are meeting in a safe space. This is one key to its effectiveness. |

Factors Leading to these Changes

- The availability of quality tools and core online resources to guide Movers Volunteers helps train the Volunteers to be facilitators to take action themselves.
- Partnerships with youth organizations has been a key to connecting with young people to widen Movers' outreach.
- The program is an easy one in which to take part and participants can also become trainers easily

Finding 4:

Although the Movers program has successfully adopted inclusive approaches and reached out to more marginalized and vulnerable communities, the majority of their trainees come from urban areas and are university students.

The participants survey indicated that 72% of the respondents who have been involved in the Movers program came from urban areas and around 28% from rural areas. The rural/urban split may be due, in part, to the fact that an urban, educated group is more likely to have the time and capacity to be able to learn online in English and exposure to have exposure and access to different social media sites and social networks to find out about the Movers training. Someone who is poor, has less education and less access to the internet is far more likely to be struggling just to survive and thus less able to take part in a program such as Movers easily.

YCL did not track the gender or marginalized status of the Movers program during its first five years of implementation but has started to do so. A manual count of the LNOB data from the Movers' automated registration system found that of 5767 participants, 416 self-identified as being from a marginalized or disadvantaged group. That represents 7.2% of that total. The registration tracker does not yet ask participants to identify to which LNOB group or groups.

YCL staff are also very conscious of the elite nature of the project's reach and have been working to either help Movers Volunteers gain entry to more marginalized and vulnerable communities and to reach and recruit Movers Volunteers from these communities so that these Volunteers can establish direct trust relationships and connections there more readily. These Volunteers also have a more in-depth understanding of these communities and can tailor the training materials and their outreach strategies to suit the local context. However, as it takes time to organize workshops and adapt the content to the local context and sometimes also provide a financial commitment to cover expenses, especially for in-person workshops, some Movers Volunteers indicated that YCL will likely need to adjust its volunteer approach and model in these communities to take these factors into account in its Movers model.

| 5.2.3 Sustainability of Movers Program Results

Finding 5:

As the program moves back to in-person workshops the cost of mounting these is likely to be a factor that limits the extent of future outreach, particularly to more marginalized or vulnerable communities in remoter communities.

There is a powerful hunger for in-person contact among the Movers Volunteers and trainees. Those working with minority and marginalized communities also think in-person workshops will be the most effective way to reach these communities in the future. This is because the more remote communities, for example, may not have good internet connectivity or find internet access too expensive. Other groups may not speak either English or the national language, have privacy concerns going online if they are from a gender minority or other group that faces stigma and discrimination due to their identity. Some may not have much experience learning online or may distrust outsiders.

The Movers Volunteers did have concerns that:

1. They are currently paying for some of the costs of running in-person Movers workshops themselves and have said that they will need support with these expenses to be able to continue doing this work in the future. This would cover the cost of transportation, basic workshop hospitality expenses and the printing of workshop certificates for trainees without internet or printer access.
2. In some countries and communities, the Movers Volunteers need access to training materials in local languages, both at the national and community levels.

Finding 6:

The Movers program is underfunded for what it is trying to achieve in some countries. This may undermine its the long term sustainability and growth.

While YCL provides considerable flexibility for each country implementing its activity one partner organization and a Youth Focal Point indicated that the training targets the project set for their countries for the small amount of funding provided were far too high for them to achieve with the funding of \$5,000 provided. In the end, the partner in question was able to both meet and surpass the targets set for them but only because they embarked on an inten-

sive fundraising campaign to generate most of the funds needed to reach the original target. It took the full attention of several of their staff which, at that time, was beyond their capacity and meant they had to divert their staff from other work. The organization wound up taking different directions as a result which they overall saw as positive, but it was a difficult and painful process for them.

Part of the problem is that YCL appears to provide the same level of funding to a country to set up and run its Movers program regardless of the size of its youth population. A one size fits all approach does not work well in this context. Several YCL staff also observed that the UNDP COs do not take them seriously because the Movers program does not really come with much funding and that they need more support to fundraise at the national level from the regional YCL hub.

5.3 Downstream Strategy: Springboard Suite of Activities

Over time YCL developed a series of different, inter-related program components to support the establishment and growth of youth-led social enterprises. The project refers to these as follows:

- **Springboard** - an umbrella term used to cover all our activities related to the support young social entrepreneurs' support
- **Springboard PLUS** - an incubation program for young social entrepreneurs that usually runs from Jan - May annually.
- **Springboard HUB** - the ongoing resource infrastructure that the young social entrepreneurs can tap into throughout the year for dedicated support.

The most successful of the winning teams in each country's innovation challenges and Springboard programs can be selected to take part in YCL's diverse regional forums. With the switch to an online regional summit format due to COVID-19 restrictions YCL was able to open up its regional summits to a wider group of young social entrepreneurs. This also turned out to be a more cost-effective way to operate. However, project staff received considerable feedback that there is still a need for the kind of networking possible from an in-person meeting. Therefore, they have decided to make the 2022 regional summit to be held in Singapore a hybrid event.

| 5.3.1 Background Data from Youth Participants Survey

Of the 121 respondents to the youth participants survey, 94 had participated in at least one of Springboard activity. A significant gender difference that appeared in the survey responses is that more respondents were male, standing at 54.2% and 45.7% respectively. This 8.5% difference stood out as YCL YSE tracker indicated that the project was fairly gender-balanced in terms of numbers of participants (50.5% female, 47.4% male and 1.9% other gender)⁹ and YCL

staff reported that young women are often in the majority in terms of being interested in setting up social enterprises. These figures, however, are slightly skewed as the tracker generally shows lower numbers of women participants everywhere except in New Zealand where female participation in the program is significantly higher bringing up the gender balance percentage for the project overall. Calculated without the New Zealand figures, the Springboard suite participation rates are 51.7% male and 48.2% female. This is just a difference of 3.5% - which is still fairly close to gender balanced, but with the balance slightly more in favour of male YSEs. The evaluation also observed that there were fewer women among the youth participants in the FGDs and had to organize additional FGDs to ensure a gender balance. The question this raises is what factors led to fewer women being able or willing to participate in the evaluation process and is one that merits further discussion with YCL. None of the respondents self-identified as being from a gender minority in this question, but 8 did in a subsequent question related to minority status.

Of the 91 persons who answered this latter question, 38 (41.7%) self-identified as belonging to a minority or vulnerable group. This is significantly higher than the approximately 10% that YCL staff indicated as the project's target for minority and vulnerable groups. This may reflect the efforts YCL has made to ensure that the Springboard suite of activities reaches minority and vulnerable groups and/or that those from these groups were keen to ensure that their voices and perspectives were heard. In the FGDs, the majority of those who took part were from urban areas and university educated, with 5 (17.8%) self-identifying as being from minority and groups. YCL's National Program Participant Tracker shows that 5.4% of the Springboard suite participants were from gender and other minorities as well as marginalized or vulnerable groups. This figure is below YCL's target of 10% representation from these groups, but their tracker was also not able to capture this level of detail in some countries. Therefore, the 5.4% number is likely a bit lower than the representation from these groups actually reached.

Not surprisingly, many had participated in more than one YCL activity. This included 68 (72.3%) of the 94 respondents who appear have started their YCL journey with the Movers program. This provides some statistical evidence to the YCL staff assertion that **the Movers program is acting as a feeder program for the Springboard suite of activities.**

⁹ Based on summary from YCL National Program Participant Tracker 2017 to 2021. There are no figures available for other genders for Sri Lanka.

| 5.3.2 Results – Youth Participant Perspective

Finding 7:

The youth participants who have had access to mentoring and business coaching from YCL have experienced significant transformations in both how they perceive their future possibilities and being able to move their social enterprises from the ideas stage to reality.

The evaluation team held FGDs with 29 youth participants from the Springboard suite. Of this group, 13 were female, 11 male, 1 self-identified as belonging to a gender minority and 10 fell into the category of being from a marginalized or vulnerable group. This included 3 people with disabilities (2 hearing impaired), 2 from ethnic minorities, 3 from remote areas, and 1 living in a conflict situation. They live in Bangladesh, China, India, Nepal, Singapore and Samoa.

The main changes in their lives that these YCL participants attributed to the project included:

- Having established their own social enterprises, with 5 of these now operating internationally in more than 5 countries and one working with other UN agencies
- Being in the process of expanding their social enterprises
- Obtaining a job with an international development organization
- Learning how to pitch their business ideas confidently and effectively
- Making connections with like-minded people
- Can now manage business management skills independently
- Gained access to other opportunities both inside their own countries and in the region, with several travelling outside their countries for the first time and gaining a more international perspective as a result
- Learned that a business could have a social impact as well as be for profit
- Gained a community and family to lean on during the tough process of starting and building a business
- Seven of the 29 FGD participants also shared the fact that their social enterprises have grown to the extent where they have employees, ranging from 4 to 25.¹⁰

¹⁰ Noting that this question was not asked of all FGD participants

Survey results filtered to include only those who had participated in at least one Springboard Suite activity¹¹ confirmed several of these results, summarized in the table below.

Table 10: Results Attributed to Participating in YCL by National Program Participants Surveyed

| Result | Number+ | % |
|---|---------|------|
| Have become a leader and social innovator | 85 | 95.5 |
| Earn a living | 53 | 60.9 |
| Start a social enterprise | 59 | 69.4 |

+ n=89

It is difficult to quantify the future benefits to their respective societies of these young people having become leaders and social innovators. This would require a longitudinal study using a control group of similar diverse groups of youth who have not had this kind of support. However, the majority of the YCL partners interviewed observed that the energy and dynamism of the YCL participants was both impressive and making a positive contribution to their communities as well as has influenced how they perceive youth. It is also clear that the confidence, skills acquired, and knowledge gained have given the diverse youth concerned a definite leg up in terms of their current success, with over 60% attributing being able to earn a living and 69% being able to start a social enterprise to having participated in YCL. **Many FGD participants indicated that they would not have had the confidence, skills or vision to start a social enterprise without the support they received from YCL.** While they thought that the business coaching mentoring and seed funding were important, they also cited the ongoing encouragement they received from YCL staff and mentors as being particularly important.

A few sample success stories include the following:

A female doctor in the Pacific Islands was able to establish a clinic providing women's health services with a "pay it forward" option in which clients who are better off can contribute to pay for the services of women from the rural or more remote and poorer areas of Samoa to have access to these health services for free. The clinic has been so successful the owner is about to open a second clinic and has future plans to work towards finding ways to ensure that any woman who needs it should be able to have her first pregnancy scan free of cost.

¹¹ This included any Springboard related training or mentoring, participation in national dialogues and/or regional summits, and innovation challenges.

In one South Asian country another team was in the process of setting up a counselling service when COVID-19 hit. Their original partners then lost faith in the social enterprise and withdrew their support, so they were devastated. Through YCL they were able to obtain seed funding, shift their enterprise services online and received substantial coaching and mentoring. Their enterprise was able to provide 3,000 online sessions with the funding they received through YCL. They observed that *“this completely changed the game as this service is something that people feel is very important for their lives. UNDP also held a special challenge for the provision of psychosocial support which had many rules and instructions. and when we mentioned in our application that we already had UN experience that completely changed everything.”* Their social enterprise has since been awarded several contracts by UN agencies to provide psychosocial services to vulnerable groups. They have now provided 34, 000 mental health sessions across their countries and are also operating in another 10 countries. Without they said they couldn't have done this.

Finding 8:

Springboard suite participants consulted who did not win their pitches have found it more difficult to get established.

One FGD participant indicated that she is really struggling to keep her business afloat and is turning to friends and family to find funds to try and expand and finance her enterprise services. In the FGD process, she was also noticeably shyer and had more difficulty expressing herself than the other FGD participants who had won the pitches for their year. This may provide one reason why her pitch did not win but also raises the issue of how to make this highly competitive process more accessible to those who are confident to start or have not had economic and social advantages and are simply not yet ready to compete at this level. Several others who did not win their pitches indicated they are still getting ready to launch their enterprises one to two years after taking part in the challenge.

What became clear in all the FGDs and KIIs with Springboard suite participants is that it is the concentrated attention the winners receive combined with the seed funding prizes that helps them succeed and that the ones who were not as successful needed a lot more support to get to that level of success or being able to compete. Several FGD participants thought it would be useful to have a longer training period for the pitch process as they found it quite difficult to become effective in just a few days. As YCL moves to working more and more with LNOB groups they will need to draw upon the lessons learned from other members of LNOB groups and from those who have not been as successful to figure out ways to adapt their approach to fit the specific needs of these groups.

One FGD participant, for example, thought the pitch judges in his country and challenge year did not have a good understanding of the mental health context and 3 thought there was not a good understanding of what community building within a social enterprise context means, i.e., their perception was that the judges may have been too corporate in their approach. Another observed that the judge team did not include the diversity of ethnic representation prevalent in her country.

Several participants also mentioned that it is difficult for them to find time to take part in all the Springboard sessions but noted that the mentoring sessions are quite helpful. In a smaller country context 5 FGD participants indicated that an in-person training and coaching approach is more effective – in part as “everyone knows everybody” and that they respond better to the personal invitations to participate. This is, in part as it is the way they are more accustomed to operating in their country. Three who did not receive funding or win the innovation challenge indicated that they are struggling to either establish their social enterprise or to keep it going.

| 5.3.3 Sustainability of Results of Springboard Suite Approaches

Finding 9:

There is a very high success rate for regional YSEs nominated by the COs. YCL does not yet track the success rates of the YSEs operating strictly through the national teams through Springboard but there are initial indications from the FGDs and participant surveys that those which have gone on to establish a social enterprise have a reasonable chance of being able to sustain their businesses.

One Regional Thematic Advisor observed that in general 90% of new enterprises established fail. One of YCL’s RRF indicators is what “% of incubator grantees (disaggregated by young women and marginalized youth) are successful 6 months after receipt of grants”. YCL staff indicated that the project has not used this indicator since YCL is not providing grants as a key support offer as originally planned. Instead, the project is providing broader support services for YSEs and directing the YSEs to diverse opportunities (including where else they can apply for funding). YCL therefore, considers that this indicator is “slightly outdated and not serving the project at its current scale and format in the best possible way.”¹²

However, YCL also maintains an internal, confidential tracker on YSEs which was able to collect some data closely related to this indicator for start-ups which had self-reported that they had raised more than USD 1,000 and had

been part of the programme for more than 6 months. Based on these two criteria, by the end of January 2022, there were 67 of 69 start-ups in this group of more established YSEs that were being monitored at the regional level which met these criteria and were still operational.¹³ Taking a closer look at this tracker, based on self-reported data these YSEs had raised USD 6.83 million of capital and had an average income of USD 77,478. Depending upon how many employees each has, these self-reported figures also provide a fairly strong indicator that these are sustainable businesses.

What YCL has been able to establish for the project overall is that 9,500 young entrepreneurs and young aspiring entrepreneurs and changemakers were supported through the Springboard suite. From this group, YCL had supported **1,240** youth-led social enterprises as of January 2022. This includes the YSE teams supported at national level and through the regional Springboard activities. Around **430** of these joined the project's activities regionally through CO nominations. Since the last check-in from YCL in January 2022 only 85 of them are currently inactive. How this was determined was verification of whether there was a company website in operation or a social media page updated in the past 6 months or if they had some form of communications with the CO/Regional Springboard team (e.g., email, check-in calls etc.) over this same time period. Based on these indicators YCL concluded that 80% (or 345) of the 430 were still in operation. This represents a high rate of sustainability for these YSEs.

However, YCL has not been able to track the progress of the national teams that were not part of the regional programs. **Therefore, it was not possible to assess the sustainability of the YSEs established through the national Springboard suite.** The YSEs nominated by COs for support at the regional level also likely represent the most successful YSEs from the national level and those at the national level that YCL has not been able to track may have somewhat lower sustainability levels.

As noted previously, FGDs with national participants in the Springboard suite included a sample of youth who took part in the innovation challenges but did not win the competition in their year. A couple of these mentioned learning from their experience and reapplying the following year with an improved pitch. Most, however, had not been able to establish their social enterprises or were still in the pre-launch stage. In contrast, most of the FGD participants who did win the innovation challenge had gone onto launch their social enterprises and several were clearly highly successful in growing their businesses. This is a small sample but provides an indication of an overall trend towards sustainability for those who won the national innovation challenges and received both seed funding and technical support and encouragement.

The tracker does not ask how many employees each social enterprise has but does ask them to report how users of their products or services there are. As of January 2022, collectively they reported 6.5 million users (an average of 94,202

¹² Noting that this tracker is a living document and therefore some of the provided data as it stood as of June 2022.

per social enterprise). It is not clear, however, how each defines a user. Some of this number likely includes users of apps and websites. This does not preclude them from being considered legitimate users of the YSE products or services but does not allow for a more qualitative assessment of the reach of their enterprises and how this might be contributing to their sustainability. Overall, however, **the survey results, FGDs and YCL's internal tracker all indicate that many of the YSEs who have taken part in diverse components of the Springboard suite and have gone on to establish social enterprises appear to be on a have a good chance of being sustainable.**

The reasons for this overall success are closely related to the rigorous process YCL has in place to determine in which YSEs the project and its partners should invest support resources. The survey results, YCL staff and partner and the related FGDs all indicate that while YCL has been actively and successfully reaching out to more marginalized and vulnerable groups, **the project, in its first years, was mainly working with well-educated youth from urban areas. The advantages of coming from this background has also contributed to the YSEs' sustainability.** This does not mean that YSEs established by those from marginalized and vulnerable groups have not been sustainable and there are also notable examples of successful social enterprises run by youth who fall into this category.

Downstream and Mid-Stream Case Study

Youth-led Social Enterprise Success Story: AI4GOV

This example highlights a social enterprise, AI4GOV, led by a young woman which focuses on providing quick data analytics related to governance and development challenges. She got involved with Youth Co:Lab through a Hackathon in her country focused on governance and local development. This had intrigued her as it was her area of expertise. The initial point of contact was through a promotional video on Facebook. She and her team applied for the program in October 2018. Her team won in their category that year. They also participated in the YCL E-Governance Hackathon in May 2019, and the Hanoi Regional Summit the same year. Although their team did not win the latter, they felt they gained increased skills and visibility from participation in these events. Overall, they attribute much of their success directly to their YSO interactions with YCL.

| Success Criteria | Before Interaction with Youth Co:Lab | After first Interaction with Youth Co:Lab |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Beneficiaries/ Reach of YSE | 0 | Difficult to estimate, but now has partnerships with UNDP and Government Ministries |
| Reach of Services | Service offer still being thought through | As above |

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Number of Employees | The start-up was formed as a result of the YCL call for applications. At the time of initial application the enterprise had 2 focal points. | Now have a team of 8 employees with full benefits and with products in pipeline |
| Service Offer | Was not developed yet | A number of services now on offer towards engaging AI for complex governance challenges. |

What Helped their Team Achieve this Success Criteria (*as articulated by the Respondent)

Support for Growth of the start up team

1. The incubator programme provided significant and critical support to help the team develop their pitch and service offer, and to gain confidence.
2. A second success lever was the exhibits they were able to present through the incubator project. They found this was key in developing partnerships, notably with the Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Health in their country with, whom their enterprise worked with on a major project
3. Helped the team to improve difference in the quality of the content that they produce.

Growth of networks and partnerships

1. The mentorship provided by the YCL Team helped their team think outside the box and expand the start up networks.
2. This coupled with access to a network of like-minded young entrepreneurs resulted in the development of a pathway for regional scalability for their enterprise.

Increased Opportunity for Visibility

Their YCL experience was magnified by the increase in visibility for their enterprise that YCL made possible as was the start-up access that participating in YCL afforded them to the wider UNDP community. Two examples of this they shared with the evaluation included:

1. The UNDP Country Office in their country approached their social enterprises was approached to support the development of a number of dashboards in response to crises (such as after a volcano eruption in January 2020). Work on this dashboard provided a foundation for their future work with the Department of Health in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns.
2. The YCL Regional YCL team also asked their social enterprise to help the project develop its Social Media Analytics Report for 2020. This also broadened the start-up's experience so that they were then able to include Social Media Analytics and forecasting in their service offerings.

The most important things they learned from taking part in the YCL programs were how to develop a pitch and articulate a service offer to a wide range of stakeholders, as well as learning how to think through how to leverage from one success to the other towards building a scalable product.

Their participation in regional summits provided their enterprise with:

- Increased visibility, and support from the YCL Team Mentorship
- Provided their team the opportunity to learn from global perspectives.
- Provided networking with entrepreneurs and helped their learn from other models and ways of working.

While observing that the Regional Summits are already quite diverse with a combination of “work and fun”, they would suggest increasing diversity by encouraging more participation from YCL team members from Southeast Asia. They also thought that clustered industry-based exchange would allow for strengthened engagement and exchange of ideas from start-ups working on similar challenges.

Section B. Midstream Approaches

5.4 Midstream Approaches: Financing Solutions

YCL has also been providing support to YSEs that provides alternative solutions to seed funding in three main ways: 1) Support for setting up crowdfunding campaigns; 2) E-commerce; and 3) Introductions of YSEs to investment firms.

Finding 10:

YCL’s crowdfunding approach has been quite successful but has limited capacity to scale up.

YCL’s crowdfunding pilot has been in place since November 2020. YCL staff and partner refer potential YSEs who could benefit from crowdfunding support and YCL’s Crowd Funding and Ecommerce Coordinator works with them to assess if they are ready to undertake a crowdfunding campaign. This readiness includes a strong commitment to do the hard work needed to prepare

for a successful crowdfunding campaign. In general, crowdfunding is also only an appropriate capital raising solution for some enterprises and tends to work best for those selling products and those with a technology component such as an app. This funding approach, therefore, would be useful for those YSEs that fit these criteria.

Standard success rates international for businesses to reach their capital raising objectives through crowdfunding stand at between 45 to 55%. The success rate for the 3 YSEs that took part in YCL's crowdfunding program is 100%. This, however, involved substantial technical support and accompaniment on this journey. To maintain this success level for other YSEs will require similar levels of attention and resources. The crowdfunding program is thus working on a small scale and has gone through 3 full cycles of crowdfunding initiatives with three YSEs. It is currently working with 2 others in the preparation stage. In the future, with this model therefore, it will be possible for YCL to work with approximately 3 YSEs at a time for roughly a year.

YCL has complemented the crowd funding approach with the development of several modules on e-commerce. This was in part a response to COVID-19 lockdowns which restricted both retail and service focused social enterprises and in part, as e-commerce approaches help YSEs reach a wider market in general.

Finding 11:

YCL's practice of sharing diverse funding and procurement opportunities with YSEs is an effective strategy, particularly when YCL provides assistance with the initial application / presentation process.

YCL has also been working actively to introduce its YSEs to government procurement processes. There are several governments in the region that have been open to seeking business and technical solutions from YSEs, particularly from those that have been vetted by UNDP through their participation in the Springboard suite. Several YSEs consulted through the FGDs found that the cachet of having participated in a UNDP program has given their enterprises considerable credibility and, in some cases, has contributed significantly to the YSEs obtaining government contracts. YCL, in general, works actively to introduce diverse opportunities to the YSEs as well as provides support to them with filling out grant, investment and other applications that could help them YSEs generate or raise capital. Once the YSEs have learned to do one or two of these applications, YCL staff indicated that they are generally able to reuse this information in other application processes independently.

Finding 12:

Investment firms that decide to invest in Springboard-supported YSEs have found that these YSEs are better prepared to scale up and compete than they would have expected for enterprises that are still in a fairly new start-up stage.

YCL has established partnerships at the regional and national levels focused on the investment side of social enterprise development. These partners note that social impact companies often do not know how to communicate their ideas to investors. Consequently, they have to show them how to be both socially responsible and commercially viable. The partners also observed that given the diversity of the Springboard participants most are not initially suitable for private investors. Therefore, the YSEs have to think about how to make their business more commercially viable. This includes how to find the right team of employees to support their growth and to assess when there is a good product and market fit that will attract investors.

The investment companies indicated that they have had considerable success working with Springboard-supported YSEs. They consider that much of this success comes from the YSEs themselves. This is, in part, since the YSEs are at such an early stage of growth that everything they do is going to change if they are open to it. The investment firms support start-ups that can evolve to work at a bigger scale and often at a later stage of growth. The firms have found that if they can identify talent and investment opportunities at an earlier stage in this process it also helps their own companies compete in a highly competitive investment market. They noted that the **YSEs that come from a Springboard background are more likely to have some of the key characteristics that are predictors of success on a larger scale and evolution to a later state enterprise.**

One investment company observed that all companies in which they invest must be scalable and have a technology element. In addition, 90% of these companies address the SDGS directly as this is part of the investment firm's mandate. Consequently, the YCL project acts as a good funnel for them. The firm also found that the Springboard-supported YSEs seem to be more well-rounded when thinking about both commercial side and the impact side. Their experience is that other social enterprises tend to be focused on just one side or the other but not both. **This balance also contributes to the sustainability of the YCL YSEs selected for investment.**

Mid-stream Strategies Case Study:

Regional Partnerships with the Private Sector | Accelerating Asia

Accelerating Asia is an early-stage venture capital fund that runs programs for start-ups and investors based in Singapore. The company website notes that the company is licensed by the Monetary Authority of Singapore and that Accelerating Asia's early-stage Venture Capital fund focuses on pre-Series A start-ups with "untapped potential that are 6-18 months away from institutional funding. Accelerating Asia invests up to US\$250,000 in pre-Series A start-ups and [its] current portfolio covers over 10 countries in Southeast and South Asia, including Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, Bangladesh and Malaysia". Its website also states that they have selected 52 start-ups in which to invest to date and have worked to accelerate over 100 Founders. In addition, 80% of the companies in which they invest are impact start-ups with 40% of these being co-founded by women. The company invests between USD 100,000 to 250,000 of venture capital in early-stage start-up companies from the region.¹⁴

Accelerating Asia did not have a formal partnership with Youth Co:Lab to start but this grew over time. The relationship started in 2020, when one of the YCL start-ups applied to them for funding and made a successful pitch for investment. After that the company got a steady stream of applicants from YCL and invested in several a year. Since Accelerating Asia receives 2000 applicants for every round of investment and only take in 10 in each round, the fact 1 to 2 YCL-supported YSEs are being accepted every year is quite significant.

Since 2020 the partnership has become more structured and Accelerating Asia offered to provide a special workshop to show YCL applicants how to apply. YCL would also send a shortlist of potential YSEs for Accelerating Asia to consider for investment. The company also started talking about how to make the YSEs more investable. These discussions contributed to the evolution of Springboard and Accelerating Asia runs the workshops.

All companies in which Accelerating Asia invests must be scalable and have a technology element. In addition, 90% of the companies in which they invest address the SDGs so the UNDP YCL program provides them with a good funnel for that corporate objective. What they have found is that the YSEs that make it into the program seem to be more well-rounded when thinking about commercial side and the impact side than many other applicants from elsewhere in the region. The YCL program is also

¹⁴ <https://acceleratingasia.com/>

very broad and able to reach people the company would not reach normally and from more diverse groups of YSEs.

The relationship with the YCL team has continued to evolve and both sides see it as quite positive. The dream for the future would be if YCL and other actors could manage to get set up a youth investment fund to fund them at a really start-up stage. Part of the process would involve then making connections for these YSEs as they evolve to a somewhat later stage when they are too big to continue their growth through small grants. These connections to additional sources of venture capital and the youth fund could help them really scale up. It is too much work for most big institutional investors to invest in these companies on their own, but they, with the help of UNDP / YCL could pool resources and if YCL did a lot of the groundwork to help get the YSEs on a solid enough footing they would be ready to risk scaling up it could be a better all-round solution.

Section C. Upstream Approaches

5.5 Upstream Approaches: Knowledge Products and Thought Leadership

Finding 13:

YCL has been working with regional partners in a strategic way to develop key research products to both inform and influence decision-makers and key stakeholders in the youth social entrepreneurship ecosystem and are among the thought leaders on youth in the region.

YCL has been working with diverse partners to develop strategic knowledge products and tools different stakeholders in the social enterprise ecosystem can use to learn more about how to work effectively with YSEs. This is as distinct from the tools and resources YCL and its partners have supported to provide training and tools for YSEs directly – although in some cases there is some overlap between these.

The primary knowledge products developed and circulated at the regional level include:

- 1. With UNICEF:** A research study on “Gender Barriers to Entrepreneurship and Leadership”, conducted in 3 countries (Indonesia, Lao PDR and Thailand) that maps out what is a growth journey for young women entrepreneurs. The purpose of the research was also to strengthen the evidence-base to support the advancement of gender equality and tackle gender-related barriers that adolescent girls and young women face. It also looks at also look at entrepreneurship eco-system and provides policy recommendations.
- 2. With Global Entrepreneurship Monitoring:** A study on Youth Entrepreneurship in Asia and the Pacific in 2018/19 that had a focus on activity aspiration and the attitude of Youth entrepreneurs in 10 countries, covering both finance and social aspects. <https://www.youthcolab.org/publications-3/Youth-Entrepreneurship-in-Asia-and-Pacific-2019>
- 3. With the Islamic Development Bank:** The development of a YSE Ecosystem diagnostic approach to apply in Bangladesh and Indonesia. YCL is also currently conducting a similar diagnostic process in Pakistan, Singapore and the Maldives. The ecosystem diagnostic framework covers six domains: (i) human capital and entrepreneurship culture; (ii) access to finance and incentives; (iii) business development support and infrastructure; (iv) innovation and technology; (v) policy and regulatory framework; (vi) access to the market. National governments have been particularly interested in the results of these diagnostics and the in the countries concerned governments have been using the results of these diagnostics to inform government policy related to youth and to entrepreneurship.
4. YCL also conducted an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on YSEs in the Asia-Pacific region.

YCL also worked closely with UNDP’s regional Fair Biz team to develop a Business Integrity toolkit¹⁵ which the regional office and YCL have distributed widely at both the regional and national levels. It has proven to be the one of the UNDP’s most downloaded knowledge products. The Fair Biz team and YCL also offer 3-day workshops at the national level on the toolkit contents. It was cited by several national stakeholders as a valuable tool of interest to both governments and businesses.

¹⁵ <https://www.undp.org/publications/business-integrity-toolkit-young-entrepreneurs>
<https://www.youthcolab.org/business-integrity>

Finding 14:

The combination of knowledge products, regional summits, national YCL programs and the Youth Entrepreneur Ecosystem Diagnostics have started to contribute to policy change related to youth and entrepreneurship at the national level in a few countries.

Despite policy change generally being a slow process, the Diagnostics of the national Ecosystem of Youth Entrepreneur processes have already yielded some results. In Bangladesh, for example, YCL/UNDP did this study in partnership with Startup Bangladesh Limited as the government partner and with the Islamic Development Bank. The study was produced by a private sector ecosystem partner LightCastle Partners.

The diagnostic study gives a comprehensive picture about the status of the start-up ecosystem and start-up entrepreneurship ecosystem in Bangladesh and engages and interviews all the ecosystem players, including start-ups. This inclusion approach is an important part of the diagnostic methodology. This is as there is a recognition that there are some policy barriers which affect those living in remote areas or who are from minority groups differently from the majority or those living in urban centers.

In Bangladesh, the dialogues with the different stakeholders related to this study are influencing government to consider different policy changes. For example, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) recently initiated a dialogue and workshop on how to make the taxation system easier for startup organizations. This has been one recommendation of the diagnostic study and YCL/UNDP staff (regional and national) believe the diagnostic process is helping influence the GoB policy process related to entrepreneurship in this and other ways.

In Viet Nam, the government of Viet Nam asked UNDP/YCL to provide input on two youth-related policies which the Youth Union and the Ministry of Home Affairs were handling and developing. The proposed youth law originally did not include any mention of youth-led enterprises. UNDP and YCL were the pioneers on this theme in the country and brought related issues up during several consultations on the policy. The government of Viet Nam issued the final draft of new youth law in 2020 and it included mention of youth entrepreneurs.

YCL/UNDP has also been working with the 844 National Start-Up program in Viet Nam for five years. As a part of this work they have been providing inputs on a new definition of start-ups to support related work the Ministry of Science and Technology is doing as well as helped negotiate acceptance of this with the Minister.

In China, YCL/UNDP's regional summit contributed to a new awareness of youth issues within the Chinese government through its regional summit work there in 2018. For this event, the UNDP Youth Coordinator began working with the Chinese youth ministry for the first time. This involved spending a lot of time on agenda formulation. At that time, their government counterparts were not that familiar with sustainable development and the idea of social enterprises. In China, these were more commonly perceived to be CSOs.

The Regional Summit forum there showcased both effective youth-led social enterprises and that the UNDP could be very innovative. The government of China subsequently indicated that they should do something in the future to empower youth towards working on the SDGs and on social enterprise establishment and approached UNDP to work with them in these areas for another 2 years. After 4 years of this joint work the government asked to see the UN Youth Strategy and have since incorporated it into their current work, e.g., the Government of China asked UNDP to cohost a youth forum and the agenda the GoC developed for the event both uses UN language and focused on the SDGs as its theme. This represents a dramatic change for the Chinese government, particularly as a Movers participant noted that in more remote areas of China deans and local authorities regard UN organizations as “unfriendly foreign forces”.

In Thailand, YCL is not working directly at the policy level, but UNDP is working with the Thailand Policy Lab project which is developing a project policy of youth for youth. During related focus groups and for an upcoming hackathon to develop this policy, the policy project drew upon YCL alumni to participate and provide youth inputs into this process.

It is too soon, however, to be able to assess whether the policy changes and processes to which YCL has contributed will be sustainable – although this likely is the case in Vietnam since there is now an official youth policy in place. Much will depend upon whether the youth policy is implemented and enforced. YCL reports indicate that the project has been able to influence and contribute to 6 policy changes in the region to date.¹⁶ This type of more systemic change should become more measurable over the next 5 years as more of the project's policy influencing processes have had time to take effect.

¹⁶ Overview of Youth Co:Lab project, PPT, January 2022.

Upstream Case Study

Thought Leadership

Youth Co:Lab has established itself as a major thought leader on youth and youth entrepreneurship issues in the Asia-Pacific region. It has done this in two main ways:

1. Leading by example through the hiring of young people at the regional and national level to work within the UNDP framework. This has helped bring a youth perspective and voice at multiple levels of the youth and youth entrepreneurship ecosystem. It also demonstrates by “walking the talk” a form of thought leadership based on the premise that “youth can and do” if given half a chance. In turn, the young people concerned – along with the YSEs who YCL has been supporting, are helping to change and influence attitudes towards youth participation and abilities by being successful, with their dynamism and commitment to positive and inclusive economic development.
2. Identifying research partners in the region that could lead studies on specific topics related to youth and youth entrepreneurship in the region. YCL provides access to a wide range of key actors and partners to provide inputs into these studies (refer to Finding 13).

These diverse studies are, for the most part proving to be influential, and they fill critical knowledge gaps related to youth and youth entrepreneurship and social enterprises in the region. YCL has also helped ensure strategic dissemination of the different publications at their regional summits and other major events. There was very positive feedback from most evaluation’s key informants asked about their use of these publications, particularly at the regional level.

While completely acknowledging this seminal work YCL has helped facilitate, the review of several of these publications the evaluation conducted led to the observation that possibly for future publications YCL needs to apply a more consistent approach to the gender and LNOB analyses included as a part of the publication methodologies. For example, the immensely popular Business Integrity toolkit is not very gender-specific. It is anticipated that the next iteration of the kit will include more relevant examples of key business integrity issues facing different genders. For example, a study of young social entrepreneurs in Vietnam found that young women are sometimes (and sometimes routinely) asked for sexual services in exchange for access to services and contracts. YSEs and general entrepreneurs thus need explicit strategies to address and prevent this type of corruption.¹⁷ The toolkit also covers workplace harassment as

¹⁷ Peebles, Dana, 2020, Global Gender Analysis of Ocean Waste Plastic Issues, Global Plastic Action Partnership, World Economic Forum.

an issue but not sexual harassment. It does cover discrimination on different grounds and has provided a good representation of women and men in the photos provided as well as religious diversity but there are no young people with disabilities or visibly indigenous youth in the images included.

Gender and LNOB were also treated somewhat differently in the national youth entrepreneurship diagnostics for Bangladesh and Indonesia, for example, with the report for Bangladesh having included more gender-disaggregated statistics and analysis and the Indonesia report very little. This was, in part, as the diagnostics reflected the information available. However, even the methodology in the Bangladesh report was more gender-integrated than that of Indonesia. The latter asked far fewer explicit questions related to gender and mainly indicated that there was a gap in the application of gender lens analysis. The policy analysis in that report also made no mention of the gender and disability-related legislation in place that potentially affect young women entrepreneurs and those with disabilities.

The publication on “Youth Entrepreneurship in Asia and Pacific 2018/19” has 2 paragraphs on gender and youth entrepreneurship issues. It is an important study that brings much light to the issues affecting youth entrepreneurs in the region but needed to delve further into related gender and LNOB issues to address the different experiences of these two categories of analysis where they exist and suggest relevant policy and program recommendations to address these. The publication on the Impact of COVID-19 on Youth-Led Entrepreneurs included clear gender and LNOB questions in its methodology.

The evaluation also found that none of the partners interviewed mentioned the study on which YCL collaborated on “Addressing Gender Barriers to Entrepreneurship among Girls in Southeast Asia”. It was not clear if this was this theme was less of a priority for them than YCL’s other youth reports such as the toolkit on business integrity or if it was simply less visible. The inclusion of Citi’s logo on the report however, lends considerable weight to the message that gender inclusion is a serious issue for the private sector.

Overall, YCL is to be congratulated on its innovative thought leadership but needs to consider how it could apply a more consistent approach to the research methodology and recommendations in future reports about their treatment of gender and LNOB groups. For example, will the project be pursuing a gender-responsive or gender-transformative and LNOB-responsive or transformative research approach and thought leadership in the future? What would both approaches look like and how would YCL communicate these guidelines to its future research partners? How would they integrate cross-cutting issues such as climate change and action,

youth participation, gender and LNOB into future research and thought leadership in a consistent way that takes some of the related data collection challenges that exist into account? Finding answers to these questions would help YCL move its thought leadership even further and build on the strong research foundation they have helped build to date.

Section D. Youth Empowerment

5.6 Youth Empowerment Results

The overall objectives of the evaluation youth participant survey were to both ensure that the voices of youth participants in YCL activities were included in the evaluation process and to determine if, in what ways and to what extent YCL has helped empower youth. The survey design drew upon the Empowerment Analysis Framework presented as a part of the evaluation's methodology.

| 5.6.1 Background of Youth Survey Respondents

There were 121 youth participant survey respondents some of whom skipped some of the background information questions. They ranged in age from 13 to 39, with the majority (62%) of respondents falling into the 20 to 29 age group, 28.7% in the older age group and 9.3% in the younger group (with most of those being 19). There were respondents from 19 of the 28 countries and territories in which YCL is operating. The proportions were roughly the same as those reported for the Springboard suite participants filter and again did not include any Pacific countries or the Maldives. The rural / urban split is also similar, standing at 27.9% and 72% respectively. However, when we filter for gender, the number of women who took part in the survey who are from rural areas drops to 21%, with rural men at 34.4%. This likely reflects the fact that young women encounter more barriers to their participation in YCL-type activities in the rural areas. It is also an indicator that the outreach strategies YCL is using have been less successful at engaging rural women.

The number of female / male respondents was close to gender balanced, with 3.3% fewer women taking part in the survey. No one formally indicated that they identified as a gender minority in response to the "What is your gender" question. The fact that the youth survey respondents who identified as belonging to a gender minority did not respond to the "Other gender category" means that it was not possible to disaggregate the empowerment results

questions by gender minorities. However, 9 persons (7.6%) did so in the question related to identity status. There was a total of 49 (41.8%) respondents who identified as belonging to a minority or vulnerable group of 117 respondents. There were almost identical numbers of women and men in this group including those who self-identified as belonging to a gender minority.

Table 11: Type of YCL Activities in which Youth Survey Participants Took Part (2017 – 2021)

| Type of YCL Activity | No. | % of total number of survey respondents |
|--|-----|---|
| Regional summit | 61 | 54.4 |
| National Dialogue | 48 | 42.8 |
| Asia-Pacific Forum on Youth Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship | 47 | 42.0 |
| Regional Dialogue on Youth Indigenous Social Entrepreneurship | 44 | 39.2 |
| Youth Co:Lab National Program | 45 | 40.1 |
| Springboard Programme | 51 | 45.5 |
| Youth Empowerment Alliance | 37 | 33.0 |
| Movers program | 86 | 76.7 |
| Use Youth Co:Lab website as a resource or for information/making connections | 62 | 55.3 |

* n=112

| 5.6.2 Youth Participant Survey Results

The survey asked a series of questions related to potential changes in the lives of YCL youth participants. The following tables summarize the changes they experienced. The column furthest to the right indicates if there are any significant differences between female and male responses for the combined “all the time” and “most of the time” responses for each question.

Table 12: Summary of Youth Empowerment Results: Survey

| Has participation in YCL activities: | All the time | | Most of the time | | Some-times | | No real change | | Gender Differences |
|--|--------------|------|------------------|------|------------|------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | |
| 1. Helped you have more power over decisions that directly affect your life? n= 114 | 44 | 38.3 | 42 | 36.8 | 23 | 20.1 | 5 | 4.3 | 15.85% less for women |

| Has participation in YCL activities: | All the time | | Most of the time | | Some-times | | No real change | | Gender Differences |
|---|--------------|------|------------------|------|------------|------|----------------|-------|-------------------------|
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Made you feel better about yourself and/or given you more confidence to make chances and take actions. n= 116 | 51 | 51.7 | 37 | 31.9 | 17 | 14.6 | 2 | 1.72 | 14.1% less for women |
| 3. Made you feel as if your opinions, needs, and experiences as a young person are valued and acted on by other groups, networks and organizations? n=116 | 54 | 46.5 | 49 | 34.5 | 20 | 17.2 | 2 | 1.72 | 7.5% less for women |
| 4. Helped you develop a positive sense of belonging to your community? n = 116 | 66 | 56.9 | 27 | 23.2 | 18 | 15.5 | 5 | 4.3 | 17.6% less for men |
| 5. Made you feel empowered to take action in your community? n = 116 | 62 | 53.4 | 36 | 30.1 | 16 | 13.7 | 3 | 2.5 | Equal for women and men |
| 6. Have you become more involved in your community after taking part in YCL activities? N = 116 | 51 | 43.9 | 32 | 27.6 | 27 | 23.3 | 6+ | 5.17+ | 5.8% less for women |
| 7. Helped you to overcome problems in your life? N = 116 | 30 | 25.8 | 26 | 22.4 | 44 | 37.9 | 16 | 13.9 | 22.5% less for women |

+ The answer option for this was “not really” as opposed to “not at all.”

The only question for which the majority of the responses were not “all or most of the time” was question 7 above related to whether their participation in YCL activities had helped them overcome problems in their lives. The responses here were close to balanced with 51.8% responding “sometimes or no real change” and 48.1% “all or most of the time”. When these responses are broken down further by gender, there is a clear gender imbalance, with 36.8% of female respondents indicating that they were only able to so “all or most of the time”. The YCL Movers and Springboard training does include problem-solving exercises but may need to include more gender-based strategies in the future to help improve this aspect of the project’s empowerment results.

YCL was not designed as a gender project but has worked on being gender-responsive. The gender-based issues that face youth are often ingrained in internalized social values that have both social and economic consequences for young women, young men and youth from gender minorities. **YCL’s approach has been inclusive but given the skew in the gender data above there is a clear message that more is needed in this regard.** There may be a need, for example, to delve deeper into what kinds of problems the diverse

genders of participants were not able to solve to see if they fall into categories YCL-related skills development can help address or if they are larger, more societal-based challenges or social/family/economic issues. Another key question would be why over 17% fewer young men feel less of a sense of belonging to their communities after taking part in YCL activities than the young women do. This raises significant concerns related to male social engagement.

Looking at these empowerment indicators when aggregated by all groups of youth, the success rate (as determined by the combined “all the time and “most of the time” responses) ranges between 71.5% and 83.5% for all but the problem-solving indicator. Thus, overall, with that exception, the survey responses for these empowerment indicators provide evidence that **YCL has been fairly successful in empowering youth in diverse ways, but generally less so for female youth.**

Examples of the types of social action in which the youth survey participants have become involved include:

- Tree planting
- Reducing malnutrition and increasing income in families especially in the rural area
- Community waste management
- Founding an organization to teach 21st Century skills to indigenous youth
- Having become involved in climate action through YECAP
- Installing a CCTV to help reduce crime in the community
- Engaging in outreach to the LGBTQI community in their country about SDGs
- Beach clean-up activities
- Increasing community awareness about their indigenous rights, social entrepreneurship, leadership, important of participation etc.
- Cooperating to engage in community level climate change action

The youth survey participants indicated that they had increased skills in the areas outlined in the table below:

Table 13: Changes in Specific Skills of Youth Survey Participants

| Has participation in YCL activities increased the skills and knowledge you need to: | Yes # | Yes % | No # | No % | Total # | Gender differences (% + or -) |
|---|-------|-------|------|------|---------|-------------------------------|
| Be a leader and social innovator | 106 | 93.8 | 7 | 6.1 | 113 | 5.9% less for women |
| Earn a living | 63 | 57.7 | 46 | 42.2 | 109 | 20% less for women |
| Start a social enterprise | 68 | 63.0 | 39 | 36.1 | 108 | 14.3% less for women |

Here the highest skills and knowledge levels the youth survey participants have acquired are those related to becoming leaders and social innovators – standing at a substantial 93.8%. However, there are solid numbers of youth who indicated they have increased the skills they need to earn a living (57.7%) and to start a social enterprise (63%). Broken down by gender, however, we again find significant differences in the responses, particularly regarding young women being able to earn a living or start a social enterprise, although there was less than a 6% difference with regard to the latter. This may indicate that the strategies YCL is using to support the establishment of youth-led social enterprises have been more effective at leveling the playing field for young women than their employability strategies. This makes sense given the highly targeted nature of the Springboard suite and the Movers program with its focus on the more generalized acquisition of 21st Century skills. The latter was intended mainly as a leadership program as opposed to a youth employment program. It has clearly succeeded in the latter, even taking the gender differences in the responses into account.

When asked if their participation in YCL activities had changed their lives in any other ways 72.3% said yes, with no significant differences between female and male responses (4.4% more women indicated other changes than men). Examples of some these changes include:

- Introduced me to a world of work where the youth are empowered to work with and for youth.
- I am a more positive and motivated person (multiple responses)
- Always talk to your peers in YCL if you ever have problems. It is great to have friends who speak the same language and to be connected with like-minded people (approx. one-third of the responses)
- I learned to enhance my skills of integrity.
- It taught me that be more a giver and less a taker and try to give as much back to your community as you can
- Made me a better human-being (5 responses)
- It helped me to do work efficiently
- Thinking fast on how to solve a problem.
- I have become more self-reliant
- How to help to get the global opportunities to expand our market and value
- I become more people-oriented
- Motivated me to work on climate change action.

There were multiple success stories the youth survey participants wanted to share with YCL and the evaluation. You can find a few representative samples below.

In August of 2021, we launched an activity called the World We Want which invited community partners to hold their own activity sessions, as well as national consultations that ask Filipino youth what future they want to see in 2030. This activity is in line with our celebration of the International Youth Day and this activity has reminded why we do what we do for the youth, with the youth, by the youth. Our work with Youth Co:Lab allowed us to reach youth from underrepresented sectors and this opportunity reminds us that there is still a lot of work to be done especially with the grass roots. Youth Co:Lab in the Philippines partners with different ecosystem players especially local youth-focused and youth-led organizations to reach the farthest first and leave no one behind.

YCL always connects me with the right people at the right time. Before this, we are just doing trial and error all the time because we are not experts in this area. Since joining YCL, we work on timelines and take things very seriously. When you take things very seriously, the system started working for us and we started earning. Although we are taking things slow we are careful about the decisions we make and our enterprise is growing from there.

Working on my crowdfunding, create one-pager for investor, fundraising plan and elevator pitch helped me a lot to grow myself as founder and entrepreneur. I love how easy it is to access the materials, the support group and the helpful team on YCL & Springboard to me to crowdfund and finish the program. I also love how YCL always taking steps to listen to what youth entrepreneur face and help them to be heard/issues to be discussed together.

Currently I am in Youth Empowerment Climate Action Platform. I successfully held two workshops with over 100 audiences, and I have coordinated with the Climate Action Week, UN Conference #2 and with the Climate Action Regional Dialogue. During this period, I not only learned more about the climate change, but also met so many friends who have the same interests in SDGs. More importantly, I have encouraged many Chinese young people to take part in our events and discuss with young people from different Asia Pacific countries.

Personally, for me while growing up I was a very shy and introverted kid. I had a very hard time expressing myself in front of people. With time I was learning how can I open up myself in a good way. It was a very slow process... Then I thought to improve my shyness I should start getting involved in social works as I always wanted to do something to contribute in the social work field. After joining the Movers Programme it was also not a smooth journey for me. I struggled for the 1st 4 to 5 months but when I became comfortable I grew as a person. Of course I have to mention [the Movers staff] for trusting me more then I did myself. Thank you ... for replying my email when I was lost. (Movers participant)

Section E.

Other Relevance and Effectiveness Issues

5.7 Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Relevance and Effectiveness

EQ 2: To what extent and in what ways has the project evolved to respond to changes in the operational context due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Finding 15:

YCL proved to be quite adept at responding to the operational context that arose from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key informants and FGD youth participants from all aspects of the program agreed on this point. Once pandemic lockdowns were enacted, YCL moved quickly to shift as much of its programming as possible online, including its regional summit. Project staff and leadership viewed this challenge as both an opportunity and a way to try and bring in people who were not usually in the picture. This was particularly important for LNOB groups as many were quite adversely affected by the pandemic and otherwise many would not have been able to attend.

YCL staff also talked to project donors about what activities needed to be delayed and what could be moved forward with different supports. In this they were helped greatly by the fact that the Citi Foundation was quite flexible and supported this shift in project delivery mode.

At the regional level, this approach led to YCL switching to Virtual Springboard Programs, a Virtual Summit and a Learning Management System that allowed participants online access to flexible asynchronous learning and automatic certification of their learning once they completed any of the modules. It also meant YCL had to simplify training content so it could be more readily understood by participants for whom English is not a first language. This also facilitated translation of these modules at the national level by some partners and UNDP COs. The project also set up a Facebook Chatbot on advocacy and supported a survey on the impact by COVID on young social entrepreneurs which diverse partners and UNDP country offices have been using as a resource.

It also meant identifying national digital partners and providing them with access to the technology the project uses on its platforms and to test these

before trying to use them to increase their access to more marginalized or vulnerable communities. It also meant having to take all events and products online and testing out ways to make these accessible and effective. In addition, YCL switched funds to support electronic accelerators as opposed to in-person accelerator programming.

The project is now organizing its next regional summit to be held in Singapore in July 2022 with both in-person and online features. The last virtual summit was able to reach much larger numbers of participants since it was online. There were 6,500 registered participants and YCL estimated that the online event reached around 95,000 additional people through video views (number calculated based on 1% of the 9.5 million views). This brings the reach of the online summit to an estimated total of 101,500 people.¹⁸

Youth participants with internet access indicated that they found the online training modules more accessible since they were set up as self-study processes and they could adapt them to fit their own schedules. Others, particularly young social entrepreneurs¹⁹, said that it has been difficult for some of them to find the time to take part in online training sessions offered at scheduled times as they are quite busy either running their businesses or studying at university. Much appears to depend upon the size of the country and the specific country's contact culture. More personal feedback and on-going contact appears to work better in smaller countries such as Samoa, while participants in countries with large populations such as Bangladesh and China appeared to thrive on the contact and connection provided by YCL online. Many spoke of the isolation they were experiencing during the lockdowns and responded quite positively to finding new ways of being connected with other diverse groups of youth. They find these connections both extremely helpful for professional reasons and said staying in touch was helping maintain their mental health.

At the country level, several partners, most notably in Cambodia and Bangladesh, found that they were able to expand their reach considerably due to the online nature of YCL's offerings during the pandemic. In both countries, this helped facilitate inclusion of participants from different provinces as opposed to the training or other activities offered being restricted mainly to capital or large cities. This helped YCL reach youth who normally would not have had access to or known about these opportunities. One CSO national level supporting partner also observed that the rapid switch to a more digital form of program delivery is really what made it possible for his organization to keep working on the YCL activities. Discussions he had with other CSOs in the region led him to observe that most of them had to halt or considerably delay most of their programming.

¹⁸ YCL, 2021, Virtual Summit Report 2021. UNDP: Bangkok.

¹⁹ FGDs with young social entrepreneurs from Bangladesh, China, Thailand, Samoa, Singapore, and Vietnam, March- April 2022.

Finding 16:

Despite these innovative measures, some groups and countries were not able to participate in YCL programming due to the COVID-19 restrictions or encountered related delays.

While highly innovative and quite agile in adapting to operating in a more online environment, the pandemic restrictions did mean that some countries and groups were not able to take part in YCL actively. Australia essentially put its YCL activities on hold for two years and is just starting up again. Some groups of youth faced online participation constraints such as not having access to stable internet, not speaking English or not being able to afford the cost of taking part in online learning due to expensive connectivity charges. For some more vulnerable or minority groups there will also always be a need for in-person contact to initially build trust and ensure accessibility.

One national level private sector partner also observed that their initial contract was signed pre-COVID but delivered during COVID. This led to a 12-week contract taking 20 weeks to implement and meant they had to revise their contract twice as a result. The company indicated that they were left to work out alternatives to address the COVID challenges mostly on their own and that these delays and the related contractual issues created extra administrative work and consequently, additional costs for the company.

5.8 Effectiveness of Communications Activities

Effectiveness

EQ 8: How effective have the project's communications activities been in terms of increasing visibility of the youth empowerment agenda and influencing decision making among key stakeholders in the region?

Finding 17:

YCL's Communications team has been quite successful in using communications to build youth participant engagement and increase the visibility the start-ups at the regional level. It has also made strategic use of regional summit to launch YCL's knowledge products and is tracking media coverage of youth issues in the region.

The way YCL has structured its communications approach is to focus on 4 main output areas from a communications perspective. The first is to build a brand for YCL. The second is a community-building approach for start-ups to help make that program more vibrant. The third is related to communications at the CO level to help the project support and amplify YCL work there and

provide resources and a regional platform for the national work. The fourth is in thought leadership area to support YCL's work to act as a catalyst for change at systemic levels.

The YCL communications team has been working actively to highlight the YSE start-ups through videos and blogs to give YSEs more visibility. The team has also provided YSE start-ups with key communications tools such as grant guidelines, graphic templates, guidance on how to write a blog, etc. At the thought leadership level, the Communications Team has been working to disseminate the project's diverse knowledge products and created a newsletter. They also try and link dissemination of major knowledge products to YCL important events such as the regional summits.

The Communications team has also focused on creating more youth engagement and has tracked this closely. YCL maintains a social media analytics tracker for its key communications and engagement activities. Through this the project has established that there has been a significant increase in their online audience and followers, noting, for example, website increases in unique visitors per month of 9,706 as well as increases in Instagram followers (4,925), as well as Linked in and You Tube subscribers (735).²⁰ The idea is that these communications platforms enhance the visibility of Youth Co:Lab, and social entrepreneurship and youth leadership overall.

The analytics processes also measure what YCL activities and issues are covered by media in the region. This is one way to measure increased visibility and provides evidence that YCL has had some success in this regard. This data, however, would require additional content analysis of all the media reports to determine if the project's communications activities have been contributing to influencing key stakeholders and decision-makers in the region and further discussion of what factors in this content analysis would demonstrate that this type of change is taking place due to communications inputs.

Finding 18:

At a more systemic level, the reports on the diagnostics of youth entrepreneurship ecosystems in diverse countries made youth and entrepreneurship issues much more visible with there being some evidence that these are starting to influence decision-makers (see Section 5.5)

The evaluation team asked UNDP regional staff, and YCL's different partners and stakeholders whether they were aware of or made use of YCL's research products and received mixed feedback. The regional partners involved in the development of some of YCL's knowledge products find the dissemination

²⁰ YCL, 2021, Key Achievements of Youth Co:Lab Communications Strategy: Sept 2020/21, UNDP: Bangkok.

process and the fact that UNDP is responsible for much of their distribution to be quite impactful. Another would like to see even more publications – in part to address specific topics and themes and in part due to UNDP’s credibility in getting the key messages across. The different accelerators and investment firms were aware of YCL’s training resources for start-ups and observed that the YCL start-ups seemed to be better prepared for scaling up than general start-ups. This perception has also helped build YCL’s brand and in turn, the project’s influence.

There was, however, less awareness of YCL’s knowledge products and training tools among national level private sector partners. CSOs at the national level are often involved in either developing or adapting the national YCL knowledge products or are delivering them through the training they provide to either Movers or Springboard participants, but several did mention making use of YCL’s key reports such as the COVID-19 impact on young entrepreneurs and the gender report. As such, they are drawing upon these studies to help inform their own work and are being influenced by these communications. UNDP COs are also sharing these knowledge products with their government partners, but it was not possible with the sample the evaluation used to establish how influential this process has been except in the diagnostic ecosystem countries and in Viet Nam.

Finding 19:

YCL staff communications approaches are contributing to the project’s branding and visibility on multiple fronts.

Not included in the evaluation matrix is the impact of YCL’s overall communications style. However, this merits mention here as this was cited by UNDP staff at the regional and CO level, private sector, and CSO partners, regional partners and by the youth participants themselves as being outstanding. They indicated that YCL staff are open, friendly, highly communicative, supportive, and responsive. The youth participants, in particular, indicated that they feel they are able to operate in a safe environment that encourages open communication, partnership and learning and this has really helped them engage with the project’s different activities and to be successful.

5.9 Value-Added of Regional Approach

Effectiveness

EQ 6. What is the added value of the project’s regional approach?

EQ 9 - How effective has the project been in mainstreaming youth empowerment in UNDP at the national and regional levels and in its different thematic areas of work?

| 5.9.1 Value Added for UNDP

Finding 20:

YCL provides considerable support to several of UNDP's regional hub teams and helped create greater connections between these teams and national UNDP COs on youth issues as well as with regional youth organizations.

The evaluation team interviewed six UNDP regional thematic advisors working in the Asia Pacific regional hub. There was a consensus that YCL's regional structure has strengthened the services of the regional hub in diverse ways. This includes:

- Helping regional thematic teams make connections with youth participants and partner organizations at the national level. "They do a lot of the groundwork for us".²¹
- Providing regional teams with learning opportunities about youth and youth social entrepreneurship as well as sharing lessons learned about specific issues related to youth at the national level. The latter were cited as having helped speed up related reforms on these issues. The YCL regional summits also contribute to this learning.
- Collaborating on development of important knowledge products and tools now used widely in the region.
- Inviting regional thematic advisors to take part in YCL events have made the work of some regional thematic teams more visible in the region, with the voice and relevant work the regional programs are doing being echoed by YCL.
- Strengthening the youth work of the COs and helping to integrate youth issues across different thematic areas. The consensus was that this work has changed UNDP's culture in the region about youth and youth participation.
- Providing regional projects and key activities with significantly greater access to diverse groups of youth from across the region.

Regional thematic advisors also observed that YCL requires a lot of technical expertise to operate effectively and has developed a mode of operating in which the project builds relationships with multiple partners across the region and at the national level that facilitates access to this expertise. For example, Citibank and CVC, amongst others, have given generous access to their staff to help mentor young social entrepreneurs. It is the regional nature of the

²¹ KII with UNDP Regional thematic Advisors, March 2022.

project that helped make this possible. Large corporations such as these operate at an international and regional level and see value added in working with young entrepreneurs in diverse markets across the region in that it both helps inspire their staff and helps them gain access to new markets and clients.

The exchange of technical expertise at the regional level for UNDP also goes in two directions. Several regional thematic advisors noted that their regional projects have funded some of YCL's activities and helped them obtain project staff (through UNV, for example) and YCL staff and youth participants have been taking part in critical regional events the Advisors have been organizing.

Finding 21:

YCL has raised the visibility of youth issues in UNDP at the regional and national levels, helped to break the programmatic silos, and increased the number of staff hired by UNDP who are youth. It has done this by taking a very proactive approach to making connections with the regional thematics on youth issues and areas on which they could collaborate.

At the regional level all regional thematic advisors interviewed noted that the YCL team works closely with their teams on specific issues. They observed that the YCL staff are well connected throughout the region and work actively to both share and maintain these connections with UNDP's regional thematic teams. In the process, YCL has helped raise awareness of diverse youth issues in the different thematic areas. Two advisors also spoke about how YCL has opened spaces for them to work with youth that they did not have before, in the one case particularly with regard to work with indigenous peoples. They noted there is significantly more participation of youth in one of their thematic area annual forums which they attribute directly to their collaboration with YCL.

This represents a significant change at the regional UNDP level. Initially, it was generally perceived that youth issues were considered the agenda and responsibility of other UN agencies. This was even though there are 700 million young people in the region and that the UN's Strategy on Youth allocates responsibility for integrating youth into programming to all UN agencies.²² After the 5 years YCL has been operating the regional thematic teams now see a value in young people's contributions and are now all incorporating youth work in their projects. They attributed this to both YCL and as the governments with which UNDP works increasingly want to bring in young people.

The annual regional report for UNDP Asia Pacific for shows this trend clearly as the budget for youth-related projects or project components increased from \$ 92.4 M in 2018 to 146.6 M in 2021 covering 24 Offices.²³ Several regional thematic advisors consider that YCL's presence and efforts have contributed significantly to this growth in interest and in funding for youth programming in the region.

Another key factor has been that young people themselves are influencers and have helped to promote greater integration of youth participation and youth issues in UNDP programs. YCL has modeled this by hiring staff who are predominantly young people themselves. This approach has shown by example what young people are capable of despite having fewer years of experience than their older colleagues. YCL has been able to do this by using a combination of hiring practices: standard Personal Service Agreements (PSAs), consultant contracts, and organizing UNV placements in key areas for the project. Most UNDP CO youth staff interviewed noted that their positions are either completely or partially funded through YCL or a YCL partner arrangement.

Their presence as Youth Community Engagement Officers (or variations on this job title) in several COs in the region has meant that there is a full-time presence of personnel with youth expertise at the CO level. This has also helped these COs break down the silos that exist between thematic areas and for youth issues to be integrated into key areas more systematically.

The UNDP China CO is a case in point. China. From 2007, there was no youth portfolio. YCL hired a youth consultant in 2017 to organize their regional forum. The CO then decided that youth work was important enough to find a way to hire a Youth Engagement Officer and to develop a CO youth strategy. Addressing youth issues is now seen as one of the China CO's annual 10 priorities. The CO was also able to mobilize some national government support to fund projects so that this work was not just regional anymore but is focused at the national level. YCL has also been assisting the regional Human Rights team with consultations and contributions related to the development of National Action Plans (NAPs) on Human Rights. In Thailand, this NAP has already been approved and the one in Pakistan has just been completed.

Other observations from UNDP Regional Thematic Advisors included that:

- YCL is an example of what can happen if you go and knock on people's doors. They are the most proactive in looking for that connection and finding opportunities for the different regional thematic teams to work together.
- YCL is extremely important and one of first projects able to engage youth at this scale
- YCL has tapped into a new way of engaging and is one of the most integrated teams in the regional hub. They always find ways to partner, are

²³ UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia-Pacific, "Youth in Review 2021: A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats"

willing to do so and are making real world change.

- YCL's support has been a key to increase our involvement with youth.²⁴

It is clear from these observations and those from UNDP CO staff that YCL's proactive approach and leadership have been key factors contributing to UNDP in the Asia Pacific region becoming more active in mainstreaming youth issues in its programming at the regional and national levels. It has also been because there is an increasing demand for this at the CO level and YCL has been there to fill this demand in strategic and innovative ways, including finding funding to increase youth staffing within multiple COs.

| 5.9.2 Value Added for Regional Partners

Finding 22:

YCL's value added for its regional partners lies in the expertise it provides on youth engagement and social entrepreneurship, a strong alignment of institutional values and mandates and the increased credibility partners get from working closely with UNDP.

The evaluation team conducted KIIs with 9 YCL regional partners. While each partner provides a different form of support, all noted the work YCL is doing fits closely with their institutional mandates and strategic visions. One multi-lateral partner also observed that working with the combination of UNDP and Citibank gives their own work in the region increased credibility as it shows that these two organizations think "we are serious about working with social impact".²⁵ Another noted the program aligns very closely with what their organization stands for and the values they stand with. It also adds value to the things they talk about and generates a positive response among their staff and clients when they talk about it. This alignment and the project's innovative approaches make people want to be engaged. That, in turn, adds value to their regional and international franchise.²⁶

Several other partners noted that YCL brings regional and thematic expertise lacking in their own organizations. One noted that YCL /UNDP is the first organization they turn to for expertise and the voice of the youth. Another sees that they bring different comparative advantages to the youth social entrepreneurship area, with their organization providing key areas of technical expertise and YCL being very good at bringing those interventions to a wider audience. Another multilateral partner noted that working with YCL has al-

²⁴ KIIs with 5 UNDP Regional Advisors, March 2022.

²⁵ KII, multilateral regional partner, April 2022.

²⁶ KII, private sector partner, April 2022.

lowed their organization to zoom in on providing support for a youth engagement project using a different entry point for this work than they usually have access to (i.e., not solely through government partners). This and YCL's success have made it possible for them to market the project within their organization and obtain funding from different departments to continue to expand their collaboration.

What came across strongly is that YCL has been quite good at developing partner relationships and that working under the UNDP umbrella have been two keys to YCL's success at the regional level. Regional partners perceive the project to be well organized and structured as well as easy to work with. Communication and roles are clear. Each regional partner also sees a clear benefit from working to support youth social entrepreneurship and leadership in the region both for their organization and for the region.

Finding 23:

YCL has been quite effective at raising and leveraging funding and in-kind contributions to support the project through a combination of the efforts of the regional YCL team and the work of its Youth Focal Points supported by UNDP COs.

The table below summarizes how much funding and in-kind funding the project was able to generate to support the project. The table provided by YCL also includes the core funding provided by Citi Foundation and the UNDP, and these amounts therefore should not be included as leveraged funds and includes some funds generated in early 2022.

Table 14: Summary of YCL Funding by Year

| Year | Citi Foundation Funding | Other Resources Mobilized (including in-kind) | Total for Year (USD) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 2017 | 250,000 | 2,035,000 | 2,285,000 |
| 2018/2019 | 1,350,000 | 10,155,000 | 11,505,000 |
| 2019/2020 | 1,900,000 | 17,263,000 | 19,163,000 |
| 2020/2021 | 2,500,000 | 13,621,624 | 16,121,621 |
| 2021/2022 | 2,200,000 | 14,744,750 | 14,744,750 |
| Totals over 5 years | \$8,200,000 (12.74%) | \$58,359,300 | \$64,359,300 |

Source: YCL project

These totals also include \$4,275,000 (6.64% of the total) contributed from UNDP's Global fund, at the regional level for a total of \$1,875,000 and USD2,400,000 from UNDP Global Funds at the CO level; with \$600,000 each for YCL programming in Timor Leste, Samoa, Papua New Guinea and Pakistan in 2020/2021. While YCL is clearly branded as a UNDP project in collaboration with Citi Foundation, the **primary data collection process** did not find any explicit mentions of, or credit given to UNDP for its financial support from its global funds. The UNDP logo however, is clearly shown on all event and publication materials and given credit in this way.

With regard to the project fund utilization, from the table below, the evaluation notes that the project is on track to utilize expenditures as per its approved workplan. The project is still in operation until December 2022 and the remaining funds for 2022 are being used to work towards the project's transition to phase 2 (2023-2026) as well as the closure of phase 1 (2017-2022) at the end of the year.

Table 15: Budget versus Expenditure (2017 – 2022)

| Year | Citi Foundation Funding | Fund Utilization | Variance between the budget and fund utilization | Remarks |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--|--|
| 2017 | 250,000 | 250,000 | 0 | |
| 2018/2019 | 1,350,000 | 1,350,000 | 0 | |
| 2019/2020 | 1,900,000 | 1,900,000 | 0 | |
| 2020/2021 | 2,500,000 | 2,500,000 | 0 | |
| 2021/2022 | 2,200,000 | 1,600,000 | 600,000 | To be finalised by September 2022 (as per Citi grant timeline) |
| Totals over 5 years | \$8,200,000 | 7,600,000 | 600,000 | On track |

Source: YCL Project Manager, June 2022

| 5.9.3 Value Added for National Partners

Finding 24:

The regional nature of the project brings multiple benefits to national supporting partner, particularly for CSO and private sector partners.

National partners also find the project's regional connection to be important for them. One CSO noted that they are trying to build connections with the international community and see working with YCL as an to extend their international outreach so that they can bring more international perspectives and understandings of the latest trends to young people in their country. They also see this as an entry point to help young people there become more involved internationally.

Another observed that that the participation of speakers from Youth Co:Lab and Citi foundation network helped their organization reach a lot of people via this network. In general, the supporting partners have found the brand value of UNDP, Citi foundation, and Youth Co:Lab is a positive element that has helped their events gain more attention from youth and increased participation.

Still others noted that they have gained the opportunity to meet with like-minded partners from other countries in the region. They find this particularly important since the Asian market is quite different from that of the West and offers a potentially high volume of users from Asia. One company observed that the fact that YCL showcased the company's work in their regional summit a year ago opened up new partnership opportunities for them. For example, currently this company is partnering with a company from Nepal and are bringing in their program to Bangladesh later this year and have also partnered with a company from Sri Lanka due to YCL connection. The regional networking opportunities YCL provides also gives the opportunity for supporting partners to learn from other organizations. Both CSOs and private sector national partners found the international networking opportunities the project provided to them has benefited their organizations in multiple ways. Another private sector company operating at the national level observed that: "As a global firm, for us it's very important that we are recognized as being committed to the regional or local communities. So, the Youth Co:Lab in the region gives us that opportunity to connect at the very local level."

| 5.9.4 Value Added for Youth Participants

Finding 25:

Regional connectedness is highly valued by YCL participants.

There is considerable value-added to YCL being a regional project for those YSEs whose work is showcased at the regional level and are able to make international and regional connections. This, however, applied to a smaller group of YSEs, predominantly those that are nominated by COs to take part in regional activities. However, the shift to the online and hybrid model of regional summits has begun to make these regional forums more accessible to more YSEs at the national level.

A strong message that came from both YSE and Movers participants is that they find great value in being connected to other youth participants at both the national and regional levels. The increased exposure to regional and international perspectives has served to broaden their experience and how they approach their YSE and social innovation work. The value of belonging to a national, regional and international community for this age group cannot be emphasized enough. It may not be measurable in terms of revenue generated or employees created but it is definitely making a positive difference to the lives of the youth participants which they are already starting to play forward in terms of their contributions to their respective communities.

Section F. Efficiency Issues

5.10 Strategic Allocation of Project Resources

Efficiency

EQ 10. Have sufficient resources (financial and human) been strategically allocated for the achievement of project results?

Finding 26:

YCL has invested much of its financial resources and time in human resources and their strategic location and commitment are two key factors contributing to the project's success.

YCL staff, and most of its regional partners and several Regional Thematic Advisors thought project's resources were allocated strategically. Several noted that the extent to which the project has scaled up over 5 year and the reach the project has all show that the resources being allocated quite strategically. However, rapid growth is not always an indicator of strategic investment and there is a need to unpack where project resources were allocated. Based on that closer analysis the evaluation agrees overall with the strong consensus among those consulted that there has been a good, strategic division of human and financial resources between the regional and national levels and that this dual approach is needed for the project to operate effectively.

In particular, **YCL has invested heavily in human resources.** Both project and UNDP regional and national staff consider this a strategic investment. The evaluation agrees. YCL's approach has been to get young people from the ecosystem itself to lead the program. It was initially a challenge for a UN agency to have young people as staff, with the average age being 27. This change was possible for four reasons:

- Citi Foundation agreed to cover much of these personnel costs.
- YCL developed a partnership with UNV to hire additional young people to fill strategic positions at both the regional and national levels.
- The UNVs have been willing to work for the relatively low stipends they are paid because they are committed to what the project is trying to achieve, see these positions as great opportunities for learning and career-building and as they tend to have more limited financial responsibilities due to their age.
- Over time, the UNDP COs have seen the value of having young staff on board, particularly to address youth issues.

All these factors have contributed to YCL becoming a youth empowerment program both within UNDP as well as externally.

In addition, where YCL has placed its the human resource funding has been strategic. The key programming teams are well resourced, and the project has increasingly been hiring people to lead the teams who are experts in their fields.²⁷ Given that the project is heavily reliant on volunteers of different types for key aspects of program delivery there may, however, be an increasing need to include more personnel with significant expertise in volunteer management and motivation on the core regional team.

Finding 27:

YCL has used a catalytic investment approach which allowed the project to leverage its core funding substantially. It has, however, also meant that UNDP, YCL and Citi Foundation had to be willing to allow the project to grow in the directions the different partners took the YCL model and to find effective ways for UNDP and the private sector to work together.

²⁷ KIIs, 2 Regional Thematic Advisors, 10 YCL staff.

From the beginning YCL has used more of a catalytic investment than a full funding approach. Thus, the project provided a model for operation and seed funding to get things going, particularly at the national level. However, YCL then expected the COs and the YCL national partners to use this seed funding as leverage to obtain more funding based on their respective priorities. This allowed the project to expand rapidly to multiple countries but may have spread resources a bit thinly in some places. As mentioned previously, this was noted particularly for the Movers program where some national partners and Movers personnel indicated that the seed funding for the program was too small for start-up funding with such high training targets.

In addition, while the local and national partner seed money leverage approach likely contributes to project sustainability through the development of longer-term relationships with these partners, it also potentially leaves YCL activities/programming at the national level vulnerable to shifts in funding from these partners should the initial period of enthusiasm wane. Although they have some concerns about how the project is structured, thus far the different national partners interviewed have not been raised this as an issue. As the project enters the next five years of its implementation this may be more of an issue in the future (or the project's momentum will continue to snowball). Either way it is something YCL will need to be track and monitor in the future.

Finding 28:

Having a flexible budget that allowed for experimentation and research on future programming options also represents a strategic use of resources. YCL also encourages its staff to take risks and sees any related failures as a learning process which further strengthens the project.

A third factor that has facilitated YCL's achievement of results is having a flexible budget with a budget line for new investment as needed to respond to what is often a rapidly changing context. YCL gives full credit to the Citi Foundation for allowing this. With typical donor funding this degree of flexibility would not be possible. YCL has been able to use this budget line each year to conduct research so project staff could figure out what to do next and to test innovative approaches. For example, this was the approach behind the funding of the first national ecosystem diagnostic report. The success of this allowed YCL to get funding for additional national ecosystem diagnostic reports from the Islamic Development Bank. This flexibility and experimental approach also helped generate the Springboard program. It grew from a small initiative in which YCL had \$10,000 to create capacity before a summit to help the young social entrepreneurs really take advantage of the opportunities provided by the event.²⁸

An example of an approach on which YCL staff took a risk that did not work out was their exploration of several options to set up a Youth Fund within UNDP (Output 5 of the ProDoc). These have not worked out yet as the architecture of UNDP operations is not set up to disburse swift start-up investments. However, the lessons learned from this research helped YCL create an approach which has included start-up grants, partnering with alliance partners, as well as creating a pre-accelerator and crowdfunding and e-commerce support.²⁹ The combination of this experimental approach and having access to flexible funding for research and pilots have helped the project anticipate new trends and risks so that YCL is not entirely demand driven and reactionary. You can observe another example of this in the youth empowerment climate action platform YCL has set up in collaboration with the regional Climate Change team in UNDP's Regional Asia Pacific hub. YCL is also looking at how to capitalize on the 4th industrial revolution, and block chain and other new technologies and their impact on the most vulnerable and has recently developed a LNOB strategy.

Finding 29:

YCL has made highly strategic use of other human resource options available through the UN system as well as through their diverse partners.

YCL staff have been particularly adept at leveraging the financing they have been able to obtain as well as making good use of existing UN and other resources. While the services of UNVs are not free, the cost of working with a UNV is less than having to hire a similarly qualified staff person through more traditional means. UNV also provides additional support services and training to its volunteers. The project's use of UNVs has been both cost effective and fits well with the project's mandate of empowering future youth leadership. YCL has worked with 15 UNVs since its inception. There are currently 5 UNVs working directly for the project as well as 5 former UNVs who YCL hired under different contract arrangements once their UNV term was completed. The UNVs in these diverse roles have found the work quite meaningful and noted that it also helps build their CVs to obtain future opportunities. The project also makes use of UNV's online support services for diverse supports of a very short-term nature that do not require an on-site presence, e.g., for translation and specialized IT services.³⁰ One national partner also mentioned making use of these online UNV services after being introduced to this service through YCL and found it quite helpful.

On the Springboard and innovation challenge side of programming YCL has been able to draw upon volunteer mentors and expertise from its diverse partners. Citi Foundation has provided 100+ mentors from among its regional staff

²⁹ KIIs, 2 YCL staff, 1 Regional Thematic Advisor, March – April 2022.

³⁰ KIIs with 3 YCL staff, April 2022.

as has CVC. Investment groups such as Accelerating Asia, amongst others, have also been providing substantial expertise to provide training and mentoring to young social entrepreneurs in addition to investment capital. YCL is also working with other accelerators and angel investors at the national level such as YY Ventures and Impact Hub in Bangladesh, the Vietnam Start-up Mentor Alliance and Angel4Us in Viet Nam, Audacity and Accenture in Singapore and CASVI in China. These represent just a small sample of this type of national level supporting partner.

In general, for most aspects of its programming YCL calls upon a considerable amount of volunteer labour and contributions from both its diverse partners and through the Movers program also from many of its youth participants. Both partners and youth participants indicated that they as individuals or their organizations are receiving considerable benefits from these volunteer contributions.

| 5.10.1 Human Resource Allocation

Finding 30:

With the quick growth of the project staff complement there have also been some growing pains and inefficiencies related to human resource practices as well as some challenges with regard to retaining project staff at the CO level.

Most project staff have been working as consultants on either short-term contracts or ones that are renewed on an annual basis. This limited both the work benefits to which these personnel were entitled as well as has meant some insecurity of job tenure. Only in 2021, when UNDP implemented an organization-wide policy that provides international personal service insurance did the project start to treat these consultants more like employees from a contractual perspective. This is even though several have been working with YCL since its inception. The process of constant contract renewals is also time consuming, and the evaluation observed that it places an undue burden on YCL's administrative staff.

“Our country programs are only as good as our people on the ground so the fact that there is so much churn is an issue.”

YCL Project Staff

Staff turnover at the country level has also contributed to continuity issues with there being rapid staff turnover of the Youth Focal Points in some COs. While it is not unexpected that younger staff are more likely to move around from job to job than older staff since they may be still trying out different options and have access to multiple opportunities, the insecurity of their contract positions likely also contributed to their decision to leave to seek work elsewhere for some. A couple of partners and Regional Thematic Advisors as well as some YCL staff observed that this CO level turnover has led to delays in project implementation in those countries. Another Regional Thematic Advisor observed that they found it hard to keep track of YCL staff contacts at the CO level because of this staff turnover.

Some of this challenge falls under normal staff turnover patterns. However, the effect of this has been exacerbated by UNDP recruitment practices and how busy CO personnel are. This has meant there were several instances where there have been gaps between when a Youth Focal Point leaves and their replacement is hired. In one CO, there were 2 changes in Youth Focal Points in a 12-month period with a gap of 3 weeks to a month before the new hires were able to start. This also led to delays in project implementation. COVID-19 restrictions complicated this situation further and caused additional delays. These factors had a particularly negative effect in the Maldives and Nepal.

Some YCL country level staff interviewed observed that although there was almost no gap between themselves and their predecessors, they were able either to call upon their predecessor for information and advice. They also received most of the materials they needed to do the work as part of the handover process.³¹ They noted, however, that their inductions were all from their predecessors and not from the regional YCL team. They found that it would have been useful to have a better overview of how YCL operates at the regional level and have access to a project organigram as well as to know who is doing what in which country, ideally through an annual regional meeting with other Youth Focal Points.

Finding 31:

YCL directs much of its funding directly to youth, either to support the role of youth-led organizations in the project or to help fund youth participation in diverse areas.

YCL has hired a lot of focal points in countries and always hire staff at this level who are youth. Their current roster of project -funded CO level staff includes 50 positions, of which 5 are currently being recruited. Of these, 38 are funded through Citi Foundation Support and 12 are listed as being funded from other

³¹ KIIs, 3 YCL staff, April 2022.

sources. This includes a combination of being from UNDP corporate and donor funds.

YCL also provides a club grant to provide seed funding for national and regional youth organizations in region to promote the program in the region. YCL staff consider that the best use of the funding is to give it directly to the youth of the communities. This kind of initial start-up funding is particularly important in countries such as Laos PDR and Timor Leste where the UNDP COs do not have funding to support YCL activities. It serves to help the national youth organizations there get started on this work while the CO looks for additional local funding.

Finding 32:

The seed funding approach and hiring of national level Youth Focal Points are two factors that have made it possible for YCL to expand to so many countries in such a short period of time. YCL, however, will need to be careful not burn out its personnel in this rapid expansion process.

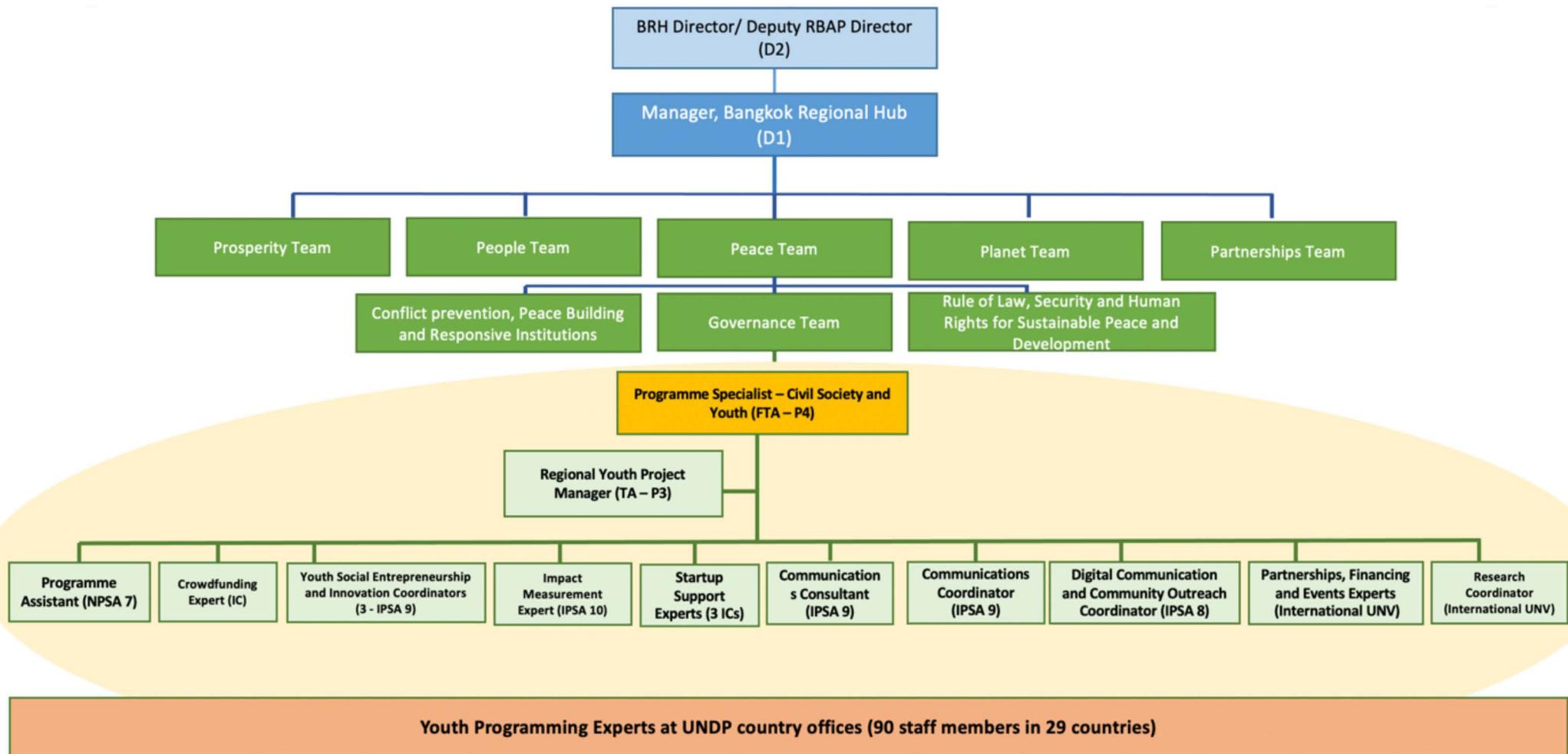
Part of the YCL approach is to hire a youth focal point in each country in which they work. YCL staff observed that “if there is no human being in place to kick-start the work it would not be easy to build anything at the national level”. The YCL model facilitates this. A key role of the Youth Focal Points is to help identify potential local partners as well as mobilize financial and human resources to work on project activities. They do so under the auspices of the UNDP COs and often provide overall youth services to the CO that helps support their youth work in other programmatic areas.

YCL staff see this approach as one that promotes sustainability since it encourages each country to look for local resources. They observed that if they fully funded a CO for YCL activities they would not be able to work in many countries and the project would not have built so much local support.

On paper, the management reporting structure for the CO level Youth Focal Point positions appears to be a bit stretched, with 3 CO level staff being supported by the Project Manager who already has 10 staff reporting to him at the regional team level (see project organigram below). There are also 23 reporting to the regional Youth Entrepreneurship and Innovation Coordinator, and 9 to the Youth Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Specialist, 9 to one Regional Springboard staff, 3 each to two other Springboard staff, and 1 to the Springboard Team Lead. While in most cases the CO level Youth Focal Points also have a UNDP CO-level supervisor, there is considerable communication and support work needed from the regional YCL team to facilitate the work of the Youth Focal Points at the national level.

Organization Chart for the Regional Youth Project

Under Governance and Peacebuilding Team, UNDP Bangkok Regional Team (BRH)



Standard human resource practice is to have no more than 5 direct reports per manager. While these are not all technically direct reports there is still a lot of reporting and support needed per person. YCL needs to consider how to ensure its staff do not experience burnout after several years on the job. Universally youth participants and YCL partner spoke about how open, communicative, helpful, and responsive the YCL regional team is. That all takes considerable time when most regional project staff have multiple staff to support at the national level. It is a dynamic project and there is much inspiration and excitement to be found in working in this kind of positive atmosphere, but the project may need to assess if there is a need to promote a structure that would facilitate a greater work-life balance in the future. This is also a project design sustainability issue.

Finding 33:

Although YCL has been quite successful on multiple fronts, there are concerns that the project is working on too many fronts at the same time.

This issue was raised by both Regional Thematic Advisors and some regional partners. The perception is that the project keeps expanding and creating new program components. The concern is that this may be spreading project resources too thinly or limiting the depth of the work being done in any one area. While the results generated thus far do not support this concern, it is still time for the project to take stock of which specific activities will continue to be most strategic to meet its overall objectives, particularly as YCL is shifting to an increased focus on support to LNOB groups who are going to require more intensive inputs to generate significant results.

The other challenge is the project is almost a victim of its own success. Several partners indicated that they see a real need for UNDP to further expand the YCL model to other regions of the world. Others also made suggestions for other ways the project could/should expand in the future. There was also feedback from the youth participants about different ways the project could further strengthen its approach – all of which would entail more work on the part of the regional and national teams. To both continue to expand its range and depth of services at the same time will require highly strategic resource allocation and the project needs to consider what is realistic and how to manage the growing external expectations.

5.11 Partnership Structure

Efficiency

EQ 11: Is the partnership structure used the most effective and efficient means to support achievement of the intended results?

The Youth Empowerment Alliance is the key partnership structure that YCL uses across all its project components, including but not limited to Springboard.

One YCL objective is to foster knowledge exchange and dialogue between the YEA partners and the YEA and young people, for example, via Regional Summits. Some YEA members are key partners of the Springboard programme (such as Accelerating Asia). Under Springboard, Youth Co:Lab has also initiated a new capacity building program for the national YEA members to build the capacities of the ecosystem partners at the national level. This program is called 'Springboard Amplifier'. However, since it started in spring 2022 it is not within the scope of this evaluation.

| 5.11.1 Regional Partnerships

Finding 34:

In general, both regional and national supporting partners find YCL's partnership structure works well for them. However, corporate partners at both levels find UNDP's contract and branding regulations cumbersome and slow.

YCL's core partnership is with Citi Foundation. It differs from traditional project donor arrangements in that Citi co-designed the project with UNDP and is actively involved in its implementation through the provision of mentoring services. The project was also structured with considerable flexibility. This requires ongoing consultation with Citi as the primary funder. Citi is also the only private sector partner formally allowed to make use of the UNDP logo.

To get approval from UNDP for a private sector partner to be able to do this takes considerable time due to internal policies designed to prevent greenwashing. Several other partners mentioned that the length of time it takes to obtain this approval is a both constraint and disappointment for them.

It took some time in general, particularly at the beginning of the project, for the UNDP and private sector partners to work out effective and efficient ways to work together. UNDP was more accustomed to either implementing projects themselves directly with a government or working through an interme-

diary CSO than working with the private sector. Given that the private sector is driven by a profit motive and that UNDP has its own UN-based institutional culture and set of procedures, it took some explaining for each side to understand how each other really works. They also had to figure out ways to get around UN internal red tape while still maintaining core accountabilities for all parties involved. UNDP and Citi Foundation also had to work out ways for both private sector entities and UNDP to meet their different institutional objectives.

The project also grew quite quickly and as of December 2021 had 202 partners at the regional and national levels. Consequently, YCL has diverse partner arrangements. At the regional level some are quite informal such as that with the Commonwealth Secretariat which involves simply agreeing to work together but without a formal Memorandum of Understanding. Others require more formal agreements such as UNV. This is as YCL has to provide some of the costs of fielding the Volunteers as well as agree to meet UNV's conditions for their treatment and living conditions. Other regional partnership agreements such as with the ILO draw upon a global MOU on Decent Work for Youth between UNDP and the ILO. This facilitates collaborative relationships at both the regional and country levels since it is not necessary to create new institutional linkages. Still others involve a simple exchange of technical expertise and provision of connections to a wide audience of youth in the region or to be able to help target specific LNOB groups.

Four regional partners interviewed indicated that from an outsider perspective they thought YCL was very well structured with clear responsibilities within the team. They also commented on the fact that there was clear communication with different team members and that they always knew who they should be talking to about which issues.

| 5.11.2 Country Level Partnerships

At the country level, YCL with the support of the project Youth Focal Point located in the UNDP CO, helps identify a local organization or organizations that can play the role of innovation hubs and other Springboard suite activities and/or support the delivery of the Movers program. Not all countries participating in YCL implement both the Movers program and the Springboard suite. Much depends upon the priorities outlined in the country national program. It also depends upon which organizations are available to provide the services needed.

YCL has structured its business model at the national level to be flexible. Essentially the regional YCL team provides the YCL model and tools to guide project implementation and each UNDP CO decides what it is the most effective way to proceed based on the partners available and country program priorities. YCL provides seed money to kickstart YCL activities in the country, the salary of most of the Youth Focal points (with Citi Foundation, UNDP and donor funding), and access to regional team expertise, connections with regional partners and regional participants as well as works actively to ensure visibility of the achievements of the youth participants and partner contributions. It is

up to the CO and Youth Focal Point to use these supports as a base to mobilize local and national resources to pay for the national program activities.

Finding 35:

While this structure provides considerable flexibility and contributes to national sustainability of YCL, it also places most responsibility for mobilizing finances to support national activities on the CO and Youth Focal Point. National partners also encounter some procedural challenges based on UN system requirements.

A couple of private sector partners at the national level from diverse countries indicated that they thought the partnership structure was too ad hoc and needed to be more structured with clearer expectations of what they were supposed to do and what kind of support they could expect from YCL. They also wanted greater clarity about the number of times they were going to be called upon to engage. Others were fine with the existing partnership structure but thought that YCL needed to take more of an ecosystem approach since the project is incubating teams who will need further and different types of support later, in terms of capital, capacity building, and networking, particularly regionally and internationally. Given that YCL is founded on an ecosystem approach, this observation may indicate a need for YCL to communicate more clearly to the national private sector partners how the overall project operates and where they fit into this overall picture.

One government supporting partner also made the observation that YCL does not seem to have expertise to run “community” projects, while understanding that this is not their mandate which is to support youth social entrepreneurship and innovation. This is particularly critical for the Movers program which actively promotes that its Volunteers and participants engage in social action projects in their local communities.

Other national partners indicated that they were quite happy with the partnership arrangement but would like to see a couple of things change in the future. The first was to simplify multi-year contracting processes since currently if a contract lasts more than a year their organization has to bid again for the same contract. This adds to administrative and human resource costs for both UNDP/YCL and its partners and sometimes makes it more difficult for the partner(s) to track the progress made by the previous year’s young social entrepreneur cohort. Several YCL staff also observed that their partners experience some inefficiencies in procurement due to UNDP contracting requirements as well as a heavy due diligence processes. This creates extra work for all concerned but much of this is not within YCL’s control.

The second suggestion was to involve the companies providing the mentorship program in the selection process of the youth social enterprises and in

the development of guidelines for the selection process. They thought that this would help to grow the start-ups in a more disciplined fashion.

Finding 36:

The partnership and program approach used in the Pacific Island countries was not as effective or efficient as that used in larger, continentally-based countries.

YCL has not worked in quite the same way in the Pacific Islands and YCL staff themselves think the program approach there needs to be strengthened. One challenge is that in the small island developing states (SIDS) there is often limited local capacity on multiple levels due to small populations and tax bases. This can limit the number and type of private sector partners upon which YCL can call to provide mentoring support to young social entrepreneurs. It also provides a much smaller base on which to build a Movers program. There was no Movers program, for example, in Samoa, one of the countries selected for a more in-depth data collection process for the evaluation.

Discussions with partners in countries where UNDP was more directly involved in YCL implementation generated the observation from supporting partners that this meant UNDP was the main entity to implement Youth Co:Lab activities. When the CO switched to collaborate with a local partner to play some of these roles and when the CO gave local partners more flexibility, the partners observed that the project results were stronger. This was, in part, as the UNDP staff must juggle multiple projects at the same time and had led to the project implementation being rigid at times and slow to react to a rapidly changing context (due to COVID). In general, the national supporting partners in this country thought it would work better if there were greater involvement of private sector partners.

5.12 Monitoring and Evaluation System

Efficiency

EQ 12: To what extent did project M&E systems provide management with a stream of data that allowed it to learn and adjust implementation accordingly?

Finding 37:

YCL has an M&E System that focuses on iterative change. This facilitates learning and implementation adjustments, but the flexibility the project provides at the national level makes it challenging to track project data in a consistent way there. Until recently the M&E system was also missing gender-disaggregated data for the Movers program but has been collecting data on the participation of minority and vulnerable groups.

The iterative approach YCL uses to test new potential new directions is supported by extensive data collection and detailed trackers for participants, event as well as social media analytics. However, it is difficult to find summaries of this data in any one place and to gain an overview of the project's progress without doing a deep dive into this data. This is, in part, as UNDP and Citi, as the key funders of the project have different reporting requirements. This means that YCL needs to maintain multiple data sets. It is also a highly complex project that operates in 28 countries and territories and offers considerable flexibility to each national program as to on what aspect of the YCL model they will focus. This made coming up with a consistent and standardized way of measuring project results at the national level a challenge for YCL. Consequently, it was not possible for the evaluation to assess some of the national level results outside of FGD data and youth participant survey results.

In addition, While YCL has revised its original RRF some of the indicators still either do not apply to the current situation or else do not capture all project results. This has been, in part, as how the project has delivered on its results has changed over the past 5 years. In addition, some of the results YCL is working to achieve are harder to measure such as empowering youth to become social innovators and leaders and to acquire 21st Century skills. To measure this type of result clearly needs a clear definition of what empowerment means in this context and what it leads to in terms of its impact on the youth participants and the communities in which they live. The latter is beyond the scope of the project to determine but there are some more concrete indicators the project could use to measure how youth empowerment is benefiting the youth themselves (refer to Empowerment Framework Analysis).

The project has been quite agile in shifting to both respond to challenges (e.g., COVID-19 lockdowns) and to anticipate future trends. YCL is currently looking for ways to apply this same agility to its M&E system. This is needed as YCL has faced some critical challenges monitoring project progress in some areas. These include some of the following:

For CO-led Programs: All YCL's National Dialogues and programs are anchored in UNDP's COs, where they align with national government's priorities. While the YCL regional team supports CO work to help steer the program objectives, it is left up to the national offices to decide how they would like to best position the YCL-related youth program offerings to add value across their portfolio. While the evaluation found evidence that this is a project strength, it has made it difficult to date to collect consistent, and systemic data for M&E purposes beyond a few national level indicators. YCL is also working with multiple partners at the national level and there are varying monitoring and reporting capacities among these partners. What they report on is determined by a combination of YCL regional, and UNDP CO and funder requirements. This is a highly complex process which needs some simplification from a monitoring and evaluation perspective.

Implementation Modality: Most of YCL's National Programs are delivered in collaboration with national governments and local partners. This means that in some cases external organisations serve as the data collection point and for tracking of the YSE metrics. To add to this challenge YCL's delivery partners may change from year to year. This latter point, while it may add to program delivery quality, can sometimes limit the efficiency of the project's M&E system.

Program Evolution: The program has evolved significantly since its inception and consequently, YCL has snapshots of the data at various stages of its implementation. The project is trying to establish a more comprehensive impact management framework and regional standard that can continue to grow with the program. The plan is to update the project document result log frame this year with the new project strategy to help YCL better capture project results at its current scale and format. The evaluation findings add to this snapshot of YCL results from a qualitative perspective but cannot provide or confirm data on the numbers reached. The evaluation also cannot assess a process that is currently being developed but acknowledges and welcomes the actions being taken to address these challenges.

Changes of National UNDP Youth Focal Points: The turnover rate in the YCL/CO Youth Focal Points has increased the challenges in revisiting legacy data and obtaining updates from YSEs.

Disaggregated data: YCL staff and partner have been diligent in collecting data disaggregated by gender and minority or marginalized status as much as possible. The regional team has developed detailed tracking systems to do this. This practice stands out as both an example for other UNDP projects and programs and provides good feedback for the YCL staff. However, there is now a need to disaggregate the LNOB data with a greater degree of specificity for

each demographic targeted. Further disaggregation is needed for youth with disabilities to determine which specific disabilities the project has been able to accommodate and if there are groups of youth with specific disabilities who have not yet been included.

Section G. Coherence Issues

5.13 Strategy Alignment

Coherence

EQ 3: To what extent is the project aligned to the strategic priorities of its key stakeholders, including key UN strategies and private sector partners?

Finding 38:

Youth Co:Lab is closely aligned with key UN strategies on youth, LNOB and gender and those of its multilateral and CSO partners. Its private sector partners, particularly at the regional level, also share many common objectives.

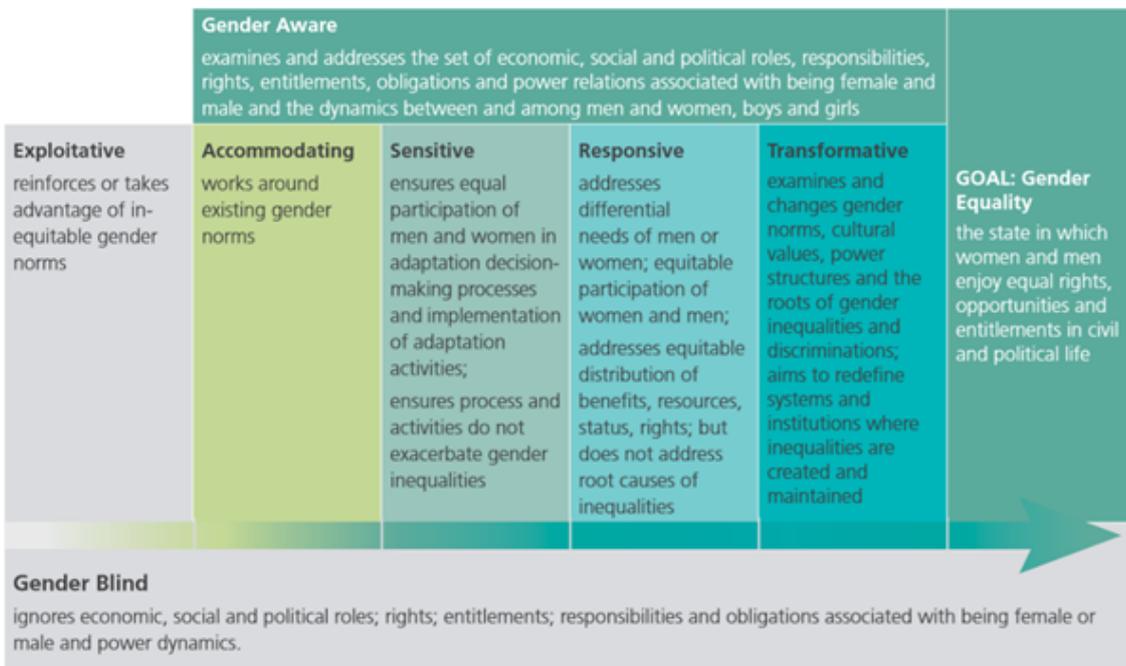
As noted in the introductory section on YCL's Theory of Change, UNDP developed the project to directly address all 4 key objectives in the UN's Strategy on Youth. The key findings previously presented confirm that all its activities directly contribute to these objectives. Many also contribute directly to UN strategies/policies on gender equality and inclusion of LNOB. They also provide evidence that the project's approaches align quite closely with those of many of its private sector partners, particularly at the regional level. If they did not, it is also highly unlikely that YCL would have received as much financial and in-kind support as it has from these partners. As it is, KIs showed a high satisfaction level among regional private sector partners regarding their being mutual goals and objectives. The national supporting private sector partners that provide acceleration and angel investment services also indicated that there is a close alignment between their corporate objectives and that of YCL/UNDP with regard to youth social entrepreneurship and fostering youth social innovation.



Lessons Learned

1. Gender-Responsive:

YCL is gender-responsive in some ways but overall has more of a gender-sensitive approach focused on achieving gender-balanced participation. To achieve more equitable results for all genders, YCL needs to work towards the adoption of a more gender transformative approach in which its program components address the root causes of gender inequality and work towards results which reflect changes in gender relations relevant for the project context. Key issues to address include determining why so many of the project's empowerment results are experienced significantly less by young women as well as to find ways to help young men feel more of a sense of belonging and connection to their communities. There is also a need to assess if there are any significant differences in empowerment and other results for LGBTQI youth. The chart below provides clear definitions showing the difference between gender-sensitive, gender-responsive and gender-transformative.



Source: IGWG and USAID (2017), UNFCCC (2012), Dazé and Dekens (2017), UNDP (2015)

2. Growth approach:

To be considered successful a social enterprise does not need to keep growing or be large. In many contexts, a small enterprise that can sustain itself is also a success story. YCL training and mentoring approaches will need to take this into account. This also applies to YCL itself. The project does not need to keep expanding to be successful and now would be a good time to consider which aspects of its programming the project should consolidate and be very selective about any future growth. In essence, YCL is like a start-up social enterprise itself and needs to take a long and hard look at what skills and human resources the project needs as it moves into its next 5 years of operation.

3. LNOB inclusion:

YCL has been quite successful in reaching out to and including specific LNOB youth groups but to achieve its future targets of reaching even more LNOB youth, YCL cannot simply expect to adapt a project approach that has been predominantly successful with urban, university educated youth. Growth priorities and approaches for social enterprise development may be quite different for some marginalized or minority groups and both require a different approach, define success in different ways and it may take longer to achieve project targets with some of these groups. YCL's outreach to organizations representing LNOB youth has been effective, but the project also needs to look for effective ways to recruit project staff from LNOB groups in diverse roles.

4. Inclusive design approach:

As Youth Co:Lab moves towards a more LNOB targeted approach, it could be useful to reflect on the key principles of inclusive design based developed by the Design Justice Network³² to see if there are any YCL should apply to the design process of its next phase to assist with the inclusion process, noting that YCL already has been applying several of these principles to its work.

These ten design principles include:

Principle 1: We use design to sustain, heal, and empower our communities, as well as to seek liberation from exploitative and oppressive systems.

Principle 2: We center the voices of those who are directly impacted by the outcomes of the design process.

Principle 3: We prioritize design's impact on the community over the intentions of the designer.

Principle 4: We view change as emergent from an accountable, accessible, and collaborative process, rather than as a point at the end of a process.

Principle 5: We see the role of the designer as a facilitator rather than an expert.

Principle 6: We believe that everyone is an expert based on their own lived experience, and that we all have unique and brilliant contributions to bring to a design process.

Principle 7: We share design knowledge and tools with our communities.

Principle 8: We work towards sustainable, community-led and -controlled outcomes.

Principle 9: We work towards non-exploitative solutions that reconnect us to the earth and to each other.

Principle 10: Before seeking new design solutions, we look for what is already working at the community level. We honor and uplift traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge and practices.

5. Localization:

This is a keyword used by multiple national partners and youth participants throughout the data collection process. They thought there was a real need to add local context into YCL training materials, establish long-term relationships with local business partners, and set up the entrepreneurship competition theme to be closely linked to local challenges and national priorities. While the national Youth Focal Points can provide some inputs to this localization process, they already have full workloads. Potential alternatives, therefore, include YCL providing localization grants as a part of the second phase supports, the regional teams providing support for the Youth Focal Points and COs to mobilize funds to help localize national processes and to provide guidelines on where and how this could be done for the project training materials, etc.

6. In-person Contact:

While an important lesson learned from how YCL was able to adapt to the COVID-19 was that YCL could reach many more young people by shifting many of its programming online, both youth participants and YCL national staff strongly crave and need some form of in-person contact in the near future. Innovation challenge participants/winner would like to see alumni meetings. New Springboard participants would like to hear from and meet more experienced Springboard alumni. The in-person contact at the regional summits appears to have led to new partnerships for both YSEs and for YCL's private sector partners. In-person contact is more expensive to organize and facilitate, but after 2 years of pandemic lockdowns may be an expense in which it is worthwhile to invest for strategic meetings/workshops. In-person interactions also generate different types of connections and exchanges and levels of influence among key stakeholders and decision-makers as well as among YSEs.

7. Movers Program Volunteer Costs:

To ensure retention of Movers Volunteers, YCL needs to develop a system to cover the upfront expenses associated with in-person workshops. As the project shifts to a stronger focus on LNOB groups, it also cannot expect the Volunteers to advance these costs out of their own pockets nor is it reasonable to ask its more well-off Volunteers to do so, as many simply do not have these funds to spare even if they are at university.

8. Movers Program Seed Funding:

Seed funding for partners and training targets need to be in proportion with the size of the country's youth population and the capacity of the implementing partner.

9. Movers Program 21st Century Skills:

Movers participants have suggested that they need to also learn how to detect if something is fake news. They have several constructive suggestions to make regarding additional programming that could contribute to their acquisition of 21st Century skills.

10. Movers Program Recruitment:

Movers participants think they could play an effective role as ambassadors for the program, particularly at the high school level. They would like to create more awareness of the program at this level and suggested that this could be a role for Movers participants even if they do not want to become full-fledged Movers Volunteers. They felt it was really important for this younger age group to become aware of the SDGs before they go on to choose what they will do after they graduate from high school.

11. M&E – Monitoring Results at the National Level:

Project flexibility at the national level is a great advantage that allows for adherence to individual UNDP country program priorities, but then YCL's M&E system needs to find an effective way to track national level results in a consistent way. This likely means looking at alternative monitoring systems than the traditional Results and Resources Framework approach.

12. M&E – Tracking Communications Results at the Upstream Level:

The tracking of how many media pieces picked up on YCL research products and activities is an important first step to assess the effect of project communications activities on key stakeholders and decision-makers at the regional and national levels. However, to do so from more of an outcomes and impact perspective will require monitoring changes in practices and it is much more difficult to link those directly to a project's communications activities. This will require a form of contribution tracking and analysis and the use of qualitative indicators.

13. M&E - Youth Participation in Surveys:

YCL staff had indicated that it can be a challenge to get good response rates for online surveys from youth participants and this proved to be the case. Future evaluations may need to address the issue of offering incentives to increase the response rates. There are many ethical and practical issues to address related to offering incentives but if not incentives then YCL will need to find alternative ways to increase youth participant online survey response rates.

14. Evaluation Scope:

An evaluation of this scope requires a 2-3 person team. Ideally to model the project's empowerment objectives it would also be beneficial to train youth beneficiaries to conduct the youth beneficiary FGDs. This serves to increase access to youth perspectives as well as to LNOB groups if the youth facilitators come from those groups. Past experience has shown that this can be done in a way that maintains evaluation objectivity. It does, however, require additional evaluation resources and time to train the youth evaluation FGD facilitators. It is also advisable to focus on no more than 10 main evaluation questions.

15. National Partners:

While there were multiple examples of positive feedback from national partners, there were also more concerns raised by national partners than any other group that participated in the evaluation process. This flags that something is not working as well as it could at the national level. Contracting issues may be outside of YCL's control but YCL could address several of the other suggestions and issues raised by national partners and needs to pay a bit more attention to national partner needs if they wish to maintain the flexible approach the project has developed.



Conclusions

6.1 Relevance Conclusions

EQ1

What are the strengths and potential gaps in terms of project design and implementation advancing youth empowerment and addressing their priority needs in the Asia-Pacific?

| Conclusion 1:

Strengths (Findings – 7, 13, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 34, 35,36, Section 5.22)

The main strengths of YCL's design and implementation lie in:

1. Adoption of a flexible, iterative design and implementation process that has allowed the YCL team to both respond to current priority needs of youth in the Asia-Pacific region about social innovation leadership and the establishment of youth-led social enterprises.
2. A clear vision that as much as possible project activities should be youth-led. The project's leadership has promoted this vision actively and taken multiple risks to make this happen.
3. The ecosystem approach to youth social entrepreneurship that focuses on providing support and strategic inputs at the downstream, midstream and upstream levels.
4. The development of a process which has made it possible for UNDP through YCL to find effective ways of working with the private sector as a key partner.

| Conclusion 2:

Gaps (Findings – 33, 35, 36, 37)

Ironically some gaps in the project design and implementation stem from the same flexibility and iterative process which are its strength. This is most evident at the national level and includes:

1. The absence of a standardized and readily applied monitoring system at the national level that can still be flexible enough to accommodate CO country program priorities.
2. The YCL model still needs further adaptation to work effectively to address the very different operating contexts in small island developing states, most notably in the Pacific Island states.

In addition, as the project moves towards a stronger focus on the even more proactive inclusion of minority and vulnerable groups, YCL will also need to adapt its model to better fit the different constraints affecting and situations of minority and marginalized groups. It may not be realistic to expect them, for example, to jump right into a highly competitive innovation challenge process, be digitally literate, speak fluent English or be willing to commercialize traditional knowledge. This will also mean adjusting project and donor expectations about the numbers the project can reach and the numbers of young people from LNOB groups that will be able to establish sustainable social enterprises. This also has cost implications related to translation of core YCL downstream materials and other costs related to increasing accessibility for these diverse groups.

EQ2

To what extent and in what ways has the project evolved to respond to changes in the operational context due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

| Conclusion 3: COVID-19 Operational Response (Findings 15 & 16)

YCL proved to be highly agile and put great effort into its adaptation to the new realities imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and used this process to extend the reach of the project to much larger numbers of participants and stakeholders than would have been possible using the more traditional in-person training and meeting approach. The decision to work with hybrid models in the future, however, makes a great deal of sense as there is both a great demand for in-person contact as the pandemic restrictions wind down and the type of participation possible online and in-person are different. Both are needed to meet project objectives. In addition, to ensure higher levels of inclusivity for LNOB groups, particularly those living in remote areas with limited or no access to internet connectivity, the need for in-person modalities will increase in the future.

EQ3

To what extent is the project aligned to the strategic priorities of its key stakeholders, including key UN strategies such as the SDGs and UN Youth Strategy and private sector partners?

| Conclusion 4: Project Alignment with Strategic Priorities of Key Stakeholders (Finding 37)

YCL is closely aligned to the key UN strategies such as the UN Youth Strategy and the SDGs and has focused much of its attention to addressing key tenets of this strategy. The project has activities that directly contribute to the 4 main priorities for results outlined in the UN Youth Strategy and has achieved significant results in each. Creating awareness about SDGs among diverse groups in the region has also been a core objective across all its program components and is a central feature of YCL's Movers program. In addition, feedback from diverse sources indicated that YCL's youth participants have taken the achievement of the SDGs on board in a major way and are both actively looking for ways to do this through their social enterprises and to create greater awareness of the SDGs among their peers. These priorities therefore, also appear to align with those of the young people the project is reaching.

Under the category of Leadership example, the UN Youth Strategy states that "the UN will support youth leadership across the organization and build staff awareness and capacity on youth-related issues". YCL has achieved this objective on multiple fronts and strongly supported a youth-led process and youth leadership in social innovation.

Interviews with a wide range of regional and national partners also found that YCL's approach was very much in alignment with their diverse core objectives. This included for private sector partners that operate internationally. They did not see a conflict between their profit motive and being good corporate citizens and welcomed the opportunity to be able to participate in the project precisely because it afforded them a chance to do both.

6.2 Effectiveness Conclusions

EQ4

What are the results achieved against the project RRF indicators?

| Conclusion 5: Results:

Output 1 (Findings – Downstream: 1,2,3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12; Midstream: 10, 13, 14, 29, 34, 35, 36; Upstream: 13, 14)

Given the fact that YCL was so iterative in nature and that the project changed from its original projected activities and indicators considerably over the course of five years, with the resources available the evaluation was able to confirm the quality of key results but not the specific quantitative indicators outlined in the RRF. Given this caveat, the key results the evaluation confirmed included the following:

Output 1: Improved ecosystem on youth empowerment in Asia and the Pacific to achieve SDGs

At the **upstream level** YCL was able to visibly contribute to the strengthening of the ecosystem on youth entrepreneurship and empowerment in Bangladesh where it conducted a national ecosystem diagnostic. It was not successful doing so in the Pacific. The term youth empowerment is very broad but in this context the evaluation interpreted it to mean increasing government consultations with youth related to policy development and change at the upstream level. Members of the YEA also met regularly during regional summits to discuss different approaches being used to support YSEs in the region and to identify key issues for advocacy and YCL played a role in at this by convening partnerships and facilitating learning and knowledge exchange between the ecosystem stakeholders.

At the **midstream level** the evaluation interpreted empowerment as referring to improving YSE access to diverse financing models. In this YCL was successful. There is a question of how many YSEs can be empowered in this way as the YSEs involved are all start-ups and must reach a particular level of growth and maturity to qualify for more scaled up investment funding. The project also only has the capacity able to assist 3 YSEs a year access crowdfunding, but due to the online nature of its training platform can potentially reach larger numbers with its e-commerce modules. At this level YCL is also connecting youth to various other opportunities such as mentorship programmes and has been contributing to youth empowerment by convening partnerships and facilitating learning and a knowledge exchange between the ecosystem stakeholders, via YCL summits and in national dialogues.

At the **downstream level**, YCL has empowered a wide range of youth through a combination of its Movers program and Springboard suite activities. The diverse groups of youth participants indicated that they have become more aware of the SDGs and the role they can play in working to achieve these. They feel more confident and connected to other youth and like-minded people and communities. They have more skills to negotiate their lives and feel empowered to take social action and to change their lives. They feel more recognized by diverse levels of society and that their voices and perspectives are taken more seriously. Those who have gone on to establish their own social enterprises also have the prospect of being empowered financially and in their ability to hire others.

From a quantitative perspective it is not as clear how many diverse groups of youth YCL has empowered. The numbers for the Movers program need to be scaled down to reflect the number of unique participants as opposed to the number of workshop attendees (which is YCL is working on). The estimate the evaluation was able to calculate, however, indicated that the numbers reached and empowered through the Movers program is still impressive.

| Conclusion 6:

Output 2: Empowered Youth (with focus on marginalized groups) avail opportunities for expanding their leadership and entrepreneurship capabilities. (Findings 1,2,3, 7,8, 9, 11, 12)

Although YCL has reached large numbers of youth, many still fall in the more elite group of urban and well-educated youth. YCL has worked actively to be more inclusive and has some strong successes in this area, particularly with indigenous groups but most of their participants still belong to more elite groups. That being said, through the Movers program the Mover Volunteers are using their privilege to reach out to other groups of youth who have less access to projects such as YCL.

In the Springboard suite realistically YCL would not have experienced the high levels of success in such a short period of time it has thus far if it had strictly targeted LNOB groups. In addition, many of more urban and educated would still not have had the opportunity for regional and international engagement the project has afforded them on their own. In essence, the project has piloted its different strategies and approaches on urban and educated youth and now has an effective model it can potentially adapt and refine to ensure that the project can reach and empower less privileged groups effectively. While doing this project staff and partners will need to keep in mind, however, that what works well for the more elite group may not work as well or at all for some LNOB groups. In addition, the true empowerment does not come from trickle down approaches.

| Conclusion 7:

Output 3 - Enhanced learning and skills development programmes for youth entrepreneurship and leadership are designed and delivered through regional dialogues. (Findings 14, 17, 20, 25)

The regional summits and other regional events have delivered enhanced learning and skills development programs for youth entrepreneurs but are equally successful in increasing the visibility and credibility of YSEs at the regional level and at providing both business and social networking opportunities for youth and partners.

| Conclusion 8:

Output 4: Advocacy, research and knowledge exchange Initiative informs new youth entrepreneurship initiatives (Findings 1, 2, 3, 7,8, 9, 11, 12)

This was particularly true at the regional level within UNDP's regional thematic teams, among YCL's regional partners and in the countries that conducted diagnostics of the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem. It was less obvious among national supporting partners but with some examples cited among those interviewed. There was, however, clear evidence that UNDP CO pro-

grams were informed by YCL advocacy, research and knowledge exchange related to youth entrepreneurship. There is also, in fact, a strongly expressed desire/need among YCL's Youth Focal Points for there to be even more of this type of knowledge exchange in the future.

| Conclusion 9:

Output 5: Innovative financing solutions are leveraged for youth entrepreneurship (Findings 10, 13, 14)

YCL has enabled greater access to accelerators and angel investors at the regional and national levels for the YSEs involved in its Springboard suite of activities. The project's crowdfunding model is highly successful but has limited capacity to work with more than a small group of YSEs. However, the evaluation agrees that this intensive, technical accompaniment approach is what is needed to ensure YSE crowdfunding efforts continue to be successful. The e-commerce approach is still at relatively nascent stages and could/needs to be expanded further in the future.

EQ5

Which key internal and external factors have contributed to, affected and/or impeded achievement of expected results?

| Conclusion 10:

Internal Success Factors (Findings – 12, 17, 21, 26, 27, 28,30, 31)

First and foremost, YCL's leadership and the willingness of its leadership to take risks and work in very different ways is what has led the project to operate in innovative ways. UNDP's regional hub management and UNDP's subsequent willingness to find effective ways to work with the private sector have also contributed to project successes. The flexible business model which delegates responsibility to the COs to find national partners but provides them with human resource and technical support to do this also is a significant contributing factor. The institution of a youth-led model and strong focus on recruitment of youth personnel at both the regional and CO levels essentially has meant that the project has been "walking the talk" and showcasing what youth can do as well as introduced a youth perspective and experience at both the regional and national UNDP office levels. The building in of a research budget has also allowed YCL to test out new models and to anticipate upcoming YSE and youth social innovator needs. All of these are factors that should be added to YCL's Theory of Change.

Communication, communication and more communication. YCL staff at all levels communicates well with partners, participants and other UNDP staff and UN agencies. They are seen as high energy and open to talking to and collaborating with all stakeholders as well as leading the way towards change

to mainstreaming youth issues within UNDP at both the regional and national levels.

| Conclusion 11:

Internal Constraining Factors (Finding 30, 34)

UNDP has diverse regulations in place regarding funding, contracting and private sector engagement which partners and UNDP staff themselves consider add to the administrative burden of some partners and makes it time consuming for private sector partners to be able to use the UNDP logo when they are contributing significantly to an event. Slow recruitment processes in some countries and high YCL staff turnover at the national level in some countries have also acted as a constraint to project implementation.

| Conclusion 12:

External Success Factors (Findings – 22, 24, 26, 27)

YCL has introduced a business model that combines youth and experience. This draws upon the energy, innovation, social commitment and willingness and ability of youth to take risks and the experience of a broad group of business mentors and CSO expertise. It works.

Citi Foundation has been quite flexible, open to new ideas and quite generous with its funding and expertise. Their international connections and far-sighted thinking and collaborative partnership approach have contributed significantly to the project's success.

The combination of social impact and private sector development also has meant that the project could appeal to a wide range of partners since it lends itself to multiple objectives and core mandates of governments, CSOs, private sector companies and academic institutions. This flexible project approach has allowed these different groups to take part in ways that advances their own objectives and brings benefits to both sides of the equation.

This is the right time and place for a project like YCL. The project is highly relevant for the region and has tapped into the strong hunger for diverse groups of youth to be connected and to contribute to their communities. Many of those interviewed had no idea that they could combine a business approach with social impact. There is also a strong demand on the part of governments in the region to address youth unemployment issues and to avoid this challenge creating civil unrest. Some of these governments also were not aware that social impact driven businesses were a viable alternative but have been open to and acting upon new ideas.

EQ6

What is the added value of the project's regional approach?

| Conclusion 13:**Value-added of Regional Approach (Findings 20, 21, 33, 23, 24, 25)**

YCL's regional approach has facilitated the following things:

- Highly useful and effective regional and international connections for its partners and youth participants, particularly through its regional summits and forums.
- Use of the project as an advocacy platform and model for youth participation and leadership
- Development of common approaches, models, and resources that different COs could apply as best suited them at the national level.
- Creation of a brand that generates excitement about working with youth across the region.
- Capitalizing on UNDP's credibility and experience and mandate to serve as a convenor to leverage high levels of financing and in-kind contributions from donors, CSOs, other multilateral organizations, academic institutions and the private sector.

EQ7

How effective has the Youth Empowerment Alliance and related partnerships been at the regional and national levels in building an enabling environment and strengthening the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship and social innovation leadership in the Asia-Pacific?

| Conclusion 14:**Youth Empowerment Alliance (Findings 29, 34, 35, 36)**

YEA was quite successful at building a network of highly diverse partners. These partnerships combined with YCL staff at the regional and national levels were particularly effective at strengthening the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship and social innovation leadership at the downstream level. They have increased access to new forms of financing to YSEs to some degree. There will be a need to expand these in the future, noting that it is often only as the YSEs become a bit more established that they will be ready to take advantage of what angel investors can offer them. The accelerators at the national and regional levels are helping them reach this point. However, not all

YSEs will either need or want to grow in size – for some there are advantages in remaining micro- or small enterprises. Thus, it is critical for YCL in the design of future strategies to provide a range of financing solutions to suit different sizes of YSEs. There is also a need to distinguish between the different ways that YSEs that sell products and those that sell services can grow as well as the different ways that female and male entrepreneurs grow their businesses and the different gender-based constraints (and opportunities) they face. Providing a continuum of technical support and financing solutions will also serve the project well as it moves to a stronger focus on working with LNOB groups.

YCL has created greater awareness among some governments in the region of what is needed to strengthen the enabling environment and ecosystem for youth entrepreneurs through its diagnostics of national youth entrepreneurship ecosystems. YEA has capitalized on this in establishing a partnership with the Islamic Development Bank to fund more of these studies. This work has created a foundation on which YEA can build in the future to expand these diagnostic processes and policy influencing processes in additional countries in the region.

EQ8

How effective have the project's communications activities been in terms of increasing visibility of the youth empowerment agenda and influencing decision making among the key stakeholders in the region?

| Conclusion 15:

Communications (Findings 17, 18, 19)

YCL's communications activities have been quite successful in increasing the visibility of youth achievements in the region. The project's knowledge products and the ways they are disseminated have also served to increase visibility of the youth empowerment agenda among key stakeholders in the region and have generated a positive response. The regional summits have also contributed to this increased visibility, particularly as YCL's communication team has tried to link the launch of major knowledge products to these large-scale events that have a wide range of influential stakeholders. These key stakeholders include UNDP itself as well as with other multilateral organizations and selected members of the private sector in addition to governments and CSOs. There is also clear evidence that UNDP COs and their government partners are allocating more funding for youth programming in the region which implies much greater awareness of the importance of doing so.

The challenge remaining is how to link these changes directly to communications. Interviews with a sample of CO staff did not identify communications per se as a contributing factor to this type of change. However, the key informants also tended to focus on results for youth participants although they

were asked about policy and ecosystem level changes. In countries where there have been policy changes it has been mainly the influence and communications related to the ecosystem diagnostics. There were, however, a couple of countries where there have been policy or youth empowerment agenda changes key informants directly attributed to either key messages about youth relayed through regional summits or the presence of the UNDP Youth Focal Points. The latter is tied to some extent to YCL's branding as the youth leadership project in the region.

EQ9

How effective has the project been in mainstreaming youth empowerment in UNDP at the national and regional levels and in its different thematic areas of work?

| Conclusion 16:

Mainstreaming of Youth Empowerment in UNDP (Findings 20, 21)

YCL has been highly successful in mainstreaming youth empowerment and issues within UNDP at the national and regional levels and in its different thematic areas of work. Diverse informants attributed this to the combination of the regional YCL team working tirelessly to collaborate with the different thematic teams at the regional level and with the introduction of Youth Focal Points at the national level within UNDP's COs as well as the project's high profile through its regional summit work and the caliber of its regional and private sector partners.

6.3 Efficiency Conclusions

EQ10

Have sufficient resources (financial and human) been strategically allocated for the achievement of project results?

| Conclusion 17:

Resource Allocation (Findings 6, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33)

The most strategic use of human resources YCL has made has been the hiring of national level Youth Focal Points to support YCL's work at the national and COs levels. This has facilitated both YCL programming in each country as well as helped mainstream gender within the national UNDP country programs. YCL has also made strategic use of other human resource options available through the UN system as well as through their diverse partners.

However, YCL also faces some significant staff turnover challenges at the national level. These may be, in part, due to the insecurity of the staff contracts. The project staffing model also has far too many personnel reporting to most of the regional Team Leads and to the Project Manager. The staff team is highly effective, but as the project itself matures, it may need to look at moving from operating in start-up mode itself to a staffing model that facilitates further growth (as needed) and a more efficient management structure. The project has started to move in this direction with the hiring of more technical expertise but also could benefit from a human resource structure review.

There is also a need to revisit the seed money funding allocations at the national level and come up with a system that takes population size and partner capacity into account more effectively.

EQ11

Is the partnership structure used the most effective and efficient means to support achievement of the intended results?

| Conclusion 18:

Partnership Structure (Findings 34, 35, 36)

YCL's partnership structure works quite well at the regional level and the project has been particularly adept at finding ways to work effectively with the private sector. To serve 28 countries and territories effectively the project also needed to have a structure which could provide both regional and national level services, support and vision. While YCL could have followed a more traditional route and outsourced more of its work to CSOs as intermediaries, this would have meant the project would have had less flexibility to work with a wide range of highly relevant and interested partners and that UNDP would not have had direct access to a lot of the drive and skills that YCL staff and partners have brought to the project's implementation at the national and regional levels.

The partnership structure at the national level is bit more challenging. It works well in many countries but does lend itself to changes in partners which affect the quality of monitoring activities and occasionally also program delivery. National partners are also more likely to find UNDP regulations to be an administrative constraint and have observed that it would be more efficient to offer them multi-year contracts if possible.

EQ12

To what extent did project M&E systems provide management with a stream of data that allowed it to learn and adjust implementation accordingly?

| Conclusion 19:**M&E Systems (Finding 37)**

YCL collects a wealth of detailed monitoring data and uses this data to adjust its implementation as needed quite effectively. Where it has faced challenges is at the national level. The project's flexible approach has meant the project found it difficult to report on a standardized and easy to apply set of disaggregated indicators, particularly with regard to YSE metrics. YCL, therefore, has only been able to clearly track the sustainability and progress of regionally nominated YSEs in a systematic way. This represents just 34% of the 1,240 YSEs established due to the project's activities. There are also uneven degrees of disaggregation for the Movers participants data, noting a gradual improvement in this over the course of the project's implementation. The new impact management/planning, monitoring and evaluation framework YCL is currently working on aims to strengthen project capacity and processes in this regard but has some significant challenges to address.

YCL has detailed analytics related to its communications activities. Within the scope of its communications strategy YCL's communications have been highly successful in creating more visibility for youth issues and YSEs as well as reaching a wide audience. However, it is often difficult to link higher level direct project results with communications reach statistics. This is an overall challenge related to the measurement of communications outcomes in general. However, as the project moves into a stronger focus on upstream results strategies future communications frameworks will need to look at adding in additional analytic categories that address this higher level of change and how it is influenced by YCL communications.

There also may be a need to take a closer look at just which employability skills the Movers program is teaching its general participants (as opposed to the Movers Volunteers) and to develop specific project indicators to measure these.

6.4 Sustainability Conclusions

EQ13

To what extent can the achieved results be expected to be sustainable?

| Conclusion 20:

Sustainability of Results for Youth Participants (Findings 5, 6, 9)

The project has been able to track the sustainability of the YSEs established through the CO regional nomination process. These results are quite impressive with over 80% of the YSEs found to be still operating and in many cases in the process of expanding. For the 69 YSEs from this group of 430 that had been part of the programme for six months or more as of January 2022 and raised \$1,000 or more, they have raised high levels of capital and self-report benefiting large numbers of other people. For another 98 YSEs in this group of 430 YCL was able to track that they reported that the number of livelihoods their enterprises enhanced as of January 2022 was 55,000. This averages out to 561 per enterprise. YCL does, however, need to dig deeper into how the YSEs define benefits and livelihood enhancement to develop consistency in this self-reporting process. YCL also needs to be able to find a way to assess the sustainability of more YSEs at the national level. Without a systematic approach to this, sustainability stories remain at the anecdotal level and there is a risk that only the success stories will be showcased.

For the Movers participants there are 2 sustainability issues. The first lies with the 1 to 2% of Movers trainees who go on to become Movers Volunteers. This group acquires a clear set of skills and contacts that have enhanced their lives in multiple ways and these experiences and knowledge set will remain with them for the rest of their lives. For the rest of the Movers trainees there are high satisfaction ratings given as feedback for the training they have received and both groups indicated that the connections they have made through the project are quite important for them. For this latter group however, given that they attend an average of 1.66 workshops each (i.e., approx. 2 workshops each) what appears to be the most sustainable for them is increased awareness of the SGDs, their potential role in working towards the achievement of these and increased confidence and belief in themselves and what they can do. All these are sustainable results although YCL would need to conduct a longitudinal study to determine to what extent this knowledge and change in self-perception last and how this influences their future choices and employability. For the LNOB groups and for young women, being included and listened to and told that their voice and experiences have value often represents a huge change for them and tends to have lasting results.

| Conclusion 21:**Sustainability of Results for Partners (Findings 22, 24)**

YCL has not been measuring the project's benefits for its different partners. However, given that it operates using a strong partnership model YCL could consider doing this over the course of the next five years. The evaluation clearly showed that each type of partner at the regional and national level sees multiple advantages in participating in and contributing to the project in different ways. The biggest benefits seem to be accruing to the larger-scale regional organizations, both corporate and multilateral, and all spoke of the longer-term benefits their participation is bringing them. Some smaller CSOs at the national level also expressed that they have experienced positive changes in their capacity which they will sustain. It was not as clear what the results and sustainability were for national level private sector partners. For government partners, it was mixed – with some making changes in policies and policy implementation processes related to youth and/or entrepreneurship and others gaining increased awareness of youth issues in their countries. The challenge with this type of increased awareness is that it is highly vulnerable to staff changes – which in some governments can be frequent and limit sustainability. As YCL moves increasingly towards supporting the building partner capacity in its next 5 years the project will need to be selective and strategic about where it invests in this type of capacity building from a sustainability perspective.

| Conclusion 22:**Sustainability of Project Design (Finding 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 34)**

Looking at the project's three streams approach the premise is that each level of support will help reinforce change at the other two levels. This also appears to be the case. The more successful the diverse youth participants are, the more this helps build the YCL brand and helps the youth themselves become influencers. They are excited about this role and bring a lot of energy to it. This, in turn, catches the attention of and impresses different stakeholder groups.

The midstream level design is based on a strong partnership approach through the Youth Empowerment Alliance and YCL's overall business model and mode of operation is partially based on the premise that its partners will continue the work they have been doing with YSEs and youth participants in general. The evaluation found that this is a well-founded assumption, particularly at the regional level. There is likely to be more flux and change at the national level and some adjustments are still needed there in terms of the type of funding support, contracting processes and the establishment of realistic expectations. However, overall, the partnership approach appears to be working and is sustainable, particularly as the core partner, Citi Foundation, co-designed the project and therefore has an ongoing and vested interest in seeing it continue to be successful as well as has contributed knowledge and skills that help ensure a sustainable design.

The alternative financing models related to accelerators and angel investors also contribute to a sustainable design as long as YCL is able to keep identifying high potential YSEs and continue to support them as new start-ups. YCL's success partially lies in the very hands-on approach it uses to support the YSEs and other youth participants who are then able to take advantage of the alternative financing modes. This is as much a management and project culture approach as a design approach but is a critical success and sustainability factor. It will be even more so as the project moves into targeting an increasing number of LNOB participants.

To sustain this level of support, however, YCL will need to take a serious look at its staffing models and the size of its team. As the project itself matures and as do the YSEs that started with YCL there will be a need for additional and different types of expertise. To avoid high levels of staff turnover at national level, YCL may also need to re-examine the type of contract it offers and the project's high level of reliance on volunteers as a part of its staffing model. The latter is only sustainable as an approach if these volunteers can commit to stay in place for at least a two-year period. Three years would be ideal but likely is not realistic. Thus far the project has been able to offer ongoing contracts to roughly a third of its UNV volunteers.

At the upstream level YCL's ecosystem diagnostic process has proven to be sustainable as an approach. The demand for this work is increasing at the government level and there is strong donor interest in funding it. There is also increasing demand for YCL's regionally focused knowledge products and no shortage of thematic issues to address. Thus, this aspect of YCL's work is a sustainable part of the project's design as long as the project can find other organizations to help pay for this work and provide the relevant expertise.

What is less sustainable about the project design is YCL's constant growth and addition of new project components before the project has worked out an effective way to systematically monitor their current results at the national level. There is merit in all the additions made thus far. However, YCL also cannot be everything to everyone. Currently there is considerable pressure on YCL to work at both ends of the YSE spectrum, i.e., identify and support an increasing number of potential YSE unicorns with regard to national and regional growth and success and to increasingly target LNOB groups. These approaches will yield results at different rates and will require different approaches that will require some reflection and consultation to determine.

In addition, YCL cannot continue to add on new or expanded project components using its current lean staffing approach. At some point, the project is going to need to consolidate its current directions and determine future expansion priorities possible with the resources available or else find additional resources to permit further expansion after this overall reflection process. The main potential expansion process several partners mentioned was the idea of starting a Youth Investment Trust. This is an idea that YCL explored but had found that UNDP regulations did not easily facilitate. There, however, remains merit in this partner recommendation if an administrative solution can be found.

6.5 Gender and LNOB Conclusions

EQ14

To what extent has the project been able to mainstream gender throughout the intervention, including in its design, implementation and monitoring?

EQ15

To what extent have the project's actions to strengthen the capacities of the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem been gender-responsive?

EQ16

What have been the most effective strategies to empower young women and vulnerable and minority youth?

| Conclusion 23:

Gender and LNOB (Section 5.6; also Finding 4, Case Study 3)

YCL's project document states that: "Youth Co:Lab has a strong focus on gender mainstreaming and strengthening young women's economic empowerment throughout all project activities and all 5 outcomes". However, the YCL ProDoc (2021 revision) only references gender in its description of some challenges facing youth and citation of other UNDP projects that focus on gender equality. In addition, only one key result in its RRF calls for collection of disaggregated data by gender. There is also only one requiring that data be disaggregated by LNOB categories (for Output 2, key results 2.3 and 2.1 respectively and no description of they will mainstream gender in all project activities. Key result 2.1 does refer to a target of reaching 50% marginalized groups for training for LNOB groups.

YCL has been much more explicitly gender-sensitive than gender-responsive in its implementation and has focused on achieving gender-balanced participation. The project's main strategies to mainstream gender have been for all staff to work actively to ensure equitable female/male participation rates, ensure that the Movers curriculum includes a module on gender equality, that female-led YSE teams are showcased at regional summits and project communications and the publication of a regional study on the barrier and constraints facing young women entrepreneurs. YCL has been quite successful in achieving gender balanced participation and this, in and of itself represents a major achievement. However, what was clear from the results of the youth participation survey is that these strategies still need some tweaking to ensure more equitable results for the diverse genders of youth participating in the project. Thus, YCL still needs to mainstream gender from a quality of par-

ticipation perspective. Numbers are not enough. The same applies to the participation of LNOB groups.

While recognizing there has been considerable success in empowering both female and male participants, the project needs to find out why the extent of empowerment results for the diverse genders has been so different. This means that the next phase of the project needs to be informed by a gender analysis of the gender-based factors acting as constraints for diverse genders to benefit from the project in more equal ways. This will require, in part, a review of all training modules and capacity building processes from a gender perspective. To make this analysis even more inclusive it would make sense to do this analysis from a Gender Equality, Disability and Social Impact perspective. This would then include an analysis of the different constraint and opportunities affecting the extent and quality of participation and results for diverse gender and LNOB groups.

It will also mean making use of the findings of the existing study YCL commissioned to assess the key issues and constraints facing young women entrepreneurs in the region in 2021. It will also mean using the project's wealth of tracking data to help track and then analyze related results about whether there are significant gender-based or LNOB differentials in the capital YSEs have been able to raise and other growth and success indicators. For example, are there more female-led YSEs in services and male-led YSEs developing technology-based solutions? What types of disabilities do the young people who have been able to participate in the project have and which disability groups have not yet participated or haven't been able to and why? What does transformative change look like for these different groups and how do they themselves define success? YCL has developed a draft LNOB Strategy, but how it will be operationalized over the next five also needs to be informed by an analysis of what are the main constraints to quality participation for the diverse LNOB groups.

When setting this type of target there are also diverse factors the project needs to consider. The first is what is the proportion of these diverse groups in the general population in a particular country. Data on the numbers of those identify as LGBTQI in any given country are hard to come by due to the sensitivity of this information and risks involved in this information being made public. It is also typically not collected as an official statistic. However, Statistics Canada has just released the first census done globally which asked respondents to identify their gender identity and included non-binary and other LGBTQI categories. It found that 15% of Canadians self-identified as belonging to diverse gender minorities.³³ Although this statistic is from a different region, it could possibly be used as a base to help determine targets supported by further related regionally based research. Approximately 15% of people in the world have a disability.³⁴

³³ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/210615/dq210615a-eng.html>

³⁴ <https://humanity-inclusion.org.uk/en/action/disability-the-global-picture>

The World Bank indicates that around 6% of the global population is indigenous but that they represent 19% of the world's poor.³⁵ YCL needs to set LNOB targets for specific marginalized and minority groups based on this kind of proportional demographic representation statistic as opposed to using a blanket 10% target.

Overall, the most effective strategies for young women are those which help them realize that they have value, which build their confidence and show them that there are multiple opportunities and choices for them in the future. For the LNOB groups, depending upon the level of discrimination they have faced, similar approaches are most effective. That combined with the partnerships which Youth Co:Lab has developed with organizations that are representative of the diverse LNOB groups have helped the project reach more from these groups. With the Movers program, it is the youth outreach from members of LNOB communities which has been the most effective.

Security related to accessibility

An issue no one mentioned but which may be a concern is that the future shift to more in-person workshops could potentially increase physical security risks for the Movers Volunteer facilitators (and possibly also participants). YCL's future training and program policies will need to address these risks in proactive ways.

EQ17

To what extent has the project been able to promote structural/ institutional changes to advance the inclusion and empowerment of minority youth (e.g., influence policies or regulations)

| Conclusion 24:

Structural and Institutional Changes (Findings 13, 14, 18)

The main structural changes to advance the inclusion and empowerment of minority youth that have taken place thus far included the following:

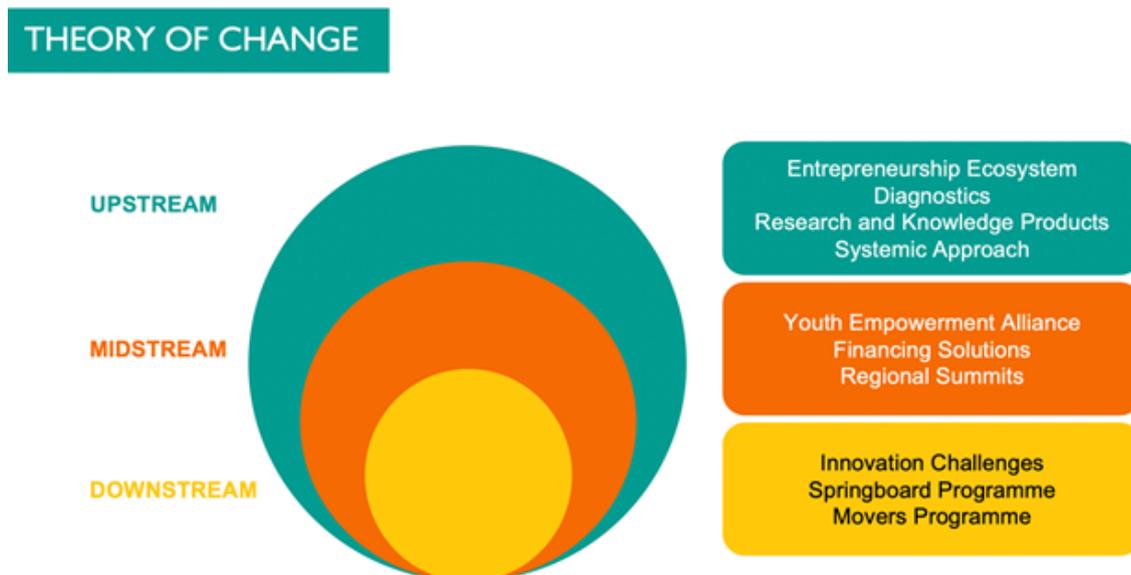
1. The hiring of Youth Focal Points to support YCL and other youth activities at the CO level. In at least one case, the CO concerned has taken on the funding of this position from its core funding and several in other countries are funded through UNDP corporate funds.
2. The inclusion of consideration of minority youth in the ecosystem diagnostic methodology.

3. The formation of partnerships with regional and national organizations that represent or are from the minority groups concerned to find effective ways to increase participation from those groups in YCL activities.

6.6 Youth Co:Lab Theory of Change

The evaluation findings confirm the underlying assumptions of the Theory of Change that Youth Co:Lab presented to the evaluation as a part of the evaluation induction session and adopted by the project in 2019. This differs from the Theory of Change presented in YCL's ProDoc considerably and provides a simplified and more integrated approach to the youth leadership and social entrepreneurship ecosystem. The original Theory of Change outlines more direct linkages between types of activities and specific project outputs and provides considerably more detail about longer term results anticipated and cross-cutting issues. It does not use the downstream, midstream and upstream approach.

While the more simplified Theory of Change is easier to follow and is more explicitly based on an ecosystem approach, it could be strengthened by revising it to add in the assumptions related to the internal and external factors that are contributing to change at each stream level. The revised Theory of Change diagram below provides one example of how YCL could do this as a starting point for future discussion.



Internal Change Factors

Youth Co:Lab Staff Capacity,
Commitment & Vision

Capacity of YCL to localize project
materials & approaches

Increased flexibility of UNDP
regulations

Ongoing viability of low cost
staffing models

Viable adaptation of YCL model for
LNOB groups

Ongoing commitment to hire
youth for UNDP/YCL roles

Application of gender-
transformative approaches

UPSTREAM

**Entrepreneurship
Ecosystem
Diagnostics
Research and
Knowledge
Products
Systematic
Approach**

MIDSTREAM

**Youth
Empowerment
Alliance
Financing
Solutions
Regional
Summits**

DOWNSTREAM

**Innovation
Challenges
Springboard
Programme
Movers
Programme**

External Change Factors

Alignment with partner objectives

Partner flexibility & commitment

Interest in supporting youth &
entrepreneurship policy & political
will of governments

Commercial scalability of YSEs

Relevance of YCL programs for
diverse groups/genders of youth

Ongoing regional stakeholder
demand for youth-related
knowledge & regional exchanges
on YSE & youth social innovation
issues

Commitment, high energy and
dynamism of youth participants



Recommendations

Recommendation Group 1: Inclusion and Targeting of LNOB Groups

As the project moves towards a stronger focus on targeting LNOB groups, YCL will need to consider:

1. Conducting an LNOB analysis to identify the constraints affecting and opportunities possible for specific groups within the LNOB designation to determine how to adapt or change the YCL program components to make them more accessible to these diverse LNOB groups. This analysis would need also need to include consideration of relevant gender equality issues.
2. Hiring an LNOB expert/coordinator on the regional team to support both regional and national LNOB efforts. This role could potentially be combined with a gender advisor role to create one position that focuses on the achievement of different aspects of equality for the project.
3. The project should also model its commitment to LNOB group inclusion through its future hires in other positions, and not only as experts in LNOB representation but also in more general positions such as Youth Focal Points. UNV, for example, is working to help find placements for UNVs with disabilities and could potentially be tapped to help identify qualified candidates.
4. Ensure the project document and RRF includes explicit, overarching LNOB results objectives and statements and that the project's indicators are disaggregated by the diverse types of LNOB groups and by gender as much as possible at both the regional and national levels. This would include setting more proportionate targets for the participation levels of LNOB groups and realistic timelines for how long it may take for different LNOB groups to get to the same level of achievement as YCL YSEs and Movers Volunteers from more elite groups. It also may entail defining success in different ways and consulting with the different LNOB groups to help develop a mutually agreed success vision and indicators for both the YSE and Movers components for LNOB groups that take their different challenges and enablers into account.
5. Discuss the provision of ongoing translation services with UNV's online resource team to increase LNOB group access to YCL training materials in countries where English is not the national language.

Recommendation Group 2: Mainstreaming Gender to Promote Gender Equality

6. Conduct a gender analysis as a part of the project design to determine the factors that have contributed to the gender differentials in empowerment levels for diverse youth from YCL activities and what are the comparative success levels for diverse genders of YSEs at both the regional and national levels to help guide YCL future actions to reduce these gender-based differentials in project results. This analysis also needs to integrate an intersectional analysis and could therefore be combined with the LNOB analysis.
7. To achieve gender equality results beyond the participation level, ideally the project should hire at least a half-time mid-level to senior Gender Advisor to support the regional YCL team and national Youth Focal Points. As indicated in recommendation Group #1 - 2 above this position could potentially be combined with the LNOB Advisor position. The alternative is to rely on support from the regional and sub-regional Gender Team supplemented by gender consultants for specific gender analysis and curriculum review tasks. However, generally a project of this size has its own dedicated Gender Advisor.
8. Ensure that project's design is informed by the gender analysis and includes explicit gender equality objectives with clear quantitative and qualitative targets and indicators in the RRF, accompanied by an adequate budget to achieve more transformative change from a gender equality perspective. The project design also needs to outline which strategies it will use to reduce the gender-based differentials in the project's success rates on diverse metrics beyond stating that gender will be mainstreamed.

Recommendation Group 3: National Partners and Approaches

9. To avoid on-going contracting bottlenecks at the national level which national partners found quite time consuming, YCL could work with the COs to develop a multi-year contracting process where this is possible.
10. Develop support systems (grants, guidelines, access to UNV online resources, etc.) to assist national programs localize the YCL approach.

Recommendation Group 4: M&E

11. Revise the M&E system overall to ensure a consistent approach to data collection and monitoring at the regional and national levels at different stages of implementation and to ensure the project captures all results to which it is contributing both directly and indirectly. This will require careful reflection on what constitutes a result for the project related to all three areas of intervention, namely: Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship as well as what should the project's key aggregated benchmarks should be. It will also require adequate full-time human resources to both redesign the M&E system and to help maintain consistent and standardized data collection at both the regional and national levels.
12. YCL's final report needs to report on both the total number of workshop attendees (i.e., seats filled) in the Movers program as well as the total number of unique workshop participants and to apply this distinction in its monitoring indicators moving forward.
13. The project's Theory of Change should be revised to add in the assumptions related to the internal and external factors that are contributing to change at each stream level as well as to integrate key cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and addressing LNOB groups.

Recommendation Group 5: Human Resources and Contracting

14. Currently YCL has too many staff reporting directly to one Project Manager and to the Team Leaders. The project needs to consider developing a more efficient management structure in which there are no more than 5 direct reports to each management position. As a part of this internal review the project team needs to consider what would be the most effective and efficient management and operational structure and optimum size for the regional team with existing and anticipated future project resources to support both the current workload and anticipated areas of expansion given that the project is shifting from a start-up phase to more established business model. This would also involve not taking on any new program components until the project has conducted its internal human resource review and has assessed what is reasonably possible with the project resources and with regard of what YCL can ask of its partners as well as what level of support YCL can provide to these partners.

Efficiency

Sustainability

Annex 1:

Excerpt from Evaluation Terms of Reference

Excerpt from Terms of Reference

3) EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY GUIDING QUESTIONS

The evaluation questions define the information that must be generated as a result of the evaluation process. In this evaluation, the questions are structured under the following criteria, defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC): relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. In addition, the evaluation will address cross-cutting questions related to gender, human rights/leaving no one behind principles.

| Evaluation Criteria | Guiding questions |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Relevance and coherence | To what extent have the project design and the project's implemented activities been relevant for addressing the identified development challenges and advancing youth empowerment in the region? |
| | To what extent and in what ways does the project offer a unique value proposition to project stakeholders that distinguishes it from other initiatives in the youth empowerment space? |
| | To what extent is the project aligned to the strategic priorities of its key stakeholders, including UNDP Country Offices and private sector partners? |
| | To what extent and in what ways has the project evolved to respond to changes in the operational context due to the COVID-19 pandemic? |
| | What are the strengths and potential gaps in terms of project design and implementation in responding to the current context in Asia-Pacific? What are the risks and opportunities? |
| | To what extent have the project design and implementation been consistent with the gender-responsive, human rights based and LNOB / diversity and inclusion approaches? |
| | To what extent have the project activities been relevant for supporting key ecosystem stakeholders, such as governments and the private sector, to advance youth empowerment in the region? |

| Evaluation Criteria | Guiding questions |
|----------------------|---|
| | <p>To what extent have young people, including young women, vulnerable and minority youth, found the project relevant to their needs?</p> <p>How coherent is the project with the UNDP's RPD and SP and Youth 2030 – the UN Strategy on Youth?</p> |
| Effectiveness | <p>To what extent has the project achieved its expected results? What are the areas of greatest achievements? What are the results achieved against the project RRF indicators?</p> <p>In which areas has the project not achieved its expected results? What have been the main challenges in the achievement of the expected results?</p> <p>What are the key internal and external factors that have contributed to, affected and/or impeded the achievement of expected results?</p> <p>How effective were the project implementation strategies?</p> <p>What is the added value of the project's regional approach and to what extent the project has been able to tap into opportunities provided by the regional approach?</p> <p>Do the project workstreams complement each other effectively? What are the strengths and potential gaps?</p> <p>How effective have the project's partnership strategies been for building the enabling environment and strengthening the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship, leadership, and social innovation in Asia-Pacific? What are the key lessons learnt from the partnerships and how could these be leveraged in the future?</p> <p>How effective have the thought leadership, advocacy and communications activities of the project been in terms of increasing the visibility of the youth empowerment agenda and influencing decision making among the key stakeholders in the region? What have been the biggest successes and challenges?</p> <p>What have been the most effective strategies in terms of empowerment of young women and vulnerable and minority youth? What have been the key challenges in advancing this agenda?</p> <p>How effective has the project been in mainstreaming youth empowerment in UNDP and UN programming and in different thematic areas of work?</p> |
| Efficiency | <p>Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically and utilised efficiently to achieve expected results?</p> <p>Have resources been sufficient for the achievement of results?</p> <p>To what extent and in what ways was the project able to leverage co-investment from other stakeholders to support the achievement of project objectives?</p> |

| Evaluation Criteria | Guiding questions |
|-----------------------|---|
| Efficiency | <p>To what extent was the project management structure appropriate and efficient in generating the expected results at regional and national levels?</p> <p>To what extent did project M&E systems provide management with a stream of data that allowed it to learn and adjust implementation accordingly?</p> <p>Has the partnership structure of the project been effective and efficient to support achievement of the intended results?</p> <p>Have the resources been used efficiently to support the empowerment of the most vulnerable youth and young women?</p> |
| Sustainability | <p>To what extent can the achieved results be expected to be sustainable?</p> <p>Which factors are contributing positively to the sustainability of the project's results?</p> <p>What are some of the possible challenges in terms of sustainability of the project results?</p> <p>What kind of factors are contributing to the sustainability of the results achieved in the empowerment of young women and minority youth, such as youth with disabilities, sexual minorities or indigenous youth? What are the key challenges or gaps?</p> <p>To what extent will financial and other resources and institutional structures be available to sustain the results and benefits achieved by the project beyond the project period?</p> <p>What can be done to improve the sustainability of the project results?</p> |
| Gender | <p>To what extent has the project been able to mainstream gender throughout the intervention, including design, implementation and monitoring of the project?</p> <p>What are the key project results with regards to direct empowerment of young women and addressing systemic barriers to the empowerment of young women?</p> <p>To what extent has the project been able to strengthen the capacities of the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem in terms of gender-responsiveness?</p> |

| Evaluation Criteria | Guiding questions |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Human rights / Leaving no one behind | <p>To what extent has the project been able to reach the most vulnerable, such as young people with disabilities, indigenous youth, LGBTIQ+ youth, and support the empowerment of minority youth?</p> <p>To what extent has the project been able to empower and support young social entrepreneurs to support vulnerable communities through their business models?</p> <p>To what extent has the project been able to promote structural/institutional changes to advance the inclusion and empowerment of minority youth (e.g., influence policies or regulations)</p> <p>To what extent has the project been able to build the capacities of the key stakeholders to advance the leave no one behind agenda?</p> |
| Lessons Learnt and recommendations | <p>What are the key lessons learnt during the project implementation?</p> <p>What are the recommendations for the future programme design? The recommendations should be firmly based on evidence and analysis, clear and result- oriented and realistic in terms of implementation.</p> <p>What could be the potential focus areas or priorities of the project's strategy in its next cycle?</p> |

4) METHODOLOGY

The evaluation will adhere to the UNDP Evaluation Policy and UNDG Norms & Standards (provided in Annexes) with its findings and judgements based on sound evidence and analysis, clearly documented in the review report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) to the extent possible, and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned. Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out. The limitations of the methodological framework and analysis should also be discussed in the report.

The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with the evaluation reference group, partners and other stakeholders, and direct beneficiaries, including young women and minority youth.

The final evaluation should employ a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods and instruments. The final methodology and data sources will be agreed upon in the inception report of the final evaluation. Some of the possible methods and data sources are provided in the table below.

| | |
|---|---|
| Desk review | <p>Review of relevant documents including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Document, Annual Work Plans, results and resources framework (RRF) and Theory of Change (ToC) • Project Monitoring and Evaluation Data • Survey data • Project progress and activity reports • Third party feedback on the project • Knowledge products, advocacy and communication materials and content • Youth and stakeholder consultation data collected during the project implementation • Financial and management information • Relevant global, regional, and national research studies • RBAP Regional Programme Document, RBAP Regional Programme Document Mid-Term Review, UNDP Strategic Plan, Youth 2030 – UN Strategy on Youth • Citi Foundation guidelines |
| Interviews and focus group discussions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with UNDP senior management, Citi Foundation, selected government counterparts and private sector partners, project stakeholders, entrepreneurs, youth participants, others • Focus group discussions with youth participants, Youth Co:Lab partners, UN partners, others. - Briefing and debriefing sessions with UNDP and Project team as well as with other partners will be organised to ensure triangulation of the various data sources to maximise the validity and reliability of data. |
| Case studies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies on youth-led social enterprises / young entrepreneurs (selection to be determined) • Case studies on specific Youth Co:Lab country programmes (country selection to be determined) |
| Surveys | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of youth, youth entrepreneurs, partners • Tracer surveys of participants in Youth Co:Lab activities |

Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix

NB: Refer to Limitations of Evaluation section – It was not possible to verify or provide quantitative data for many indicators except for youth participants through the youth survey, FGDs and KIIs.

| Evaluation Questions | Indicators/ Success Standards Legend: Q = Qualitative Indicator; # = Quantitative Indicator | Link to relevant Conclusions & Findings | Data Sources and Collection Methods | Methods for Data Analysis | Evidence availability/ reliability 0-None or N/A 1-Weak/low 2-Fair/medium quality 3-Strong/high |
|---|---|--|---|--|---|
| Evaluation Criteria # 1 Relevance | | | | | |
| 1. What are the strengths and potential gaps in terms of project design and implementation advancing youth empowerment and addressing their priority needs in the Asia-Pacific? | 1.1 Project components directly address the priority needs of: • % of Youth social entrepreneurs and leaders who had access to the project have access to business finance and mentorship. | Conclusion 1: Strengths (Findings – 7, 13, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 34, 35,36, Section 5.22) Conclusion 2: Gaps (Findings – 33, 35, 36, 37) 1.3 – Flexible design based on clear objective, but meant more iterative approach to outcomes so these were not always clear. | FGDs KIIs Web survey Document review Website reviews • Diverse Groups of Female/Male Youth • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Capacities Assessment | 2-Fair/ medium quality |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of the involvement of diverse groups and genders of youth in social innovation leadership. • # of capacity building and technical support related to inclusive youth policy development of governments • # of Private sector links to corporate social responsibility and access to building youth-led businesses and youth markets (Q) <p>1.2 Extent of disaggregation of participation by diverse groups and genders of youth in project indicators (#) (Limited)</p> <p>1.3 The degree to which the project has clarity on the design, objectives and expected outcomes (Q)</p> | <p>1.4 Limited in the design</p> <p>1.5 – good at regional level, poor at country level</p> | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| | <p>1.4 The extent to which the project design informed by and addresses diversity analysis and needs of diverse groups of youth (Q)</p> <p>1.5 Adequacy of disaggregation of results by regional and country levels.</p> | | | | |
| <p>2. To what extent and in what ways has the project evolved to respond to changes in the operational context due to the COVID-19 pandemic?</p> | <p>The extent in which the project design and operations were revised to respond to the challenges generated by the COVID-19 pandemic. (Q)</p> | <p>Conclusion 3: COVID-19 Operational Response (Findings 15 & 16)</p> <p>Quite well done</p> | <p>FGDs KIIIs Document review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Groups of Female/Male Youth • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Capacities Assessment | <p>2-Fair/ medium quality</p> |

Evaluation Criteria # 2 Coherence

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| <p>3. To what extent is the project aligned to the strategic priorities of its key stakeholders, including key UN strategies and private sector partners?</p> | <p>The degree to which the project design, approaches and target groups address priority objectives of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The last UNDP's Regional Programme Document (2018-2021) • The last UNDP's Strategic Plan (2018-2021) • Youth 2020 • UN Strategy on Youth • SDGs • Citi Foundation's Pathways to Progress Initiative • UNDP policies on Human Rights, LNOB and inclusive practices • (Not at all, to limited extent, to moderate degree, to significant degree) (Q) | <p>Conclusion 4, Finding 37.</p> <p>Well aligned.</p> | <p>Document review KIIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP regional and CO staff • Citi Foundation staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence | <p>3-Strong/high</p> |
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Evaluation Criteria # 3 Effectiveness

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| <p>4. What are the results achieved against the project RRF indicators?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4.1 # of project results achieved against project RRF indicators for each stakeholder group at the downstream, mid-stream and up-stream level (to be presented in table format) (Q) • 4.2 Identification of areas in which project has not achieved its expected results (Q) • 4.3 Description of any unexpected results (both negative and positive) (Q) • 4.4 Description of specific project results related to the empowerment of diverse groups of young women (Q) • 4.5 Description of specific project results related to the vulnerable and minority youth (Q) | <p>Conclusion 5: Results: Output 1 (Findings – Downstream: 1,2,3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12; Midstream_ 10, 13, 14, 29, 34, 35, 36; Upstream: 13, 14)</p> <p>Conclusion 6: Output 2: (Findings 1,2,3, 7,8, 9, 11, 12)</p> <p>Conclusion 7: Output 4 (Findings 14, 17, 20, 25)</p> <p>Conclusion 8: Output 4: Findings 1, 2, 3, 7,8, 9, 11, 12)</p> <p>Conclusion 9: Output 5: (Findings 10, 13, 14)</p> | <p>FGDs KIIs Web survey Document review Website reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Groups of Female/Male Youth • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Empowerment Analysis • Capacities Assessment • Theory of Change Mapping | <p>2 – Fair/ medium quality</p> |
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| <p>5. Which key internal and external factors have contributed to, affected and/or impeded achievement of expected results?</p> | <p>5.1 Identification and description of key internal factors that have contributed to, affected and/or impeded achievement of expected results (Q)</p> <p>5.2 Identification and description of key external factors that have contributed to, affected and/or impeded achievement of expected results (Q)</p> | <p>Conclusion 10: Internal Success Factors (Findings – 12, 17, 21, 26, 27, 28,30, 31)</p> <p>Conclusion 11: Internal Constraining Factors (Finding 30, 34)</p> <p>Conclusion 11: External Success Factors (Findings – 22, 24, 26, 27)</p> <p>Unexpected results – large scale of success</p> | <p>FGDs KIIs Document review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Groups of Female/Male Youth • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • Academic partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory of Change Mapping • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Empowerment Analysis • Network Analysis | <p>2-Fair/ medium quality</p> |
| <p>6. What is the added value of the project's regional approach?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.1 Identification and description of the opportunities the regional approach provided (Q) • 6.2 Extent to which the project was able to tap into these opportunities (Not at all, to a limited degree, to moderate degree, to significant degree) (Q) | <p>Approach (Findings 20, 21, 33, 23, 24, 25)</p> | <p>KIIs Document review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Network Analysis | <p>2-Fair/ medium quality</p> |

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| | <p>6.3 Extent to which project management at regional and national levels facilitated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective and efficient project implementation • Exchange of lessons learned and relevant knowledge across the region and among diverse stakeholders • Agile business models and funding mechanisms <p>(Not effective, Limited effectiveness, moderate effectiveness, highly effective at regional level, a bit less so at national level) (Q)</p> | | | | |
| <p>7. How effective have the Youth Empowerment Alliance and related partnerships been at the regional-</p> | <p>7.1 Number of partnerships established by the YEA at regional and national levels (#) 203 partners</p> | <p>Conclusion 13: Youth Empowerment Alliance (Findings 29, 34, 35, 36)</p> | <p>FGDs KIIs Web survey Document review Website reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Groups of Female/Male Youth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Empowerment Analysis • Network Analysis | <p>2-Fair/medium quality</p> |

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| <p>and national levels in building an enabling environment and strengthening the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship and social innovation leadership in the Asia-Pacific?</p> | <p>7.2 Extent of increased engagement of diverse groups and genders of youth in activities that demonstrate local, national and/or global citizenship (Q & #) High</p> <p>7.3 Number of diverse groups and genders of youth that have increased capacity and 21st century skills (#)</p> <p>7.4 Number of diverse groups of and genders of youth that have increased access to finance and technical advice to support the start-up and growth of social enterprises (#)</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • Academic partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory of Change Mapping | |
| <p>8. How effective have the project's communications activities been in terms of increasing visibility of the youth empowerment</p> | <p>8.1 # of following key stakeholder groups that report positively on their use of Youth Co:Lab's key knowledge products for in helping with their visibility and empowerment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse groups and genders of youth | <p>Conclusion 14: Communications (Findings 17, 18, 19)</p> | <p>FGDs</p> <p>KIIs</p> <p>Web survey</p> <p>Document review</p> <p>Website reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Groups of Female/Male Youth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Network Analysis • Audience Analysis | <p>2-Fair/ medium quality</p> |

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| <p>agenda and influencing decision making among key stakeholders in the region?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National government stakeholders • Private sector partners • CSO and academic partners (Q & #) <p>8.2 Response or changes in behaviour/actions taken to diverse social media and communications strategies and options YCL has used by youth and diverse partners (Q)</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • Academic partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | | |
| <p>9. How effective has the project been in mainstreaming youth empowerment in UNDP at the national and regional levels and in its different thematic areas of work?</p> | <p>Extent and ways in which Youth Co:Lab actions and knowledge products have influenced the integration of youth empowerment at the Country Program and Regional program levels within UNDP's different thematic areas of work</p> <p>(Not at all, to a limited degree, to a moderate degree, to a significant degree) (Q & #)</p> | <p>Conclusion 15: Mainstreaming of Youth Empowerment in UNDP (Findings 20, 21)</p> | <p>KIIs Document review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Capacities Assessment | <p>2-Fair/medium quality</p> |

| Evaluation Criteria # 4 Efficiency | | | | | |
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| <p>10. Have sufficient resources (financial and human) been strategically allocated for the achievement of project results?</p> | <p>10.1 Number and type of project's results that met /did not meet targets within parameters of project's allocated resources (Q & #)</p> | <p>Conclusion 16: Resource Allocation (Findings 6, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33)</p> | <p>KIIs Document review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Groups of Female/Male Youth • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • Academic partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence | <p>2-Fair/medium quality</p> |
| | <p>10.2 Number and type of project's results that did not meet targets within parameters of project's allocated resources due to resource-related issues (Q & #)</p> | | | | |
| | <p>10.3 Number and type of project's results that met or did not meet targets related to the empowerment of the most vulnerable youth and young women within parameters of project's allocated resources (Q & #)</p> | | | | |

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|--|---|---|--|--|------------------------|
| <p>11. Is the partnership structure used the most effective and efficient means to support achievement of the intended results?</p> | <p>11.1 Description of partnership structures project uses and the ways these have supported achievement of project results (Q)</p> <p>11.2 Amount and percentage of project funding and resources co-leveraged from other stakeholders (#) (see Table 14)</p> <p>11.3 Extent to which partnership structure supports youth-led initiatives related to project objectives (Q & #)</p> <p>11.4 Description of potential alternative partnership structures (Q)</p> | <p>Conclusion 17: Partnership Structure (Findings 34, 35, 36)</p> | <p>FGDs KII Document review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Groups of Female/Male Youth • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • Academic partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence | <p>3 – Strong/high</p> |
| <p>12. To what extent did project M&E systems provide management with a stream of data that allowed it to learn and adjust implementation accordingly?</p> | <p>12.1 Existence of a project M&E system/process and M&E personnel (Q)</p> <p>12.2 Frequency & timeliness of monitoring reports (Q)</p> <p>12.3 Project workplans revised in response to M&E data provided by M&E system as needed (Not at all, to limited extent, to moderate degree, to significant degree) (Q)</p> | <p>Conclusion 18: M&E Systems (Finding 37)</p> <p>Significant regional data collected but not at national level – represents serious monitoring gap</p> | <p>KII Document review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Capacities Assessment | <p>2-Fair quality</p> |

| Evaluation Criteria # 5 Sustainability | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|------------------------|
| 13. To what extent can the achieved results be expected to be sustainable? | 13.1 Number and type of outcomes likely to be sustainable for the project stakeholders/ participants, including for young women and minority youth, such as youth with disabilities, sexual minorities or indigenous youth (Q & #) | Conclusion 19: Sustainability of Results for Youth Participants (Findings 5, 6, 9) Conclusion 21: Sustainability of Project Design (Finding 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 34) | FGDs KIIs Document review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Groups of Female/Male Youth • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • Academic partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Capacities Assessment • Empowerment Analysis | 2-Fair/ medium quality |
| | 13.2 Identification and description of factors that will either contribute to or impede the sustainability of project's results such as scalability, continuity of funding and stakeholder/beneficiary capacity (Q) | | | | |

Evaluation Criteria # 6 Gender

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| <p>14. To what extent has the project been able to mainstream gender throughout the intervention, including its design, implementation and monitoring?</p> | <p>To what extent gender is mainstreamed in the project design, implementation, including M&E framework. (Q)</p> | <p>Conclusion 22: Gender and LNOB (Section 5.6; also Finding 4)</p> | <p>KIIs Document review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • Academic partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Capacities Assessment • Empowerment Analysis | <p>3-Strong /high</p> |
| <p>15. To what extent have the project's actions to strengthen the capacities of the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem been gender-responsive?</p> | <p>15.1 Description of ways in which the project's actions to strengthen the capacities of the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem have been gender-responsive. (Q)</p> <p>15.2 Number of project actions/interventions to strengthen capacities of youth entrepreneurship system that have been gender-responsive (# & Q)</p> | <p>Conclusion 22: Gender and LNOB (Section 5.6; also Finding 4)</p> | <p>FGDs KIIs Web survey Document review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Groups of Female/Male Youth • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • Academic partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Capacities Assessment • Empowerment Analysis | <p>2-Fair/medium quality</p> |

Evaluation Criteria # 7 Human Rights/ LNOB

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| <p>16. What have been the most effective strategies to empower young women and vulnerable and minority youth?</p> | <p>16.1 Description of project strategies and business models designed explicitly to empower young women and vulnerable and minority youth (Q)</p> <p>16.2 Number and proportion of young women and vulnerable and minority youth that have directly benefited from participating in different project components compared to total number of participants (#)</p> <p>16.3 Identification and description of key challenges to the empowerment of young women and vulnerable and minority youth (Q)</p> | <p>Conclusion 22: Gender and LNOB (Section 5.6; also Finding 4, Case Study 3))</p> | <p>FGDs KIIs Web survey Website reviews Document review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Groups of Female/Male Youth • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • Academic partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Capacities Assessment • Empowerment Analysis • Theory of Change Mapping • Audience Analysis | <p>2-Fair/medium quality</p> |
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| <p>17. To what extent has the project been able to promote structural/ institutional changes to advance the inclusion and empowerment of minority youth (e.g., influence policies or regulations)</p> | <p>17.1 Number of gov't, CSO, academic and private sector stakeholders that have increased capacity and knowledge of effective ways to be inclusive of female, vulnerable and minority youth (#)</p> <p>17.2 Increase in institutional human and/ or financial resources to address the inclusion of female, vulnerable & minority youth in institution's work (Q & #)</p> | <p>Conclusion 23: Structural and Institutional Changes (Findings 13, 14, 18)</p> | <p>KIIs</p> <p>Document review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Private sector partners • CSO partners • Academic partners • UNDP regional and CO staff • Project staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution Analysis • Analysis of Multiple Lines of Evidence • Capacities Assessment • Empowerment Analysis • Theory of Change Mapping | <p>2-Fair/medium quality</p> |
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Annex 3:

Interview Guides – Focus Group Discussions

Focus Group Discussion Semi-Structured Discussion Guides

1. For Female/Male /Other Genders Youth Involved in the Movers Program

Number of participants

Number female

Number male

Number that identify in other gender category

Number that identify as belonging to any type of vulnerable or minority group
(provide details of which type of group)

Countries in which located

No. from urban location:

No. from rural location:

1. How long have they each been involved in the program?
2. What roles have you been playing in the Movers program?
3. What kind of training and new skills did you receive as a part of the Movers program?
4. How have you been able to use this training and skills?
5. What is different about your life before and after taking part in the Movers program?
6. What things made these changes possible?
7. Which specific groups of youth have you been able to reach with this training?
8. Are there any specific groups you haven't been able to reach?
9. Is there anything you would suggest to improve or change the Movers program in the future?

2. FGD Question Guide for Female/Male/Other Genders of Youth involved in TOT Facilitated by a Movers Volunteer

Number of participants

Number female

Number male

Number that identify in other gender category

Number that identify as belonging to any type of vulnerable or minority group

(provide details of which type of group)

Countries in which located:

No. from urban location:

No. from rural location:

1. What kind of training did you receive from a Movers Volunteer?
2. When did you receive this training?
3. What was the most important thing you learned from this training?
4. What new skills did you gain from this training?
5. How have you been able to use this new knowledge and skills?
6. What is different about your life before and after taking part in the Movers training?
7. What things made these changes possible?
8. Has the work you have done because of this training led to any changes in your community? If so, what were these?
9. Were there any specific groups of youth who did not take part in this training?
10. Is there anything you would suggest to improve the Movers Volunteer training in the future?

3. FGD Question Guide for Female/Male/Other Genders of Youth involved in Youth Empowerment Alliance

Number of participants

Number female

Number male

Number that identify in other gender category

Number that identify as belonging to any type of vulnerable or minority group
(provide details of which type of group)

Countries in which located

No. from urban location:

No. from rural location:

1. In what ways are you involved in the Youth Empowerment Alliance?
2. When did you become involved with the YEA?
3. Have you been able to start a social enterprise as a result of your participation in the YEA? (or are in the process of doing so)?
4. What is different about your life before and after taking part in the youth social enterprise support program in your country?
5. What factors made these changes possible?
6. What kinds of new opportunities have you been able to access for your social enterprise?
7. What things made it possible for you to have these new opportunities?

8. What kinds of new connections/partnerships have you been able to make?
9. Has your involvement in the youth social enterprise support program directly benefited or helped other people? Which groups and how?
10. Is there anything you would suggest to improve or change the Youth Empowerment Alliance in the future?

4. FGD Question Guide for Female/Male/Other Genders of Youth involved in Springboard Program

Number of participants

Number female

Number male

Number that identify in other gender category

Number that identify as belonging to any type of vulnerable or minority group (provide details of which type of group)

Countries in which located

No. from urban location:

No. from rural location:

1. In what ways are you involved in the Springboard program?
2. When did you become involved with the Springboard program?
3. What have been the most important things you have learned through the Springboard program?
4. What is different about your life before and after taking part in the Springboard program?
5. What factors made these changes possible?
6. What kinds of new opportunities have you been able to access?
7. What factors made it possible for you to have these new opportunities?
8. What kinds of new connections/partnerships have you been able to make?
9. Have you been able to start or plant to start a new social enterprise or have taken on a social innovation leadership role in your community because of the Springboard program?
10. Are there any specific groups of youth you have observed that haven't been able to take in the Springboard program? (Why do you think this is?)
11. Is there anything you would suggest to improve or change the Springboard program in the future?

5. FGD Question Guide for Female/Male/Other Genders of Youth involved in Regional Summits (between 4 -5 participants)

Number of participants

Number female

Number male

Number that identify as other gender

Number that identify as belonging to any type of vulnerable or minority group
(provide details of which type of group)

Countries in which located

Which regional summit they attended: (In person) Virtual

No. from urban location:

No. from rural location:

1. Why and how were you picked to attend a Youth Co:Lab regional summit?
2. What year did you participate?
3. What were the most important things you learned from taking part in the regional summit?
4. What is different about your life before and after taking part in this summit?
5. What factors made these changes possible?
6. What kinds of new opportunities have you been able to access?
7. What kinds of new connections/partnerships have you been able to make?
8. What have you done related to social innovation and social enterprises since taking part in the Regional Summit?
9. What inspired you to do this?
10. Are there any specific groups of youth you have observed that were not well represented at the regional summit?
11. Is there anything you would suggest to improve or change the regional summits in the future?

6. FGD Question Guide for Female/Male Youth/Other Genders involved in National Summits

Number of participants

Number female

Number male

Number that identify as other gender

Number that identify as belonging to any type of vulnerable or minority group
(provide details of which type of group)

Countries in which located

Which national summit they attended (year and country)

No. from urban location:

No. from rural location:

Year they each participated in the national summit in their country:

1. Why and how were you picked to attend a Youth Co:Lab national summit?
2. What were the most important things you learned from taking part in the national summit?
3. What is different about your life before and after taking part in a national summit?

4. What things made these changes possible?
5. What kinds of new opportunities have you been able to access?
6. What kinds of new connections/partnerships have you been able to make?
7. What have you done that is related to social innovation and social enterprises since taking part in the national Summit?
8. What inspired you to do this?
9. Are there any specific groups of youth you have observed that were not well represented at the national summit?
10. Is there anything you would suggest to improve or change the national summits in the future?

7. FGD Guide for UNDP Country Offices with Youth Focal Point Turn-over

Date:

Name(s):

Position(s):

Location:

Gender: Female Male Other (if they choose to self-identify)

1. When did you start working as a Youth Focal Point for your CO?
2. What does this role involve?
3. How long a gap was there between your appointment in this role and the time the former Youth Focal Point left this position? (EQ 6,13)
4. What kind of support/induction information did you get when you started to serve in the Youth Focal Point role? (EQ 6)
5. What else would have been helpful for you to fulfill your Youth Focal Point responsibilities? (EQ 6, 13)
6. To what kinds of key results, including unexpected results has the YCL work contributed in your country? (EQ 4)
7. To which factors and strategies/approaches do you attribute these results? (EQ 4, 7)
8. Which of these results/changes do you think are sustainable and why? (EQ 13)
9. How well does Youth Co:Lab's monitoring system work for you and your CO? Is there anything you would change? (EQ 12)
10. Is there anything Youth Co:Lab should continue to do or do more of in the future to address UNDP's regional and national programming needs related to youth and youth issues?

Annex 4:

Semi-Structured Interview Guides for Key Informants

1. Interview Guide for UNDP Regional Youth Advisor and Regional Advisors Familiar with YCL

Date:

Name(s):

Position(s):

Location:

Gender: Female Male Other (if they choose to self identify)

1. In what way is your work connected /involved with the Youth Co:Lab project?
2. In what ways is the Youth Co:Lab project relevant for UNDP at the regional and national levels? (EQs 1, 3)
3. Has the Youth Co:Lab project contributed to the way in which you integrate youth issues in regional programming in any way (including in your area of thematic programming)? If so, how? (EQ 9)
4. To which key results related to the UN's youth objectives has the Youth Co:Lab project contributed at the regional level? (EQ 4)
5. To which factors and strategies/approaches do you attribute these results? (EQ 4, 7)
6. Which of these results/changes do you think are sustainable and why? (EQ 13)
7. How has the Youth Co:Lab project responded to the changes brought about by COVID-19 at the regional level?(EQ 2)
8. Do you think the Youth Co:Lab project has allocated its resources strategically to achieve its key objectives? (EQ 10)
9. How effective and efficient have you found the regional structure of the Youth Co:Lab project from a project delivery perspective? (EQ 6)
10. How effective and efficient have you found the regional and national partnership structure of the Youth Co:Lab project? (EQ 11)
11. Are you aware of and/or make use of any of the knowledge products and tools the Youth Co:Lab project has produced? (EQ 8)
12. Has the Youth Co:Lab's monitoring system provided you with timely and useful information to help guide your work with diverse groups and genders of youth? (EQ 12)

13. How has Youth Co:Lab addressed the barriers to the participation of female youth in UNDP supported programming in the region? (EQ 16)
14. How has Youth Co:Lab addressed the barriers to the participation of vulnerable and minority youth (such as youth with disabilities, youth from minority ethnic groups, youth who identify as LGBTQI, etc.) in the region? (EQ 17) Who is not yet being reached?
15. Is there anything Youth Co:Lab should continue to do or do more of in the future to address UNDP's regional programming needs related to youth and youth issues?

2. Interview Guide for UNDP Regional Thematic Advisors not directly familiar with YCL:

1. In what way is your work connected /involved with the Youth Co:Lab project?
2. In what ways is working with diverse groups and gender of youth in your thematic area relevant for UNDP at the regional and national levels? (EQs 1, 3)
3. What factors have contributed to the way in which you integrate youth issues in regional programming in any way (including in your area of thematic programming)? If so, how? (EQ 9)
4. What are key results for diverse groups and genders of youth to which UNDP has contributed at the regional level in your thematic area? (EQ 4)
5. To which factors and strategies/approaches do you attribute these results? (EQ 4, 7)
6. Which of these results/changes do you think are sustainable and why? (EQ 13)
7. How has UNDP's work in the region in your thematic area responded to the changes brought about by COVID-19 at the regional level?(EQ 2)
8. What is the best way to structure a regional project for youth that operates at both the regional and national levels? (EQ 6)
9. Are you aware of and/or make use of any of the knowledge products and tools the Youth Co:Lab project has produced? (EQ 8) If none, what youth-related tools/knowledge products do you use?
10. How does UNDP's work in your thematic area address the barriers to the participation of female youth in in the region? (EQ 16)
11. How does UNDP's work in your thematic area address the barriers to the participation of vulnerable and minority youth (such as youth with disabilities, youth from minority ethnic groups, youth who identify as LGBTQI, etc.) in the region? (EQ 17) Who is not yet being reached?
12. What are the priority areas of support needed for diverse groups and genders of youth in this region in your thematic area in the future?

3. Interview Guide for UNDP Country Offices

Date:

Name(s):

Position(s):

Location:

Gender: Female Male Other (if they choose to self-identify)

1. In what way is your work connected /involved with the Youth Co:Lab project and since when?
2. In what ways is the Youth Co:Lab project relevant for UNDP in this country (EQs 1, 3)
3. Has the Youth Co:Lab project contributed to the way in which your CO integrates youth issues in its programming? If so, how? (EQ 9)
4. To which key results related to UNDP's youth objectives has the Youth Co:Lab project contributed at the national level? (EQ 4)
5. To which factors and strategies/approaches do you attribute these results? (EQ 4, 7)
6. Which of these results/changes do you think are sustainable and why? (EQ 13)
7. Were there any unexpected results? Or results not achieved? (EQ4)
8. How has the Youth Co:Lab project responded to the changes brought about by COVID-19 for your Country Office and for the diverse groups and gender of youth participants?(EQ 2)
9. Do you think the Youth Co:Lab project has allocated its resources strategically to achieve its key objectives and results? (EQ 10)
10. What works well and what does not for your CO with regard to YCL's regional structure of from a project delivery perspective? (EQ 6)
11. How effective / efficient have you found the regional and national partnership structure of the Youth Co:Lab project? (EQ 11)
12. How/to what extent do the project stakeholders and beneficiaries and CO staff make use of the knowledge products and tools the Youth Co:Lab project has produced? (EQ 8)
13. How well does Youth Co:Lab's monitoring system work for your CO? Is there anything you would change? (EQ 12)
14. How has Youth Co:Lab addressed the barriers to the participation of female youth in UNDP supported programming in the region? (EQ 16)
15. How has Youth Co:Lab addressed the barriers to the participation of vulnerable and minority youth (such as youth with disabilities, youth from minority ethnic groups, youth who identify as LGBTQI, etc.) in the region? (EQ 17) Who is not yet being reached?
16. Is there anything Youth Co:Lab should continue to do or do more of in the future to address UNDP's regional programming needs related to youth and youth issues?

4. Interview Guide for Private Sector Partners

Date:

Name(s):

Position(s):

Location:

Gender: Female Male Other Gender (if self-identified)

1. What year did your company become involved with the Youth Co:Lab project?
2. What role does your business play in the Youth Co:Lab project?
3. How does the work the Youth Co:Lab project respond to the priority needs of diverse groups and genders of youth in the region/country? (EQ 1)
4. What are the main results or changes you have observed among the diverse groups of female and male youth with which your company has worked through the Youth Co:Lab project? (EQs 4, 7, 15)
5. What factors do you think contributed to these results? (EQ5)
6. Which of these results/changes do you think will be sustainable in the future? Why? (EQ13)
7. What have been the benefit of participating in the Youth Co:Lab project for your company? (EQs 3, 11)
8. How could these benefits be further enhanced in the future? (EQs 3, 11)
9. What works well about the type of partnership structure you have with the Youth Co:Lab project? Is there anything you would change? (EQ 11)
10. Has your company revised or adopted any of its policies/practices related to working with youth? If so, to which factors do you attribute these changes? (EQ 7)
11. How has the Youth Co:Lab project responded to the changes brought about by COVID-19 for your company and for the diverse groups and gender of youth participants?(EQ 2)
12. What is or should be the role of the private sector in this process?
13. Has the Youth Co:Lab's monitoring system provided you with timely and useful information to help guide your work with diverse groups and genders of youth? (EQ 12)
14. What has been the value added of the Youth Co:Lab project being regional for your company (if any)? (EQ6)
15. Are you familiar with or have made use of any of Youth Co:Lab's knowledge products or tools? (EQ8)
16. Which specific groups and genders of youth do you think project is reaching and which ones have not been able to participate? (EQs 16, 17). How can this be improved?

5. Interview Guide for Government Partners

Date:

Name(s):

Position(s):

Location/Country:

Gender: Female Male Other Gender (if self identified)

1. What year did your government become involved with the Youth Co:Lab project?
2. What role does your government play in the Youth Co:Lab project?
3. How does the work the Youth Co:Lab project respond to the priority needs of diverse groups and genders of youth in your country? (EQ 1)
4. What are the main results or changes you have observed among the diverse groups and genders of youth who have been involved with the Youth Co:Lab project and your government? (EQs 4, 7, 15)
5. What factors do you think contributed to these results/changes? (EQ5)
6. Which of these results/changes do you think will be sustainable in the future? Why? (EQ13)
7. What has been the benefit of participating in the Youth Co:Lab project for your government? (EQs 3, 11)
8. How could these benefits be further enhanced in the future? (EQs 3, 11)
9. What works well about the type of partnership structure you have with the Youth Co:Lab project? (EQ 11)
10. Is there anything you would change? (EQ 11)
11. Has your government revised or adopted any of its policies/practices related to working with youth in the past five years? If so, to which factors do you attribute these changes? (EQ 7)
12. How has the Youth Co:Lab project responded to the changes brought about by COVID-19 for your government and for the diverse groups and genders of youth participants?(EQ 20)
13. Has the Youth Co:Lab's monitoring system provided you with timely and useful information to help guide your work with diverse groups and genders of youth? (EQ 12)
14. What has been the value added of the Youth Co:Lab being a regional project for your government (if any)? (EQ6)
15. Are you familiar with or have made use of any of Youth Co:Lab's knowledge products or tools? (EQ8) (How have these helped your work?_
16. Which specific groups and genders of youth do you think project is reaching and which ones have not been able to participate? (EQs 16, 17). (How could this be improved?)

6. Interview Guide for CSO or Academic Partners

Date:

Name(s):

Position(s):

Location/Country:

Gender: Female Male Other (if self identified)

1. What year did your organization become involved with the Youth Co:Lab project?
2. What role does your organization play in the Youth Co:Lab project?
3. How does the work the Youth Co:Lab project respond to the priority needs of diverse groups and genders of youth in your region and country? (EQ 1)
4. What are the main results or changes you have observed among the diverse groups and genders of youth who have been involved with the Youth Co:Lab project and your organization? (EQs 4, 7, 15)
5. What factors do you think contributed to these results/changes? (EQ5)
6. Which of these results/changes do you think will be sustainable in the future? Why? (EQ13)
7. What has been the benefit of participating in the Youth Co:Lab project for your organization? (EQs 3, 11)
8. How could these benefits be further enhanced in the future? (EQs 3, 11)
9. What works well about the type of partnership structure you have with the Youth Co:Lab project? (EQ 11)
10. Is there anything you would change? (EQ 11)
11. Has your organization revised or adopted any of its policies/practices related to working with youth? If so, to which factors do you attribute these changes? (EQ 7) (Probe for which types of policies)
12. How has the Youth Co:Lab project responded to the changes brought about by COVID-19 for your organization and for the diverse groups of youth participants?(EQ 20)
13. Has the Youth Co:Lab's monitoring system provided you with timely and useful information to help guide your work with diverse groups and genders of youth? (EQ 12)
14. What has been the value added of the Youth Co:Lab being a regional project for your organization (if any)? (EQ6)
15. Are you familiar with or have made use of any of Youth Co:Lab's knowledge products or tools? (EQ8) (How has this contributed to your work?)
16. Which specific groups and genders of youth do you think project is reaching and which ones have not been able to participate? (EQs 16, 17). (How could this be improved?)

7. Semi-Structured Interview Guide for YCL Staff

(N.B. some adjustments to these questions will be made for the actual interviews based on the specific role each YCL staff member plays)

Date:

Name(s):

Position(s):

Location:

Gender: Female Male Other (if they choose to self-identify)

1. What way is your role in the Youth Co:Lab project?
2. What are the YCL key results related to youth social enterprises and entrepreneurship in the region and at the national level, including unexpected results? (EQ 4)
3. To what do you attribute these results? (EQ 4, 7)
4. What are YCL key results related to youth social innovation and leadership in the region and at the national level, including unexpected results? (EQ 4)
5. To what do you attribute these results? (EQ 4, 7)
6. To what kinds of results has YCL contributed with regard to policy or regulation changes that promote youth rights, inclusion and social entrepreneurship, including unexpected results??
7. To what do you attribute these results?
8. Which of all these diverse results/changes you have mentioned do you think are sustainable and why? (EQ 13)
9. How has the Youth Co:Lab project responded to the changes brought about by COVID-19 at the regional and national levels?(EQ 2)
10. Do you think the Youth Co:Lab project has allocated its resources strategically to achieve its key objectives? How and why? (EQ 10)
11. What works well and what doesn't about how the project is structured at the regional and national levels? (EQ 6,11)
12. How has the Youth Co:Lab project contributed to the way UNDP integrates youth issues in its regional and national programming? (EQ 9)
13. How are different stakeholders/beneficiaries making use of the knowledge products and tools the YCL project has produced? (EQ 8) (other communications observations?)
14. What works well and what doesn't with Youth Co:Lab's monitoring system? (EQ 12)
15. Which specific groups of youth is the project reaching well and why? (EQ 16)
16. Which groups are you not reaching as well and why?
17. What changes in its approaches does YCL need to make in the future to address regional and national programming needs related to youth and youth issues?

9. KII Question Guide for Female/Male Youth/Other Genders involved in Regional Summits

Date:

Name:

Regional Summit participated in:

Gender: Female Male Other (if they choose to self-identify)

Do they identify as belonging to any type of vulnerable or minority group (provide details of which type of group)

Country in which located

From urban location:

From rural location:

1. Why and how were you picked to attend a Youth Co:Lab Regional summit?
2. You were selected to take part in this interview as you have been identified as being a successful participant in the Youth Co:Lab project. What does this success look like for you?
3. What helped you achieve this success?
4. What were the most important things you learned from taking part in the regional summit?
5. What is different about your life before and after taking part in the regional summit?
6. What things made these changes possible?
7. What kinds of new opportunities have you been able to access?
8. What kinds of new connections/partnerships have you been able to make?
9. What have you done related to social innovation and social enterprises since taking part in the Regional Summit?
10. What inspired you to do this?
11. Have these post Regional Summit activities helped any other people? If so, in what ways and how many?
12. Are there any specific groups of youth you have observed that were not well represented at the national summit?
13. Is there anything you would suggest to improve or change the regional summits in the future?
14. Is there anything you would suggest to improve the Springboard or Youth Empowerment Alliance programs in the future?
15. Do you have any other success stories about your experience with the Regional Summit, Springboard or Youth Empowerment Alliance that you would like to share?

Annex 5:

On-line Survey Questions: Youth Participant Survey and Partner Survey

A. Youth Participant Survey (All participant groups)

Introduction:

- Will explain purpose of evaluation, who can participate, guarantee confidentiality, provide deadline for responding, give estimated time it will take to respond and contact details for any questions/clarifications.
1. Name
 2. Age
 3. Location (country)
 4. Location in country : Urban ____ Rural ____
 5. Gender Female ___ Male ___ Other Gender Identity (if you choose to self identify) ____
 6. Do you belong to any of the following groups (please tick all categories which apply to you:
 - A person with a disability (either physical or mental)
 - An ethnic minority
 - A gender minority
 - Indigenous
 - Migrant
 - Live in a humanitarian assistance setting such as a refugee camp or shelter
 7. In which Youth Co:Lab activities have you taken part and what year did you start taking part in this/these activities? Please tick all that apply to you.

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| Regional Youth Summit | | | | | |
| A Youth Co:Lab National Summit/dialogue | | | | | |
| Asia-Pacific Forum on Youth Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (APFYLIE) | | | | | |
| Regional Dialogue on Youth Indigenous Social Entrepreneurship | | | | | |
| Youth Co:Lab National program | | | | | |
| Springboard program | | | | | |
| Movers Volunteer program | | | | | |
| Youth Empowerment Alliance | | | | | |
| Use Youth Co:Lab website as a resource or for information/ making connections | | | | | |
| Other (please describe briefly) | | | | | |

8. Has your participation in Youth Co:Lab activities helped you gain have more power over decisions that directly affect your life? Yes ___ No___
9. Has your participation in Youth Co:Lab activities made you want to become more involved with helping your community? Yes ___ No___
10. Has your participation in Youth Co:Lab activities made you feel better about yourself and/or given you more confidence to make choices and take actions? Yes ___ No___
11. Has your participation in Youth Co:Lab activities made you feel as if your opinions, needs and experiences as a young person are valued and acted on by other groups, networks, or organizations (including the government)? Yes ___ No___
12. Has your participation in Youth Co:Lab activities helped you develop a positive sense of belonging to your community? Yes ___ No___
13. Has your participation in Youth Co:Lab activities made you feel empowered to take positive action in your community? Yes ___ No___
14. If yes, what kinds of actions have you taken? (Please describe briefly)

- Has your participation in Youth Co:Lab activities:

15. Has your participation in Youth Co:Lab activities helped build your ability to thrive despite adversity?
16. Increased the skills or knowledge you need to: (Please tick all that apply)
- Be a leader and social innovator. Yes ___ No___
 - Earn a living. Yes ___ No___
 - Start a social enterprise. Yes ___ No___
17. Has your participation in Co:Lab activities changed your life in any other ways? Yes ___ No ___
18. If yes, in what ways? (Please describe briefly)
19. Do you have any success stories or lessons learned about your experience working with Youth Co:lab you would like to share with us? If so, please describe briefly below:
- Success Story:
 - Lessons learned:
20. Would you like to take part in an online discussion group about what the next phase of the Youth Co:Lab should be doing to help empower youth as social innovators and leaders in the Asia Pacific region? Yes ___ No ___
21. If yes, please include your email address and we will be in touch with you soon to invite you to join this group. The discussion chat will be taking place from March 28th to April 5th.

Email address: _____

Thank you for taking part in this survey. Your insights, inputs and experience are contributing to Youth Co:Lab's design and approaches for the next phase of the project.

A. Partner Survey (Youth Empowerment Alliance Partners)

Introduction:

- Will explain purpose of evaluation, who can participate, guarantee confidentiality, provide deadline for responding, give estimated time it will take to respond and contact details for any questions/clarifications.

1. Name:

2. Position in organization:

- _____ Director/CEO
- _____ Finance Staff
- _____ Program Staff
- _____ Policy Staff
- _____ Research Staff
- _____ Other (please describe)

3. Gender: Female Male Other Gender (if you choose to self-identify _____)

4. Location of organization:

- _____ Australia
- _____ Bangladesh
- _____ Bhutan
- _____ Cambodia
- _____ China
- _____ Fiji
- _____ Japan
- _____ Laos PDR
- _____ Hong Kong SAR
- _____ India
- _____ Indonesia
- _____ Maldives
- _____ Mongolia
- _____ Nepal
- _____ New Zealand
- _____ Pakistan
- _____ Papua New Guinea
- _____ Philippines
- _____ Republic of Korea
- _____ Samoa
- _____ Singapore
- _____ Solomon Islands
- _____ Sri Lanka
- _____ Timor Leste
- _____ Thailand
- _____ Vanuatu
- _____ Vietnam
- _____ Other: Please indicate:

5. Is your organization a:

- Government organization
- Private sector company
- Civil Society Organization
- Academic Institution
- Donor (Bilateral or Multilateral organization)

6. What year did your organization start working with the Youth Co:Lab project?

| 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| | | | | |

7. What is the role of your organization in the Youth Co:Lab project? (Please tick all that apply)

- Funder (for overall project or national program)
- Finance support for youth social entrepreneurs (grant or loan)
- Business Mentor or Technical Support
- Policy advice/development
- Consultations with diverse groups and genders of youth
- Knowledge product or tool production
- Provision of networks and connections to youth
- Training of youth on social innovation
- Training of youth on social enterprise development and growth
- Other (please describe)

8. What are the main results or changes you have observed among the diverse groups and genders of youth your organization has worked with through the Youth Co:Lab project? (EQs 4, 7, 15) (Please tick all that apply).

- New youth social enterprises established
- Youth social enterprises scaled up in size and reach
- Youth social enterprises have become more sustainable
- Increased social and business connections for youth social entrepreneurs and innovators
- Increased confidence of youth social entrepreneurs and leaders
- Increased influence of youth social entrepreneurs in your organization's policy work
- Increase in skills in financial literacy
- Increase in digital literacy and skills
- Increased leadership skills
- Increased negotiation and inter-personal skills
- Increased engagement with and contribution to their communities
- Have not observed any significant changes
- Other (please describe)

9. What factors do you think contributed to these results for youth social entrepreneurs and leaders? (EQ5)

- Training/mentorship provided by my organization
- Increased access to financing
- Increased access to business connections
- Increased connections with other youth social entrepreneurs /leaders
- Increased understanding of youth social entrepreneurs and leaders by my organization
- Access to knowledge products and tools provided by Youth Co:Lab
- Other (Please describe)

10. Which of these results/changes for young social entrepreneurs and leaders do you think will be sustainable in the future? (EQ13)

- New youth social enterprises established will continue to operate
- Youth social enterprises scaled up in size and reach
- Youth social enterprises have become more sustainable
- Increased social and business connections for youth social entrepreneurs and innovators
- Increased confidence of youth social entrepreneurs and leaders
- Increased influence of youth social entrepreneurs in your organization's policy work
- Increase in skills in financial literacy
- Increase in digital literacy and skills
- Increased leadership skills
- Increased negotiation and inter-personal skills
- Increased engagement with and contribution to their communities
- Other (please describe)

11. For any of the points in Question 10 which you don't think are sustainable could you briefly describe why?

12. What has been the benefit of participating in the Youth Co:Lab project for your organization? (EQs 3, 11) (Please tick all that apply)

- Increased access to new markets for my organization's services and/or products
- Increased use of my organization's services and/or products (not for profit)
- Improved credibility and reputation of my organization
- Opportunity for organization staff to feel they are making a contribution

- Increased understanding of the priority needs of youth social entrepreneurs and leaders
- Increased capacity to work effectively with youth social entrepreneurs and leaders
- Haven't experienced a significant benefit from participating in the YEA
- Other benefits (Please describe

13. What works well and what does not about the type of partnership structure you have with the Youth Co:Lab project? Please tick all options/statements that apply. (EQ 11)

| Statement | Works well | Does not work well | Not applicable |
|--|------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Partnership structure is clear about who in the partnership is responsible for what | | | |
| Partnership structure provides access to regional and national resources and opportunities | | | |
| It makes the work my organization is doing with young social entrepreneurs and leaders easier and more effective | | | |
| It provides timely feedback about what is working well or what still needs improvement | | | |
| It fits well with my organization's policies and regulations | | | |
| Partnership structure is respectful of and appreciates what my organization has to offer | | | |
| Financial processes are easy to manage and disbursements are timely | | | |
| Project reporting requirements are clear and do not require large amounts of staff time | | | |
| Other (Please describe) | | | |

14. Has your organization revised or adopted any of its policies/practices related to working with youth since working with Youth Co:Lab?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

15. If yes, to which factors do you attribute these changes in policy/practices?
(EQ 7)

- Positive change in public opinion or in institutional culture related to youth inclusion
- Increased staff capacity related to working with youth or on youth issues
- Increased access to relevant tools and knowledge products from Youth Co:Lab
- Increased funding support to support youth-related policy revision or development
- Access to technical advice to support youth-related policy revision or development
- Increased participation of youth social innovators and leaders in the community
- Increased participation of youth social innovators in my organization's work
- External support from non-Youth Co:Lab sources
- Other (please describe)

16. Has the Youth Co:Lab's monitoring system provided you with timely and useful information to help guide your work with diverse groups and genders of youth? (EQ 12)

- Yes
- Sometimes
- No
- Not applicable

17. What has been the value added of the Youth Co:Lab project being regional for your organization (if any)? (EQ6)

- Increased access to regional partners and connections
- Access to regional resources related to youth social enterprises and social innovation leadership
- Increased leverage to advocate for support for youth social enterprise and social innovation leadership issues
- Increased access to training related to youth social enterprise and social innovation leadership
- Access to exchange of good practices in the region
- Increased reputation from working with a regional UN project on these issues
- Other (Please describe)
- No significant value added of regional approach

18. Are you familiar with or have made use of any of Youth Co:Lab's knowledge products or tools? (EQ8)

- Yes
- No

19. If yes, which Youth Co:Lab knowledge products and/or tools have you found to be the most useful?

20. Which specific groups and genders of youth do you think project is reaching effectively or is not reaching well (EQs 16, 17). Please tick all that apply.

| | Is reaching effectively | Is not reaching effectively |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Urban youth (middle class and above) | | |
| Urban youth (poor) | | |
| Rural youth (middle class and above) | | |
| Rural youth (poor) | | |
| Urban youth (well educated) | | |
| Urban youth with low education | | |
| Rural youth (well educated) | | |
| Rural youth with low education levels | | |
| Youth with disabilities | | |
| Ethnic minority youth | | |
| Youth from gender minorities (LGBTQI+) | | |
| Female youth | | |
| Male youth | | |
| Youth living in humanitarian assistance context or refugee settlement | | |
| Other category of minority or vulnerable youth (please describe) | | |

21. If you have any success stories related to work you have done with diverse groups and genders of youth that you would like to share please describe briefly below provide a link which describes this good practice or success story.

22. If you have share any lessons learned you would like to share based on your experience working with Youth Co:lab please describe briefly here.

Thank you for taking part in this survey. Your insights, inputs and experience provide valuable insights that are contributing to Youth Co:Lab's design and approaches for the next phase of the project.

Annex 6:

Youth Co:Lab Results and Resources Framework 2021

| <p>Intended Outputs as stated in the UNDP Strategic Plan / Global Programme Results and Resources Framework: (RPD) Output 2.3 Institutions, networks and non-state actors strengthened to promote inclusion, access to justice, and protect human rights (SP 2.2.2 and 2.2.3)</p> <p>Output indicators as stated in the UNDP Strategic Plan / Global Programme Results and Resources Framework: (RPD) Indicator 2.3.1: Number of policies and initiatives that strengthen the enabling environment for youth empowerment (disaggregated by sex)</p> | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------|----------|------|---------|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|-----------|--|
| <p>Project title and Atlas Project Number: Regional Youth Project on Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Youth Co:Lab), Atlas Project Number: 00110753</p> <p>Project Goal: Establish a common agenda for Asia-Pacific countries to invest in and empower youth to accelerate implementation of SDGs through leadership, social innovation and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>Project Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Output 1: Improved ecosystem on youth empowerment ecosystem in Asia and the Pacific to achieve SDGs. · Output 2: Empowered Youth (with focus on marginalized groups) avail opportunities for expanding their leadership and entrepreneurship capabilities. · Output 3: Enhanced learning and skills development programmes for youth entrepreneurship and leadership are designed and delivered through regional dialogues. · Output 4: Advocacy, Research and knowledge exchange Initiative informs new youth entrepreneurship initiatives · Output 5: Innovative financing solutions are leveraged for youth entrepreneurship | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PLANNED OUTPUTS | KEY RESULTS | DATA SOURCE(S) | BASELINE | | TARGETS | | | | | | DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS |
| | | | Value | Year | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | |
| Output 1: Improved ecosystem on youth empowerment in Asia and the Pacific to achieve SDGs. | 1.1." Youth Alliance" meets regularly for knowledge exchange and best practices on start-up support. | | 0 | 2016 | | - 1 meeting conducted to engage relevant stakeholders - 3 visits of business incubators and accelerators | - 1 Youth Alliance meeting convened | - 1 Youth Alliance Meeting convened -2 events co-convened in partnership with Youth Alliance | - 1 Youth Alliance Meeting convened -2 events co-convened in partnership with Youth Alliance | No Change | -Meeting minutes, survey from Youth Alliance partners - Report on youth-led entrepreneurship and innovation |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|------|---|--|--|--|--|-------------------|--|
| | 1.2. % of regional and local partners satisfied with trainings by the Youth Alliance secretariat | | 0 | 2016 | - Development objectives, membership qualifications, management models defined - Common understanding on the vision and role of the Alliance reached | - Online database for business incubators and startups created | - Internal capacity building plan for Youth Alliance members developed | -50% satisfaction (disaggregated by categories of partners) | - 50% satisfaction (disaggregated by categories of partners) | No Change | - survey from Youth Alliance partners |
| | 1.3 # of governments launch systems approach pilots to build new capabilities and experiment to tackle youth unemployment | | 0 | 2019 | | | | 3 countries implement systems approach to youth unemployment | 5 countries implement systems approach to youth unemployment | No Change | |
| | 1.4 # of policies and programmes created/updated to support Youth Leadership, Innovation and Entrepreneurship | | 0 | 2019 | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | No Change | |
| | 1.5. Regional Summits/Forums on Youth entrepreneurship and innovation convened to foster south-south collaboration | | 0 | 2016 | - National Innovation challenges conducted in 7 countries to identify winners for regional summit | - 1 regional youth summit convened | | - 1 regional youth summit convened | - 1 regional youth summit convened | No Change | - Online survey and impact stories from participants |
| Output 2: Empowered Youth (with focus on marginalized groups) avail opportunities for expanding their leadership and | 2.1. # of young people (50% from marginalised groups) developing entrepreneurial mindset through national training programs | | 0 | 2016 | - In 7 countries, young social innovators, youth entrepreneurs and youth organizations provided with opportunity to foster innovation through events, with special focus given to | - 50 young entrepreneurs / social innovators and youth organizations provided with | - 50 young entrepreneurs/ social innovators and youth organizations provided with leadership | 1400 young people | 1600 young people | 2000 young people | - Feedback survey from COs regarding the programmes |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|------|------|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| entrepreneurship capabilities. | | | | | young women and marginalized youth - In 7 countries, opportunities are provided for coalition-building and networking among young entrepreneurs/social innovators, and with leaders/experts in the fields of development, business, technology and innovation - In 7 countries, awareness about youth and SDGs raised through these innovation challenges and ongoing publicity campaigns | leadership training opportunities through events | training opportunities through events | | | | |
| | 2.2 # of youth trainers trained to strengthen SDG based entrepreneurship in their communities (50% from marginalised groups) | 0 | 2019 | | | | | 50 young people trained | 50 young people trained | 50 young people trained | - Follow up survey from the training |
| | 2.3 Number of SDG solutions created by youth (disaggregated by gender and countries) | 0 | 2018 | | | | | - 120 SDG solutions - 20 countries | - 160 SDG solutions - 25 countries | - 200 SDG solutions - 28 countries | - Feedback loop with young SDG entrepreneurs on every module output submitted - Feedback from COs regarding the programmes |
| 2.4. % of incubator grantees (disaggregated by young women and marginalized youth) who are successful 6 months after receipt of grants | 0 | 2016 | | - A network of existing incubator scheme strengthened | - 7 grants to youth entrepreneurs provided | - 10 grants to business incubators provided | 50% | 50% | 50% | - Feedback survey from incubator grantees | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|------|---|---|--|--|-----------|-----------|---|
| Output 3: Enhanced learning and skills development programmes for youth entrepreneurship and leadership are designed and delivered through regional dialogues. | 3.1. A regional policy dialogue on youth innovation and entrepreneurship convened | | 0 | 2016 | | - 1 policy dialogue organized with the participation of key stakeholders in the region | | No change | No change | No change | - Review of secondary data on youth related policies on social innovation |
| | 3.2. Inaugural meeting of Youth Alliance convened | | 0 | 2016 | | - 1 meeting convened to engage the relevant stakeholders | | No change | No change | No change | -Meeting minutes, event concept note |
| | 3.3. A Regional Youth Summit on entrepreneurship and innovation convened | | 0 | 2016 | - National Innovation challenges conducted in 7 countries to identify winners for regional summit | - 1 regional youth summit convened | | No change | No change | No change | - Online survey and impact stories from participants |
| | 3.4. A Global Forum on Youth leadership, innovation and entrepreneurship convened | | 0 | 2016 | | - 1 Global Youth Forum convened | | No change | No change | No change | |
| Output 4: Advocacy, Research and knowledge exchange Initiative informs new youth entrepreneurship initiatives | 4.1. Conduct research of existing networks of business incubators in the Asia-Pacific region to be incorporated into the Youth Alliance on a selective basis conducted | | 0 | 2016 | - 5 existing networks of business incubators/partners identified to be incorporated to youth alliance | - 5 existing networks of business incubators/partners identified to be incorporated to the Youth Alliance (in addition to year 1) | | No change | No change | No change | - Survey for existing ecosystem players and other stakeholders |
| | 4.2. A report on the state of youth-led entrepreneurship, social innovation and leadership in the region in the context of SDGs published by the Youth Alliance | | 0 | 2016 | | - Report by the Youth Alliance published | | 3 thematic reports related to youth entrepreneurship ecosystem | | No change | Dissemination results from the reports |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|------|---|--|---|---|-----------|-----------|---|
| | | | | | | | | published (with focus on young women) | | | |
| Output 5: Innovative financing solutions are leveraged for youth entrepreneurship | 5.1. Partnerships mechanism developed in order to strengthen youth empowerment initiatives | | 0 | 2016 | | - Partnership Mechanism and its management structure established | | No change | No change | No change | - Documents related existing trust funds (MDTF and UNSIF) |
| | 5.2. A Youth Start-up Incubator scheme established to support youth entrepreneurs, with special focus given to young women and marginalized youth | | 0 | 2016 | - An existing incubator scheme strengthened | - 7 grants to youth entrepreneurs provided | - 10 grants to youth entrepreneurs provided | No change | No change | No change | - Existing incubator schemes from UNDP COs and private sector |

Annex 7:

List of Persons Interviewed

Youth Participants

| Program Component | Name and Enterprise Name (where applicable) | Country |
|--|--|-----------------|
| | Tawhida Shiropa, Founder, Moner Bondhu | Bangladesh |
| | Tahmid Kamal Chowdhury, Founder, Safepad | Bangladesh |
| | Alim Al Rajii, Co-founder, Borac Energia | Bangladesh |
| | Vyshnavi Desiraju, Founder of LAGOM | Singapore |
| | Ong Jun Hock, Ryan, Founder of The Catalyst | Singapore |
| | Suzanna Tang, Founder of Urban Origins | Singapore |
| | Olisana Mariner | Samoa |
| | Ronnie Wong Soon | Samoa |
| Youth Empowerment Alliance/ Springboard/ Regional Summits | Esmerelda Lo Tam, Ei8ht Sports | Samoa |
| | Ho Zhi Hui, Co-Founder, Skilio | Singapore |
| | Lamea Tanjin Tanha | Bangladesh |
| | Jannatul Bakia Sweety | Bangladesh |
| YOUTH | Murad Ansary | Bangladesh |
| | Petronilla Molioo | Samoa |
| | Suchart Ingtha, Co-Founder, Titang | Thailand |
| | Ruslina Muleng, Co-Founder, Peace of Art | Thailand |
| | Phimphan Dueanchaem, co-founder of This-ability | Thailand |
| | Muhammadharis Jiman, Co-Founder of BIE Card Game | Thailand |
| | Chengchuan Shi, Founder, Voibook | China |
| | Yi Lan, Founder, Mamaucan | China |
| | Jichen Liu, Founder, Clear Plate | China |
| | Wenbin Zhang, Marketing Director, Orcauboot | China |
| | Max Song, Founder, Carbon Base | China |
| | Ali Shabbar, Co-Founder, DeafTawk | Pakistan |
| | Lei Motilla, Co-Founder, AI4GOV | The Philippines |
| | Reyasat Chowdhury, Co-Founder, Shuttle | Bangladesh |

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|--|---|----------------------------|
| | Nofi Bayu Darmawan, Founder & CEO, Kommerce | Indonesia |
| | Divya Rathod, Co-Founder, SilveryNanos | India |
| | Lin Hwang, Co-Founder, DamoGo | South Korea/ Indonesia |
| | Laressa Amaly, Suri the Goods | Indonesia |
| Movers Programme | Imran Hamid | Bangladesh |
| | Sumaiya Binte Ferdous | Bangladesh |
| | Xiaoyue Zhao | China |
| | Yufan Chen | China |
| | Han Zhang | China |
| | Huiqiao Qiu | China |
| | Truong Nguyen Luan | Viet Nam |
| | Nguyen Quoc Hieu | Viet Nam |
| | Nguyen Minh Anh | Viet Nam |
| | Dinh Thu Ha | Viet Nam |
| | Manh Hung Vu | Viet Nam |
| | Tran Thanh Bao | Viet Nam |
| | Soma Gowshami | Bangladesh |
| | Kamily Chakma | Bangladesh |
| | Sirajam Munira | Bangladesh |
| | Samira Akter Siyam | Bangladesh |
| | Probin Tropura | Bangladesh |
| | Buyuan ZHANG | China |
| | Yuwei ZHONG | China |
| | Xinyi ZHAI | China |
| | Yuexi Du | China |
| | Yangdi Yan (UNV) | China |
| | Nguyen Duy Phuong | Viet Nam |
| | Kurt Nguyen | Viet Nam |
| | Nguyen Kim Yen Nhi | Viet Nam |
| | Springboard or Innovation Challenges | Watsal Rajbhandari, DOCHAA |
| Thinles Norboo, Ladakh Basket | | India |
| Sadikshya Aryal, Himalayan Innovations | | Nepal |
| Salote Vaai | | Samoa |
| Luana Ross | | Samoa |
| Pelenatete Tae | | Samoa |
| Joao Baptista P. Guterres | | Cambodia/ Timor-Leste |

Regional UNDP and YCL Regional Team

| |
|--|
| Beniam Gebrezghi, Program Specialist Civil Society & Youth |
| Chongguang Yu, Technical Specialist |
| Livio Sarandrea, Crisis Prevention and Rule of Law Specialist |
| Tshering Choden, Regional Gender Specialist |
| Darko Pavlovic, Project Manager |
| Katri Kivioja, Policy Specialist |
| Savinda Ranathunga, Regional Youth Project Manager |
| Ke Lin, Youth Entrepreneurship and Innovation Coordinator |
| Sze Wai Cheung, Youth Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Coordinator |
| Dinh-Long Pham, Youth Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Specialist |
| Mala Rajpal, Programme Development and Strategic Development Communications Expert |
| Cissy Shen, Partnerships and Youth Programme Development Consultant |
| Pauliina Meskus, Junior Consultant to Support Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Activities, |
| Patrick Dulay, Consultant to provide Crowdfunding Support for Youth-led Social Enterprises, |
| Ruoxiao Song, Partnership and Innovative Financing Consultant |
| Trisukon Kunkaew, Programme Associate |
| Athiti Kanjanaphairoj, Project Assistant |
| Brook Horowitz, Senior Consultant - Business Integrity in ASEAN, UNDP |

UNDP National Staff

| | Name and Job Title | Country |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------|
| Overview | Mahmudul Hasan, Programme Officer and Youth Coordinator, UNDP Bangladesh | Bangladesh |
| | Xin Gao, Youth Development Analyst, UNDP China | China |
| | Christina Mualia-Lima, ARR Governance & Poverty Reduction Unit, UNDP Samoa | Samoa |
| | Tupe Crawley, Project Co-ordinator , UNDP Samoa | Samoa |
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| | Karla Rodriguez Barradas, Youth Engagement Associate, UNDP | Singapore |
| | Nguyen Nhu Quynh, Inclusive Innovation and Youth Officer, UNDP Viet Nam | Viet Nam |
| | Nitchakan Daramatat, Youth and Social Innovation officer, UNDP Thailand | Thailand |
| Staff Turnover Countries | Rifki Hadiawan, UNV Youth Entrepreneurship Officer, UNDP Indonesia | Indonesia |
| | Hiromi Amano, Youth Engagement Consultant, UNDP | Japan |
| | Young-Ji Kim, Youth Entrepreneurship Policy and Partnerships Analyst | Korea |
| | Binita Karki, Youth Officer, UNDP Nepal | Nepal |
| National Movers Coordinators | Shathy Jomoddar, Youth Community Engagement Officer, UNDP | Bangladesh |
| | Waddhna In, Youth Community Engagement Volunteer, UNDP | Cambodia |
| | Niharika Batra, Youth Community Engagement Assistant, UNDP | India |
| | Yumna Malik, Youth Community Engagement Assistant, UNDP | Pakistan |
| | Ngoc Hong Vuong, Youth Community Engagement Assistant, UNDP | Viet Nam |

Regional Partners

| Stakeholder group | Interviewees |
|--|--|
| Regional Partners | Arina Darif, Community Investing and Development Manager, Citi Asia Pacific; |
| | Yibin Chu, Head of Community Investing and Development, Citi Asia Pacific |
| | Prae Sunantaraks, Mekong Region Director, AVPN |
| | Sharia Walker, Senior Youth Development Specialist, IsDB |
| | Daisuke Takatsuki, Principal, CVC Asia Pacific Japan |
| | Sushil Ram, Programme Manager, The Commonwealth |
| | Dmitry Frischin, Deputy Regional Manager, UNV |
| | Felix Weidenkaff, Youth Employment Specialist, ILO |
| | Amra Naidoo, Co-founder & General Partner, Accelerating Asia |
| | Winnie Toh, Programme Manager, Accelerating Asia |
| | Faiz Shah, Head, Development Management & Director, Yunus Center, AIT |
| | Melanie Mossard, Director of Entrepreneurship & Innovation, Impact Hub Cambodia |
| Research and Knowledge Products | Ulrike Guelich, Assistant Professor at the School of Entrepreneurship and Management at Bangkok University in Thailand |
| | Robin Gravesteyn, PhD, Lead Systems and Research Migration and remittances, United Nations Capital Development Fund |
| | Allison Morris, Programming Specialist, Youth Empowerment Partnerships, UNICEF |

National Partners

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Buyuan Zhang, Project Management Office, China
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John V.C., Accenture, Singapore

CSOs and Academic partners

Arif Nezami, PreneurLab, Bangladesh
Lin Zhe, NPI, China

Annex 8:

Pledge of Ethical Conduct

Youth Co:Lab's administrative records include signed pledges of ethical conduct for each member of the evaluation team and can be accessed upon request.

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