



Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken

YEP
WATER



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Mid-term Review Young Expert Program (YEP) Water

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LIST OF TERMS

Dutch Young Expert:

Young expert, Master or Bachelor graduate with a maximum of four years of work experience, with the Dutch nationality

Local Young Expert:

Young expert, Master or Bachelor graduate with a maximum of four years of work experience, with the nationality of the country they work in and not previously employed by this organization

Alumni:

Young Experts who have been in the program but finished or have left the program

Organization:

A company, knowledge institute or non-profit organization

Project:

A project, program or activity that the Young Expert is working on YEP Program bureau: The program bureau that manages and coordinates the YEP program, located at NWP, Bezuidenhoutseweg 2, 2594 AV, Den Haag

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
IenM	Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment
IGG	Inclusieve Groene Groei / Inclusive Green Growth, department of the MoFA, that is responsible for YEP
IWA	International Water Ambition
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
JPO	Junior Professional Officer
JPP	Junior Professional Program SNV
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoFA	Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague Netherlands
MTR	Mid Term Review
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NWP	Netherlands Water Partnership
PPP	Public Private Partnership
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small Medium size Entreprize/MKB
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
ToC	Theory of Change
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
VEI	Vitens Evides International
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
YEP	Young Expert Program

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THIS REPORT

This report concerns the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the Young Expert Program Water (YEP Water) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) since its start in on 15 June 2013 until mid November 2015. The YEP Water aims to support the continued availability of international professionalism and expertise in the water sector. It is a work- and learning-program that offers Dutch and local young water professionals the opportunity to gain professional experience in an international development context.


YEP Water is an answer to the concerns expressed by the Dutch water sector in 2011 that it will not be able to contribute to the Dutch water ambitions in the development context in the future as the sector lacks young talent and lacks international development expertise.

Based on the RoyalHaskoning report of 27 September 2011 (Voorstel voor een Young Expert Programma Water en Voedselzekerheid), the Netherlands Water Partnership (NWP) and MoFA developed a Public Private Partnership (PPP) program aimed at strengthening the expertise of young professionals in the water sector by offering job placements in Dutch organizations that are active in developing countries (knowledge institutes, companies and non-governmental organizations). Young experts, YEP alumni, the participating organizations, NWP and MoFA are to form a network that is to support the human capital agenda of the Dutch water sector and to create a strong foundation and opportunities for continued support between the government and the water sector in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

YEP Water was initiated on January 1st 2013. Overall, YEP Water aims to admit over 100 Dutch and over 100 local young experts during a period of five years. YEP Water aims it to be embedded in the Dutch Water sector assuring that YEP Water training and support contributes towards the fulfilling of the human capital needs of the sector.

1.2. GOAL OF THE REPORT

The overall goal of this report is to report on the Mid Term Review (MTR) that was executed between mid November 2015 and Mid February 2016. This MTR generates conclusions and lessons learned on YEP Water in order to help the programme to reach it's full potential in the upcoming period. The main research questions that are addressed are:

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- To what extent, directly and indirectly, currently and in the future, is YEP Water addressing the stated human capital problem of the Dutch water sector, with special attention to the development relevance of the activities undertaken by the Dutch water sector?;
 - How is the YEP Water programme performing, what are its strengths and weaknesses and what can be further improved in order to achieve optimal efficiency, effectiveness and impact?
Due to the nature of an MTR, the focus is on lessons that can improve the program. We used the principles of collective learning and involved the different stakeholders at every stage and had many formal and informal encounters in The Netherlands as well as in Benin and Kenya.
 - Jan Spit CS Delft and Empower People (Ronald Wielinga and Henriëtte Kloots) executed this MTR. We thank all respondents for their time and energy and - above all - enthusiasm in answering our questions. Going through the report, you will find that this report mirrors the variety of the Dutch Water Sector: many different souls, many different opinions, often contrary to each other. We have done our utmost best to reflect these views as clearly as possible and we invite you to send your comments and ideas to henriette@empower-people.nl.

1.3. MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

This report concerns the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the Young Expert Program Water (YEP Water) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) since its start in on 15 June 2013 until mid November 2015. We summarize the findings of the MTR team consisting of Jan Spit CS Delft and Empower People (Ronald Wielinga and Henriëtte Kloots) according to the points raised in our terms of reference. We start with findings and conclusion and wrap up with the recommendations in italic.

RELEVANCE

YEP Water is an answer to the concerns expressed by the Dutch water sector in 2011 that it will not be able to contribute to the Dutch water ambitions in the development context in the future as the sector lacks young talent and lacks international development expertise. Based on this challenge the following objectives for YEP have been formulated:

1. Building international experience amongst young high potentials in the water sector;
2. Creating international opportunities for personal development of young high potentials;
3. Set-up a long-term presence in several countries by supporting sustainable networks in selected countries and realise new opportunities for the Dutch economy (TRADE) and development cooperation (AID).

As far as the first two objectives are concerned, YEP performs in an excellent way. The respondents recognize a shortage of junior staff with experience abroad on the one hand and aging of staff on the other hand. YEP addresses these issues in a professional way by supporting young professionals to gain experience abroad, helping them to start an international career in the water sector and by creating a pool of experienced professionals for the sector. The program offers also training for and development opportunities of these young experts. The respondents are more focused on working internationally then working on international development.

It is harder to draw conclusions on the third objective, 87% of the respondents say that YEP Water is contributing to a sustainable presence and international networks abroad and 50% claim that YEP makes them more competitive. However, is has not really become very clear what MoFA intends to do with the increased workforce as the number bilateral funded projects is decreasing and many organizations active in developing countries, especially NGOs are sizing down or closing doors as a direct result of the same MoFA policy.

We recommend that YEP and MoFA create a long-term plan to assure there is a sustainable contribution from the program to the sector.

NETWORKING

The program bureau pays a lot of attention to the networking part of the program: events are organized in such a way that networking is stimulated and young experts in finding jobs, also after they have left the program. When it comes to being a network of opportunities beyond the program we can conclude that this depends primarily on the effort of the organization itself and the effort of the young expert. YEP makes it certainly easier for the young experts to be able to be employed abroad. The added value for the participating organizations is both the financial aid and the training program.

YEP ALUMNI

Currently 100% of the alumni are working in the water sector of which 50% are working in the international development sector. The program bureau stimulates alumni to stay in touch by implementing a platform that makes it easier to keep in contact.

The alumni could play a more intensive role in the program, for example by organizing master classes, promoting the program in their current roles and coaching the current Young Experts.

ADDITIONALLY PUBLIC CONTRIBUTION

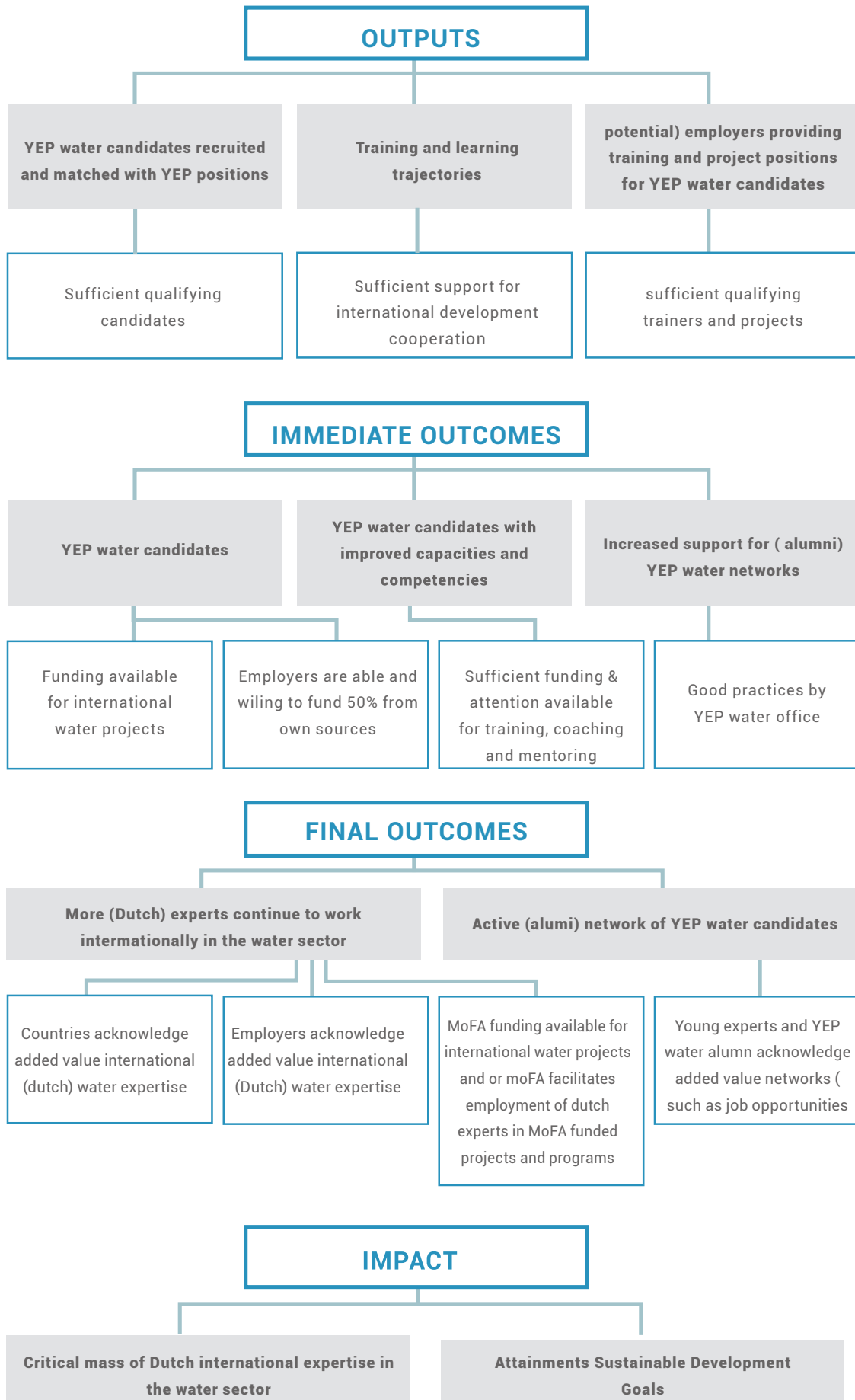
YEP depends on the MoFA grant, which is an important risk for the program. The sector neither has the power nor the organizational capacity to run the program without the financial support of the Ministry. The grant that the participating organisations receive is an important reason to join the program.

We recommend having a broader range of financial sources to reduce the dependency on MoFA.

THEORY OF CHANGE

As there was no Theory of Change for YEP Water we prepared the following proposal, which is based on the ToC of YEP AgroFood and our findings in the MTR removing aspects like 'innovation'.

Main objective YEP Water: Support the continued availability of international expertise in the water sector



We would like to encourage the program bureau to make sure there is a final version before the summer 2016. We also recommend the reporting of the program to be based on the Theory of Change to see whether the program is still meeting the needs of the organizations in the sector.

INVOLVEMENT EMBASSIES

The involvement of the embassies depends mainly on the engagement of the embassy itself. Due to the restriction on accumulating subsidies it is not possible to finance young experts at embassies.

We recommend a more personalized approach for the different embassies assure they are all engaged as much as possible. Suggestions are to involve MoFA more effectively, set-up regular calls with the different embassies or have local organizations take more responsibilities on getting the embassies involved in the program.

More buy-in from embassies could be achieved by having young experts employed by embassies. As current rules prevent this, a special YEP-Embassy program would need to be created, but to avoid 'unfair' competition, this should go hand-in-hand with a YEP-SME and YEP-NGO program.

YEP AS PARTNER

Although the stakeholders value the open and pleasant character of the communication between the MoFA, NWP and the water sector, we conclude that the expectations of MoFA and the YEP program bureau differ.

We recommend that a joint session be organised in which the partners focus on the expectations, roles and responsibilities for the coming period.

PERCEPTION PPP

The participating organizations contribute 50% of the finances to the program. This contribution has a positive effect on the engagement and commitment of the organizations and most the applicant organizations are satisfied with this setup.

PPP LESSONS LEARNED

The PPP aspect contributes to the engagement of the participating organizations and assures that organizations contribute responsibly to the success of the program. For MoFA, the PPP character is an excellent way to contribute actively, share experiences and contribute to the YEP Water goals in an effective and efficient way.

BUDGET AND GOAL OF THE PROGRAM COMPARED TO THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYED AND TRAINED YOUNG EXPERTS

Opinions on what is good and what needs improvement differ. This is mainly caused by the fact that the program is not very personalized. The program also focuses on formal and social learning (which are in fact only 30% of the learning needs) and too little on learning on-the-job. On the average, there is approximately € 6,000 per year available for the training program. Compared to trainee programs this is a budget that might be expected.

There might be a couple of adjustments possible to make sure the program is more effective:

- We advise redesigning the training in the Netherlands according to the 70:20:10 model thereby increasing the efficiency and reducing the (expensive) time in classrooms;
- Personalised learning. We recommend making the training program more personalised;
- Outsourcing of learning. Beside the trainers that are hired for the program we recommend to set-up cooperation with educational institutes and / or universities to support the training program;
- Giving more responsibility to the mentors in the program.

PROGRAM BUREAU'S PERSPECTIVE ON IMPROVEMENTS ON ITS EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

The program bureau performs on a very professional level. Around 12.5% of MoFA's grant is spent on program management. The main cause that the costs are higher than might be expected, seems to be both the number of days spent by the program bureau and the relatively high tariff. However, it needs to be stressed that the costs that are labelled as 'management costs' include many more tasks. Furthermore, the program management costs in the first two years were higher than might be expected based on the number of young experts in the program.

We recommend the program bureau to set-up a more detailed time registration system. This to obtain more insight into the time spent and where there are opportunities for efficiency improvement opportunities.

INVOLVEMENT WATER SECTOR

The YEP program has built a broad network in the water sector. Getting organizations in the sector involved, does not mean that everybody is aware of YEP. The brand awareness of the program in the sector can be improved.

We recommend working with YEP ambassadors that are in key positions at the stakeholders of the program. The ambassadors are both the ears and eyes in the sector and contribute to the exposure of the program. Secondly the program itself needs to maintain the high level of education if it wants to make a difference in resumes.

SATISFACTION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS

Overall there are a lot of positive responses to the program, coming from all different stakeholders on all different levels.

OTHER YOUNG EXPERT PROGRAMS

The main strength of YEP Water is that it is focused on water; it has a long-term involvement and an in-depth experience due to the training program. Compared to JPO it is relatively cost-effective as costs of JPO at multilateral organizations are high. The opportunity for YEP is that projects nowadays require all-rounders to execute international projects and this is a good fit with YEP. A threat for the YEP Program is that traineeships such as VEI Water provide short-term trips and demanding assignments as well.

RULES ON PREVENTION OF ACCUMULATION OF SUBSIDIES

EU rules prevent hiring of YEP Water candidates by embassies and projects funded by MoFA. Bending of rules to assure that opportunities are not missed, has created a situation that can easily be considered as 'unfair' towards other opportunities 'not-to-be-missed'. The best approach is to have several dedicated YEP program streams: YEP Embassy, YEP SME, YEP NGO with special rules.

We recommend investigating the possibility to be more flexible in the percentage of subsidy that is granted to the different projects. In some cases it might be enough to only finance the training program while in other cases a subsidy of 50% is not sufficient for an SME or small NGO.

YEP WATER'S MONITORING PLAN

Generally YEPs' monitoring plan works well.

Finally we would like to reflect on the program bureau: the staff works hard, spends a lot of time on informing all stakeholders, and keeps the business running while at the same time it improves the program. However, the different stakeholders do not always recognize the efforts of the program bureau. We recommend a more targeted communication per stakeholder (or group of stakeholders), to assure specific stakeholders know specific things on the program that interests them. We also recommend the program bureau to better market their activities. The enthusiasm and commitment of the program bureau to the program has the effect that nearly all initiatives come from the program bureau and almost all the work is done by themselves, whereas it is sometimes more efficient and effective to outsource a part of the work to other organizations that are willing to support the program bureau. *We recommend spending more time on empowering other people and organizations. Create ambassadors with certain responsibilities, have the mentors take more responsibilities and make more use of the alumni. It would be very beneficial to do a NPS score, preferably a 360 degrees NPS score, every year to have a benchmark of the satisfaction of all the stakeholders. This is a very quick way to measure the overall satisfaction with the program and the outputs and outcomes of the program. As the program highly depends on the program manager, we recommend that the program manager transfers the knowledge, experience and network to selected team members. This will at the same time pave the way to also transfer a part of the tasks and make the program more cost efficient.*

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

According to the stakeholders, YEP is helping them in creating a 'better' image as a good employer by hiring young professionals. At the same time YEP is not yet making them a more competitive player. We see a great win-win situation: If YEP can make a real difference for a company in this field, the company will become a great ambassador for the program, continue to hire young experts and on its turn promote the added value of YEP to other organizations.

2. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

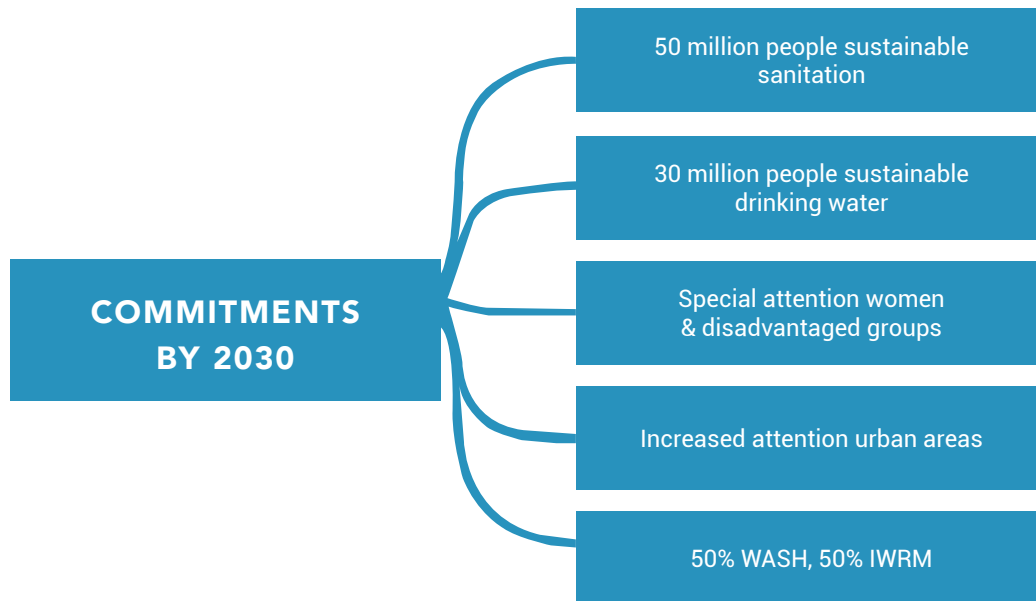
2.1. INTRODUCTION

YEP Water is an answer to the concerns expressed by the Dutch water sector in 2011 that it will not be able to contribute to the Dutch water ambitions in the development context in the future as the sector lacks young talent and lacks international development expertise. But... what is this 'development context'? One thing is sure; this context is constantly changing and what is in the headlines today (How to allocate the refugees in Europe? How to provide safe water and sanitation in refugee camps?) is not the same as was in the headlines yesterday (how to combat climate change?) or the headlines of tomorrow.

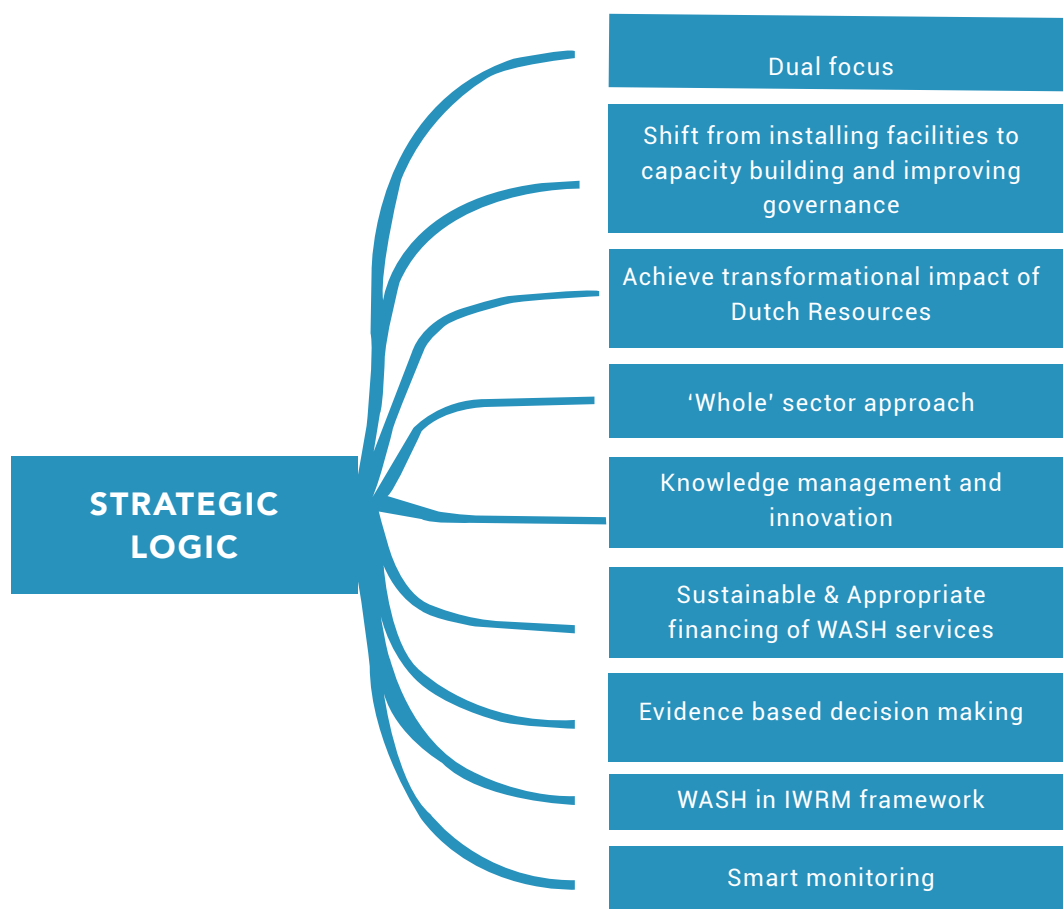
We have by no means the ambition to provide an overall analysis of the context for the Dutch Water sector. However, in this chapter we describe factors that influence the posting § 2.2; we discuss the job position of YEP Water Alumni (§ 2.3) and the actors in § 2.4. We round off chapter with a short description of other programs that target young experts (§ 2.5).

2.2. TRENDING TOPICS AND FACTORS AND TRENDS THAT INFLUENCE YOUNG EXPERT'S POSTINGS

New WASH Strategy. At the moment MoFA is working on its new WASH Strategy. The commitment of MoFA is shown in Figure 1. The strategic logic of the Draft WASH Strategy is presented in Figure 2.



 **Figure 1: Commitment MoFA 2030 (Draft WASH Strategy, November 2015)**



 **Figure 2: Strategic logic DRAFT MoFA MOFA WASH Policy (November 2015)**

CONSEQUENCE OF WASH POLICY FOR PROFILE FUTURE WATER EXPERTS

Although this is a DRAFT policy paper, its consequences for the future Water Expert are clear: the 'WASH expert of the future' needs to be educated in water, wastewater, sanitation and Integrated Water Resources. From the focus on the hardware in the past (design and installation facilities), the focus will be on capacity building and improved governance, finance, knowledge management and smart monitoring.

INTERNATIONAL WATER AMBITION 2016

In January 2016, three ministers (IenM, Aid and Trade, Economic Affairs) have published the International Water Ambition (IWA) of their ministries. The most important characteristics are presented in Figure 3. In the IWA, YEP Water is mentioned explicitly as part of Pillar 1 ("Provide opportunities to young experts through YEP") and Pillar 3 ("Dutch experts support local decision making and implementation through secondment, Netherlands Business Support Offices, DRR team and YEP").

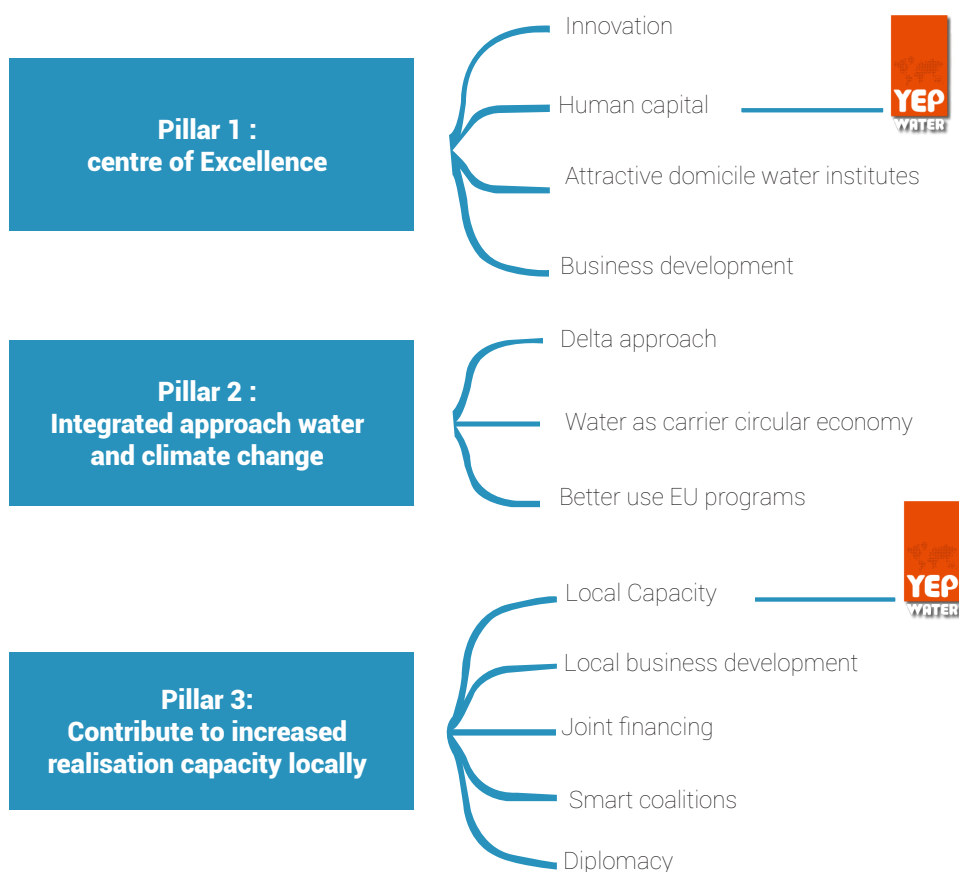


Figure 3: YEP and the 3 pillars of the International Water Ambitions (WA) January 2016

CONSEQUENCE OF IWA FOR PROFILE FUTURE WATER EXPERTS

Based on the IWA, we conclude that the 'Water expert of the future' needs to be an 'all-rounder': he/she needs to be innovative, business-minded, integrate water and climate change and be versatile in financing and coalition building.

CONSEQUENCES IWA FOR YEP PROGRAM BUREAU

The IWA is formulated for the period 2015-2021 whereas YEP Water spans the period 2013-2017. Soon, YEP Water will 'deliver' the last batch of young experts and it is important that the YEP program bureau receives clear guidance on the direction of its future: (1) monitoring of the young experts in the field and prepare an exit strategy?; or (2) preparing the floor for a new generations of young experts? The fact that YEP Water is mentioned explicitly in the IWA shows that there is reason to assume that there is scope for continuation of YEP Water beyond 2017, funded by MoFA. Hence, the YEP program bureau needs to be prepared for a continuation of its present role in the near future.

SHORT-TERM VERSUS LONG-TERM

In the description of the findings of the MTR we show that there are enough young (water) experts that are willing to work abroad. We also indicate that, for a proper understanding of the challenges and the opportunities of working internationally, ideally, a young expert needs to be employed for at least two years (many ex-Associate Experts claim: minimum 3 years). The high costs involved in stationing Dutch Experts abroad and the increase in number of locally available experts lead to a tendency where most assignments for water experts are on a short-term basis only. Hence, YEP Water alumni need to take into account that employment will usually be on short-term basis.

RECOMMENDATION TO MOFA.

Provide asap guidance to the YEP bureau on what direction the program needs to develop: Whether they should continue developing new generations of Young Experts with MoFA funding or switch into the monitoring role and prepare an exit strategy.

2.3. WHAT TO DO WITH THE POOL? WHAT ARE THE PROSPECTS FOR YEP WATER ALUMNI?

In 2006, MoFA has requested MDF to evaluate the Associate Expert Program (Associate Experts Programme Evaluation 1954-2006, 'Breeding the Fish in the Associate Experts Pool', MDF, 22 December 2006). One of the main recommendations to MoFA is to continue with the Associate Expert program, provided MoFA concretises the long-term aim of developing an expert-pool: "The question that needs to be addressed is how and by whom should this expert-pool be used and what should its impact be?". In § 2.2 we outlined the type of experts that are required in the near future. The question how many experts are needed is more challenging. In the following chapters we present the figures of YEP Water alumni, showing that almost 100% of the YEP Water alumni have found a job in the (international) water context. However, the example of JPP program of SNV shows that finding a job in the international (water) context with 2 years working experience is a challenge. In fact, an internationally operating water expert usually needs to have more than 5 years experience to add value to a proposal for international tenders of internationally operation consultancy firms or NGOs.

In the past, bilateral funded water programs were an excellent opportunity for Associate Expert Alumni and other young experts with less than 5 years experience to gain further experience. Anno 2016, we notice that the number of bilateral funded MoFA projects has declined drastically and that many organizations that were active internationally have closed, are closing their doors or are downsizing as a result of MoFA's policy to fund international organizations 'at the expense of' Dutch organizations. The US\$ 25 million Trust Fund currently being developed by MoFA with the World Bank is a good example. Integrating young experts in these MoFA funded multilateral organizations might be a good way to provide more job experience opportunities for young experts and YEP Water candidates.

SWOT ANALYSIS CONTEXT YEP WATER

STRENGTHS

- YEP Water is able to attract enough young experts to be placed in projects;
- YEP Water is able to find enough projects to place young experts.

WEAKNESSES

- It is not clear whether there will be a labour market for the Dutch YEP water alumni in future.

OPPORTUNITIES

- New' skills are required to be able to answer the sustainable development goals;
- International Water Ambition (IWA) keeps YEP on its agenda;
- MoFA funding to international / multi-lateral organizations can be used as a leverage to post Dutch (Young) Water Experts, YEP Water candidates and YEP Water Alumni.

THREATS

- Decrease in bilateral MoFA funding;
- Dutch organizations have to compete internationally for NL funding /decline in bilateral Dutch project funding.

CONCLUSION

As far as the current number of YEP Alumni is concerned, all have found employment. However the number of bilaterally funded projects and Dutch organization active internationally is decreasing, whereas the number of multilateral funded program increases, so the job-opportunities for YEP Water alumni is an area of concern.

RECOMMENDATION TO MOFA.

(1) Increase the number of bilaterally funded projects so that YEP Water Alumni are assured of job assignments. (2) Increase the potential of employing young experts and YEP Water by using a certain % (say 2%) of the programs funded through multilateral organizations (such as the World Bank Trust Fund) on the deployment of young experts.

2.4. ACTOR ANALYSIS

CONSULTANCY ORGANIZATIONS

Consultancy firms are competing in an international environment where donors rank project proposals, mainly on the number of years of international experience of the experts proposed. In the past, many international water experts at consultancy firms have been recruited from the pool of experience experts from SNV, Bilateral and Multilateral Associate Expert programs. In general consultancy firms are keen on employing young experts from YEP Water. Some smaller consultancy firms find the 50% contribution too costly.

WATER UTILITIES

The last decade Dutch Water Companies have started to work abroad. The 'Motie Koppejan' allows drinking water companies to use 1% of their Gross Turnover for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) purposes. This was, amongst others, used to start international activities in the field of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Usually three factors are mentioned as motivators: (1) to be a more attractive employer; (2) to assist in the fulfilment of the MDGs and SDGs and; (3) to expose the employees to a challenging environment and trigger flexibility- and innovation- skills. Vitens Evides International (VEI) is one of organizations that made international water its prime business. Most water utilities (except Waternet and Oasen) have found the way to YEP Water.

WATER AUTHORITIES

Although (or 'thanks to?') the fact that Dutch Water Authorities do not have the mandate to spend 1% on CSR, they are following in the footsteps of the water utilities, and 5 water authorities have found their way to YEP Water. They have the same 3 motivators as the water utilities.

NGOS

NGOs are suffering most of the MoFA policy to reduce bilateral funding. In the past decades they were breeding grounds for innovation and new approaches. The new reality is forcing them to work more and more like consultancy organizations. Some organizations, like SNV are capable to switch; others are less successful. NGOs are making good use of the YEP Water opportunities.

EMBASSIES AND MOFA

In our interviews with embassy staff, it is generally acknowledged that YEP Water is the breeding ground for the future generation embassy staff, once they have built up enough 'field' experience. There are a number of embassies that are interested in employing young experts as part of YEP Water at the moment. Due to the 50% non-MoFA contribution rule (EU restriction on accumulation of subsidies/ unfair competition) this is not possible.

LOCAL HOST ORGANIZATIONS

For practical reasons, the initial contact between YEP Water program bureau and a local host organization is mainly through the Dutch partner organization. Once the young expert is on the job, there is contact on reporting and/or the functioning of the young expert. In the face-to-face interview with the host organization in Benin (SONEB), the host indicated that he would welcome a more intense interaction with the YEP program bureau.

CONCLUSION

The type and size of different of organizations that are interested in YEP Water young experts varies and not all organization that are willing, are able to post young experts, either because the 50% own contribution cannot be raised or because the 50% contribution would come for MoFA sources as well. As a result of the '50% rule', interesting opportunities can easily be missed.

RECOMMENDATION TO MOFA.

See discussion on PPP and pilot in Kenya later on: a reflection on disadvantages of the 'missed opportunities' on the one hand and advantage of a 'straightforward and univocal program execution' is needed. If the 'learning experience' weights as a very important criterion, some alternative programs might be needed such as a 'YEP-Embassy', 'YEP-SME'/Small and medium-sized enterprises, 'YEP-NGO' with specific rules to allow a higher percentage of MoFA contribution, provided this is allowed by EU-rules on unfair competition.

2.5. OTHER TAILOR MADE PROGRAMS THAT EMPLOY YOUNG (WATER) EXPERTS

JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER (JPO) / ASSOCIATE EXPERT PROGRAM

This is a continuation of the former Associate Expert Programme. Following the MDF evaluation in 2006, MoFA has outsourced the administration and guidance of the experts to the Nedworc Foundation. Generally this is considered successful and very 'lean and mean'. At MoFA, 0.5 fte is available to visit the 19 multilateral organizations that have MoUs with MoFA. The organizations selected, are often from the 'historical' list and choices are made by the Minister, based on 10 KPIs (Key Performance Indicators). The JPO program is not focused on water. The JPO regards itself an extremely flexible programme; at the moment, it is working on 2 JPOs for IOM (International Organization for Migration, <http://www.iom.int>) in Lebanon and Jordan. The average cost of a JPO is US\$ 160,000 per year. The MDF evaluation mentions that in the early years of the JPO/AE program, the training component received too little attention. Today, the guidance of the AE is an important aspect.

JUNIOR PROFESSIONALS PROGRAM (JPP) SNV

SNV is a 50-year old development organization with 1500, mainly local staff. 80 staff members are expatriates; 15 of the staff are Dutch. MoFA financial support stopped per 1 January 2016 and SNV has to acquire its own work, amongst others through tenders. This switch from to NGO-ish mentality to a more business minded mentality is a challenge. The Junior Professional Program (JPP) of 2013 started with 12 newly recruited personnel (out 2,000-3,000 applicants) for a period of 2 years. SNV has spent 1 million Euro on this program. Unfortunately the 2 year experience are not enough to score 'high points' in international tenders and SNV did not have the financial resources to put the 12 people on the payroll.

VSO

Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) welcomes volunteers from most professional backgrounds, between the ages of 24 and 75. Requirements vary according to the needs of VSO's overseas partners and typically need:

- At least two years' relevant experience in a specific field;
- A degree or other recognized qualification;
- To be available to be away from home for between six and 24 months;
- To be willing to live on a basic allowance, adapt to new living conditions, and be prepared to learn the local language;
- To have experience of (or interest in) mentoring others, so you can pass on your knowledge to local colleagues.

UNV/ UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS

Every year, up to 8,000 qualified and experienced women and men of some 160 different nationalities volunteer at least six months of their lives to help others. These UN Volunteers work in some 130 countries promoting peace, responding to disasters, empowering communities and helping to build sustainable livelihoods and lasting development. UN Volunteers come from dozens of professional backgrounds but all of them are catalysts of positive change. They are encouraged to be creative

and entrepreneurial, and foster volunteerism for peace and development both within and beyond their assignments. They work at the heart of communities in partnership with governments, United Nations agencies and civil society. Being a UN Volunteer is not a career; it is also not an entry route to the United Nations.

TRAINEE PROGRAM VITENS EVIDES INTERNATIONAL (VEI)

Trainees at VEI are recruited for a 2-year period. They are not being posted internationally for this period, but need to execute a number of assignments. For some assignments the trainees travel to VEI programs abroad for a period of minimum 3 weeks to maximum 6 months. The YEP Water candidate who 'switched' from YEP Water to VEI that we interviewed, indicated that this program was preferred as she regarded a 1-2 posting too long.

SWOT ANALYSIS YEP WATER IN RELATION TO OTHER TAILOR-MADE PROGRAMS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialized in Water projects; Long-term involvement so in-depth experience; Relatively cost effective compared to JPO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job opportunities in bilateral (MoFA) funded projects are not as many as there used to be, so postings opportunities for YEP Water Alumni with only 2 years experience might be limited The question that was posed to MoFA in 2006 ("what to do with the pool?") seems still valid: "How and by whom should this expert pool (YEP Water Alumni, AEs) be used and what should its impact be? It is not clear what the long-term aim of the developed expert-pool is
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New generation projects require 'all-rounders' and YEP Water provides this opportunity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traineeships such as VEI Water provide short-term flexible assignments.

CONCLUSION

Compared to other tailor made programs to employ young (water) expert, YEP Water has an added value as it employs young, experts sufficiently long (2 years) to get 'real' field experience and as it focuses on water.

RECOMMENDATION TO MOFA.

Continue YEP Water.

3. BACKGROUND OF YEP WATER PROGRAM

3.1. OBJECTIVE AND REASON

The YEP Water Program aims to support the continued availability of international professionalism and expertise in the water sector. The work and learning program offers Dutch and local young professionals the opportunity to gain professional experience in an international development context through work placements at Dutch organizations that are active in developing countries.

Prior to the initiation of YEP Water, the Dutch water sector expressed its concern for a lack of young talent and therefore possible future capacity problems and a lack of international development experience required to contribute to the Dutch water and food security ambitions in the international developmental context.

In 2011, RoyalHaskoningDHV wrote a proposal for the YEP program. In this proposal the objective of the YEP was described as follows: Strengthening the water and food security sector to be and remain internationally active and increase the international profile of the Netherlands.

The following three sub-objectives have been formulated:

1. Building international experience among young high potentials in the water and food security sector;
2. Creating international opportunities for personal development of young high potentials;
3. Set-up a long-term presence in several countries by supporting sustainable networks in selected countries and realise new opportunities for the Dutch economy (TRADE) and development cooperation (AID).

In the same report, RoyalHaskoningDHV ¹ identified success factors for the YEP Program:

- Good cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), participating organizations and the program bureau is essential for the continuity and success of the program;
- Long-term commitment from all parties;
- YEP is in line with the strategy of the participating organizations and in that way contributes in achieving the goals of these organizations. This means that the participating organizations have a clear vision for the deployment of a young expert, also after completion of YEP Program;
- The costs for the program shall be shared equally by MoFA and the sector;
- Facilitating and execution of a training program and set-up of sustainable networks are essential aspects of YEP² ;
- Quality assurance is embedded in the design of the program;
- Deployment of the Young Expert is flexible and administrative burden is limited.

In January 2013, YEP water was initiated as a public-private partnership between the Netherlands Water Partnership (NWP) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). NWP is the network organization of the Dutch water sector. Officially, YEP Water started 15 June 2013.

The framework of the YEP Water ensures participating organizations to contribute at least 50% of the cost of the work placement of the Young Expert. YEP Water distinguishes two types of deployment of Young Experts in development projects:

1. A young Dutch expert is sent abroad and deployed for a period of minimum 1 and maximum 2 years in a development project of a Dutch organization;
2. A young local expert is deployed for a period of minimum 1 and maximum 2 years in a development project of a Dutch organization.

A YEP Water steering committee has been established that includes representatives of the Water sector, MoFA, young experts and an independent chair. The YEP Water steering committee oversees the execution of the program in accordance with the framework as set out in the partnership agreement and advises the program bureau regarding implementation.

1) RoyalHaskoningDHV; Voorstel voor een Young Expert Program voor de water en voedselzekerheid; 6 oktober 2011

2) In addition: the YEP'ers spend part of their time to supporting sustainable networks of local and international professionals in the sector. The aim is to create lasting networks between Young Experts and between Young Experts and local professionals. In the long term the aim is that these networks will lead to opportunities for the Dutch sector.

One of our respondents, also involved in a very early stage of the program, put the goal of YEP as follows:

"YEP is built on a very basic intrinsic motivation of doing the right thing to make this world a bit better. For that we wanted to combine international work, trade and developmental work. This is not done very often, and the new generation does this effortlessly."

3.2. FACTS & FIGURES

The following facts and figures are measured as per 8th of February 2016. They are based on the data of the YEP Water program bureau:



YEP INITIATED 2013

YEP Water was initiated in January 2013



5 YEAR PROGRAM

The program has a duration of 5 years until December 2017;



108 DUTCH & 107 LOCAL EXPERTS

The overall aim is to admit 108 Young Dutch Experts and 107 Local Young Experts over these 5 years;



31 COUNTRIES & 65 ORGANIZATIONS

The program is now active in 31 countries and at 65 organizations;



37 ALUMNI

There are 37 Alumni of the program of which 33 finalised the program and 4 stopped during the program for personal reasons;



66 YEP POOL CANDIDATES

The pool of candidates has 66 Young Experts. On top of this, there are 7 non-active candidates and 10 have been removed after having been in the pool for 2 years.

The total number of the young expert is 134, the activity, gender division and age is shown below:

YOUNG EXPERTS

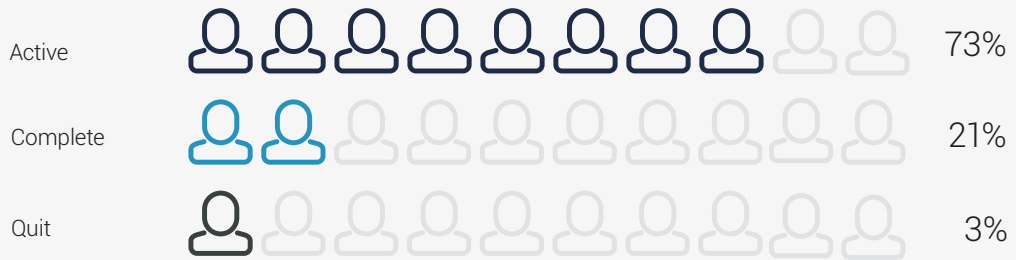


Figure 4: The activity of the total number of Young Experts

GENDER DIVISION

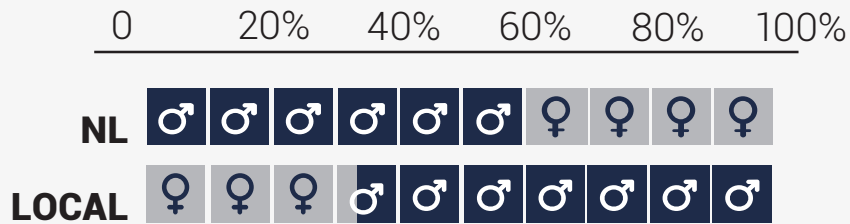


Figure 5: The gender division of the Young Experts in percentages

AVERAGE AGE YOUNG EXPERT

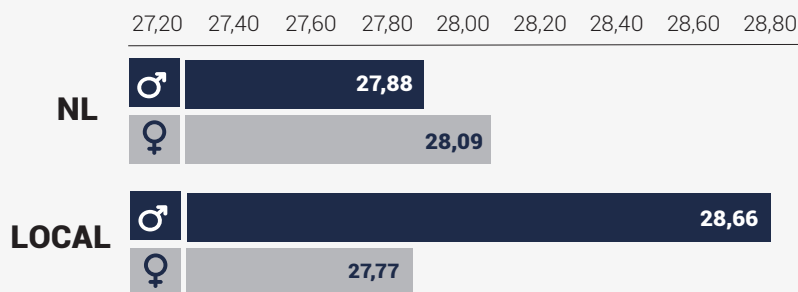


Figure 6: The age average of the Young Experts

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY USED

4.1. OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paragraph describes the research methodology used. Within this study we collected both primary and secondary data. The analysis of the secondary data is done by a desk study. For this we used:

- Aggregated data on the program, which was made available by the YEP program bureau;
- Reports on similar young expert training programs and methods;
- Reports on human capital in the water and development sector.

The primary data was collected in a number of ways:

- Online survey;
- 1-1 interviews (face-to-face / phone);
- Focus group discussion.

The research methodology is both qualitative as well as quantitative. The quantitative part of the research is done via an online survey. The specific questions of the survey can be found in the Appendix (nr. 1). In Appendix nr 2 it is specified which question was asked to which target audience. The qualitative part of this research is done in the online survey but also by 1:1 interviews with stakeholders, asking stakeholders specific questions by email and via clarifying interviews (phone) with targeted individuals after filling in the questionnaire. The research is based on a set of parameters and specific target audiences.

4.2. TARGET AUDIENCES AND RESPONSE RATE

Target Audience	Survey Sent out to	Survey Response%	Clarifying interviews	Specific Interviews	Question
Ministry of foreign affairs	2	0%	2		
Embassies			2		7
Steering committee	4	50%			
Program office	5	100%			1
Active young experts (Dutch)	78	69,1%		2	2
Active young experts (Local)	72	59,7%			
Yep alumni	15	67,9%			
Pool of candidates	63				
Rejected prospective young experts					
YEP coaches	3	100%			
YEP trainers	17	58,8%			
YEP mentors*	89	44,9%		1	4
Rejected prospective employers					'Standard' online survey with clarifying answers
Rejected prospective employers			1		2
Rejected prospective employers who did not apply for a young expert			4		
Non-participants who graduated a few years before the initiation of YEP	**	**	3		
Former employees of the program office				1	
Other program offices			2		
Former employees of the program office	--	--		1	
Other program offices	--	--	2		

* Employers of Young Experts both Dutch and local

** Request for a list of names was sent/ discussed with TU Delft. However, the student registration systems does not register 'aspirations to work abroad'. In stead some student have been approached directly.

 Table 1: Target audience and response rate

The online survey was sent to 338 respondents of which 173 filled in the entire survey (overall response rate of 51%). Interviews (additional or clarifying) were done with an additional 21 respondents. The selection of the additional interviews was based on the advice of the program bureau. In addition we selected people in the sector that were thought to be able to tell us more on specific topics, like other young expert programs. The selection of clarifying interviews was based on the comments in the survey, which either were not clear enough or showing deviating responses.

4.3. BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENTS

4.3.1 Relationship with YEP Water

The quantitative answers of the survey in this report can be allocated to the following relationships and roles with the YEP Water program. Most of the respondents are Young Expert or Mentor; of course these were also the biggest groups in the target audience. In the Mentor category we have included both local mentors as well as Dutch mentors.

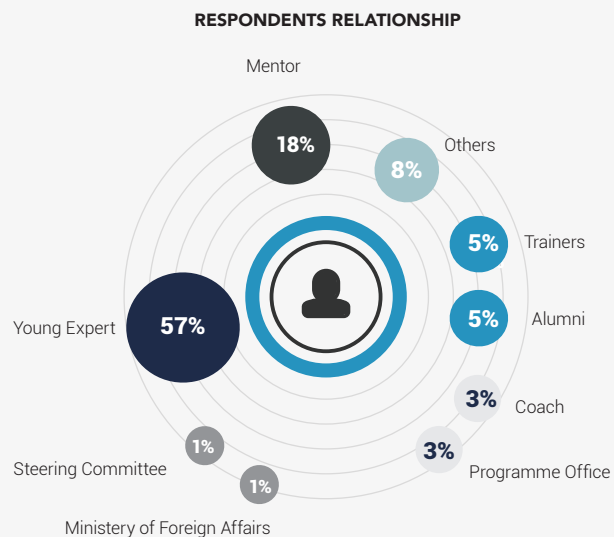


Figure 7: Respondents relationship with YEP

4.3.2 Geographical representation

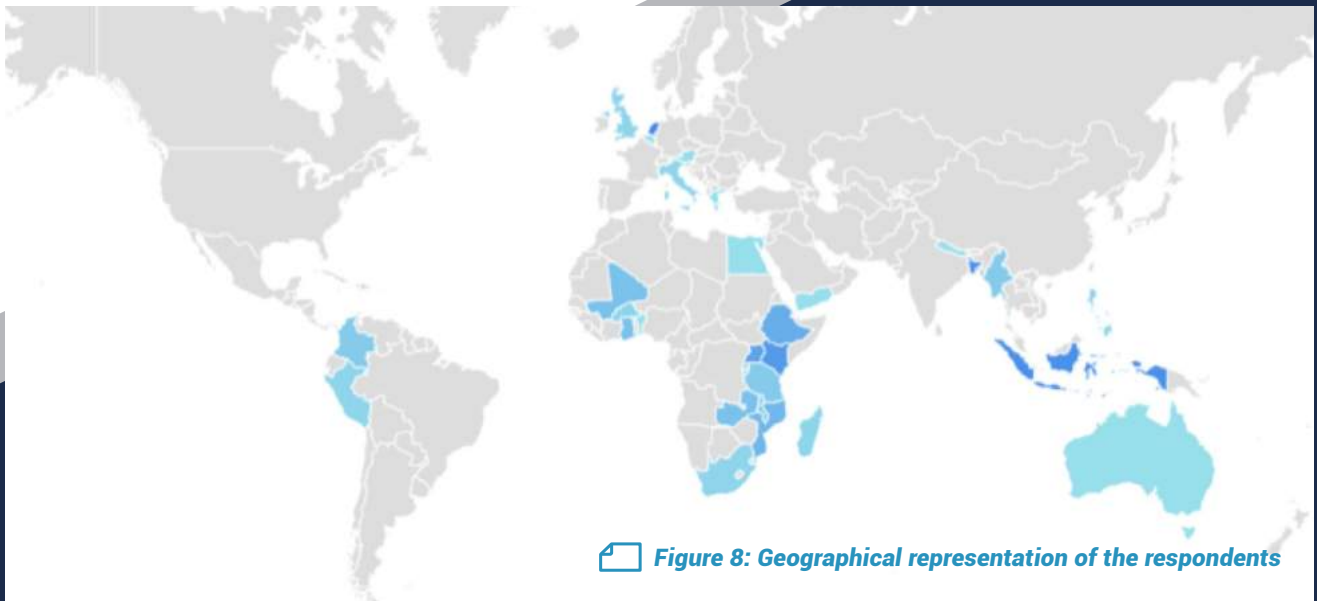
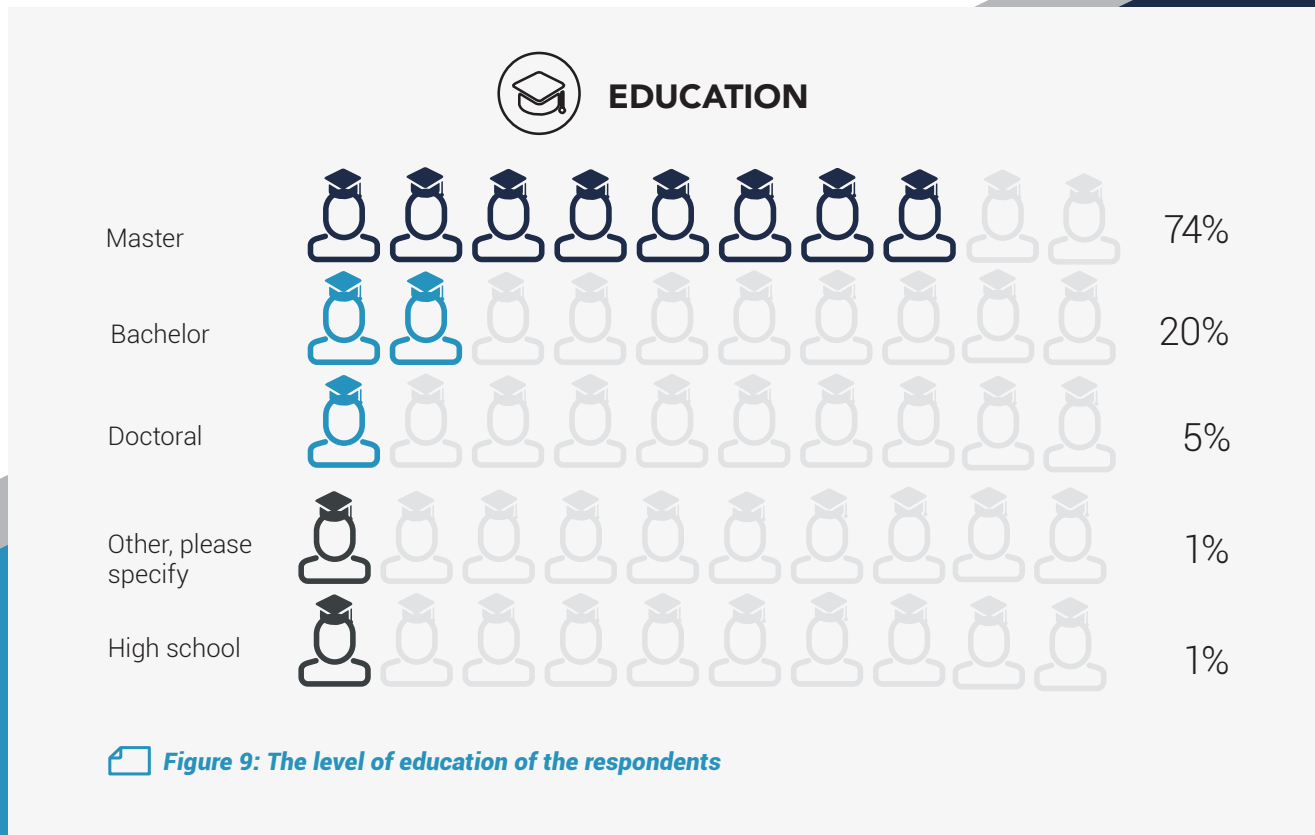


Figure 8: Geographical representation of the respondents

4.3.3 Relationship with YEP Water

In Figure 9, we provide an overview of the level of education of the respondents and their years of working experience. Most of the respondents have a Master's degree or a Bachelor degree.



4.3.4 Remarks on the research methodology and reporting

Most questions in the survey had 4 options: 'very good', 'good', 'poor', and 'very poor'. With this division in answers we made sure that the respondents were 'forced' to make a decision instead of saying 'no opinion' or go automatically for the 'moderate' answer. The advantage of this approach is that the respondents really had to make a choice. The disadvantage is that people, who would have wanted to select the option 'not applicable for me', were forced to make a choice as well. All respondents however, had the opportunity to provide a clarification of their answer for all questions in a separate entry field. The results have been analysed based on this and there is no tainting of the results.

Secondly, most of the qualitative answers of the survey below are specified according to what target audience the respondent belonged to. When it comes to answers from interviews, the category of the respondent is not mentioned with their answers or comments, because it can easily be traced back to a specific person. Given the fact that we have interviewed a limited amount of people.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTED DATA AND QUALITATIVE RESULTS

This chapter is focused on the description of both the quantitative data as well as the qualitative results of the study. Normally a report distinguishes between the two, however due to the fact that most quantitative data are followed up with additional qualitative results in this study, they are described together in the chapter below. Often specific data is followed by comments on quotes relating to that particular topic. This chapter starts describing the relevance of YEP Water, followed by partnerships, the effectiveness of YEP Water and recommendations from the respondents. Hence, this chapter is by no means a representation of the opinions of the research team, it only describes the answers of the respondents given in the interviews and the survey.

5.1. RELEVANCE OF YEP WATER

One of the major topics of this research is the relevance of YEP Water. The question is: Is YEP Water handling issues that are currently high on the agenda in the sector? The following sections focus on the added value of the program by looking into how YEP Water is handling challenges in the water sector, whether the program has added value in general and added value for the young experts and organizations specifically.

5.1.1. Reasons for working with YEP Water

Getting insights in what motivates mentors, coaches, companies and young experts to be cooperating with YEP Water, helped us to get insight in what the value is of the program to them and whether that coincides with the goals of the program. That's why all respondents were asked what their motivation was to be working together with YEP Water.

The respondents answered sometimes on a very high abstract level saying that they want to work with and for people and that YEP Water is one way of doing that.

The young experts claim that YEP Water is helping them to develop on a personal and professional level, giving them entrance to a career in the international water sector, increasing their network and improving their impact. Also they feel that, because they are part of the program, it is building their self-confidence as a young professional. The organizations' feedback is that they were in need of a link between their work in the Netherlands and the local organization and that the Young Expert bridges this. Most organizations say that YEP Water is helping them in their capacity building for now and in the future, as well as being able to help a young professional to build experience in the field.



The YEP Water alumni claim that YEP Water has helped them to develop themselves as well as facilitated them to continue working in the sector. The YEP program bureau, trainers and coaches are motivated to help young professionals to gain experience in the international water sector and in developmental work and indicate that the program is helping them to contribute to that.

This is a summary of some of the reactions:

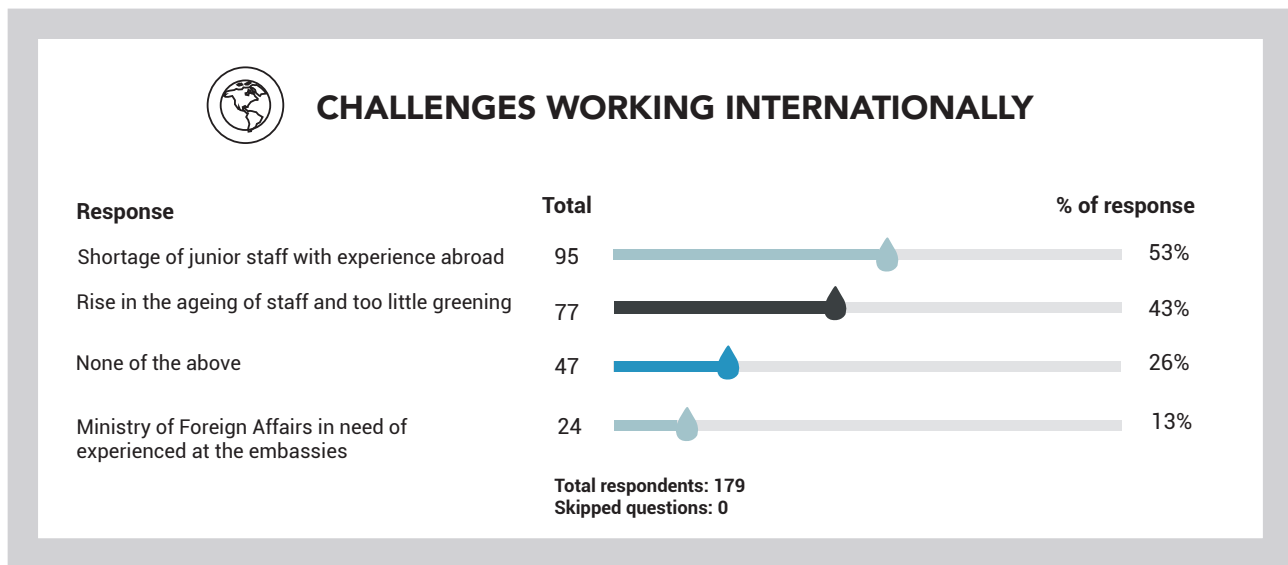
- Working with highly motivated professionals;
- Give or been given a chance to work abroad and internationally;
- Capacity building within the water sector;
- Getting involved and being able to make a difference for the water sector;
- Having an international network and links to international companies;
- Being part of a consistent training and mentorship program;
- Sharing knowledge across all borders of age, sector and country;
- Having a future orientation on their career or the future of their company.

5.1.2. Challenges in the international watersector

Working in an international development context is always a challenge. In this study the following issues are mentioned when it comes to working in an international context:

- Communication issues;
- Cultural differences;
- (Unstable) Political situations, bureaucracy and corruption;
- The adaption of knowledge and technical skills to a local situation and context;
- More opportunities and projects are available for experienced employees.

When asked about specific challenges in the water sector, 53% of the respondents recognize a shortage of junior staff with experience abroad and 43% recognize a rise of ageing staff and too little greening, as is shown in the graph below.



 **Figure 10: Specific challenges for working internationally in the water sector**

YEP Water, according to the different respondents, addresses these challenges by:

- Supporting young people to obtain (hands-on) experience abroad;
- Help young professionals to start and build a career in the water sector and sharing experiences along the way;
- Create a pool of professionals with experience in water;
- Create financial room for organizations to send young professionals abroad;
- Promote the hiring of young professionals to organizations in the sector;
- Training and developing the young experts to overcome the challenges normally faced in working internationally as well as offer personal development.

One of the Young Experts said:

“The program exposes the young professional to a global network of water experts and quickly develops the skills of the young professional”

The reason the stimulation of young experts is important, according to one of the interviewed respondents, is because the water sector is one of the sectors where still a lot of retired people are re-hired. They have a lot of experience and work as freelancer in the business. They are not only preventing people from 30-40 years of age from opportunities to get relevant experience, but they also don't leave any room for young experts to obtain experience in the field. One of the mentors added the comment that we have major issues in the Netherlands with the aging of the workforce and for that reason, hiring young experts is necessary to keep the workforce sufficiently large and experienced for the future.

In one of the interviews a respondent mentioned that the program is not only put in place because of the stimulation and increase in the number of Young Experts, but also for development cooperation reasons. This respondent questions whether this is still a big focus of the program or whether YEP Water is it less focused on development cooperation work. The question raised was: How does this program fit into the bigger picture of the goals of MoFA in development cooperation work in the water sector?

5.1.3 Experience of local organizations

Local organizations experience additional challenges in working with Dutch companies, which is what they have been asked specifically in this research. On a positive note they mention that Dutch organizations are very efficient and result-orientated which makes it easy to work together. As areas for concern they mention:

- A dependency on funding from the Dutch government for international developmental work and as a result of this, a lack of an 'entrepreneurial' spirit;
- Cultural (communication) issues;
- A lack of understanding of the local (political) circumstances.

An example of these cultural issues, given by a local organization, is for example that meetings in the Netherlands are 'cast in stone' and not flexible when it comes to planning. Abroad there is much more flexibility and Dutch companies do not always understand this. The role of YEP Water in addressing these issues, according to one of these organizations, has more value for the young expert, who gains cultural diversity experience. Hence, this facilitates the organization to work with Dutch organizations in general. He said:

"Dutch companies often feel assured when a Dutch person is involved in the country. It does not matter much whether this person is a YEP or regular staff."

Organizations mention that when cultural issues are raised, YEP program bureau is doing their utmost best to support the organization and the Young Expert in overcoming these issues.

5.2 THE ADDED VALUE OF YEP WATER

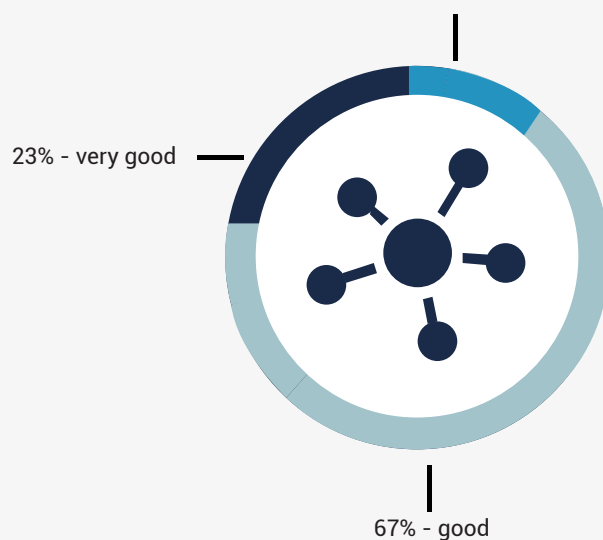
5.2.1 Introduction

For YEP Water to be able to have added value, which is one of the topics of this research, it needs to add value specifically to the young experts, the organizations and their mentors as well as. In this section the general added value of the program is discussed. The answers below, out of the survey came from all target audiences in the survey, young experts, Pool of candidates, program bureau, Steering Committee, alumni, coaches, trainers and mentors.

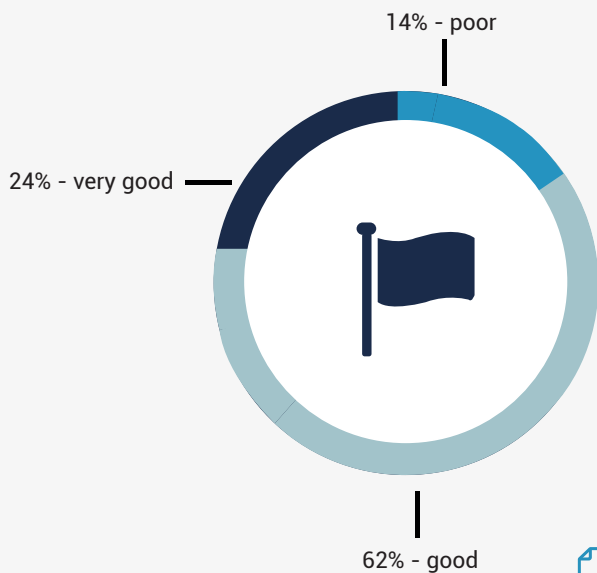
- 98% of the respondents think YEP Water contributes to a breeding ground for young talent (47% 'very good', 51% 'good', 2% 'poor');
- 98% also think YEP Water contributes to build up CV's and networks (46% 'very good', 52% 'good' and 2% 'poor');
- 97% think YEP Water is providing an opportunity to work and live in other cultures. 60% even claims YEP Water does a very good job providing this (60% 'very good', 37% 'good' and 3% 'poor');
- 96% say YEP Water creates a pool of experts with experience abroad (44% 'very good', 52% 'good' and 4% 'poor');
- 87% say that YEP Water is contributing to a sustainable presence and international networks abroad (21% 'very good', 66% 'good', 12% 'poor'). Reason for scoring 'poor' on this question is that the respondents say it is a little bit too early to have an opinion on this, although the promise for having a sustainable presence is there.

When asked whether YEP Water creates a network of opportunities beyond YEP Water the answers are as follows:

Respondents have made additional comments, saying that this highly depends on the employer and the performance of the Young Expert, as well as the Young Expert's networking skills. The respondents say YEP Water is not actively making sure there is a network of opportunities beyond YEP Water, but some of the Young Experts get a new job because of the network of YEP Water based or their performance during the project. The alumni network is seen as a good starting for making sure the network is staying in touch after the projects have ended. The program bureau mentions that it puts a lot of effort in taking care of the young experts, after the young experts completed the YEP Water program by pointing at job opportunities and an 'exit interview'.



 **Figure 11: Network of opportunities beyond YEP Water**



When asked whether YEP Water is contributing to the brand awareness of the Dutch water sector in international networks and companies abroad, the answers were as follows:

Figure 12: Contribution of YEP Water to brand awareness

Mentors comment that it is too much of a responsibility to have this solely coming from a program like YEP Water, although the program definitely contributes to this. In one of the interviews it was also mentioned that it is very important to be educating Dutch professionals in the international context for the international status of The Netherlands as a country. It shows that The Netherlands is a good partner and it works on a good international reputation. This interviewee said:

“Through this program, the Dutch water sector will be more recognized attractively because it is promoted by a young dynamic expert”

5.2.2 YEP Water added value for young experts in the water sector young experts in the water sector

The group of respondents in the category young experts is split into two groups in this research: The Dutch Young Expert and the Local Young Expert. This has been done to be able to ask the Dutch young experts specific questions on their wishes to work abroad, and how YEP Water has contributed to this. Their answers are followed by questions we asked to the entire Young Expert target group.

5.2.3 Dutch Young Expert

Most Dutch Young Experts say that YEP Water was not particularly their motivator for working abroad in the water sector. Most of them already had the idea, or already had working experience abroad and wanted to do this again. They follow this up by saying that although YEP Water was not particularly the motivator to be wanting to work abroad, YEP Water did make it possible or more easy for them to be getting more work experience abroad. This is also confirmed by the program bureau that claims that one of their most important goals is to make it easier to work abroad for young professionals.

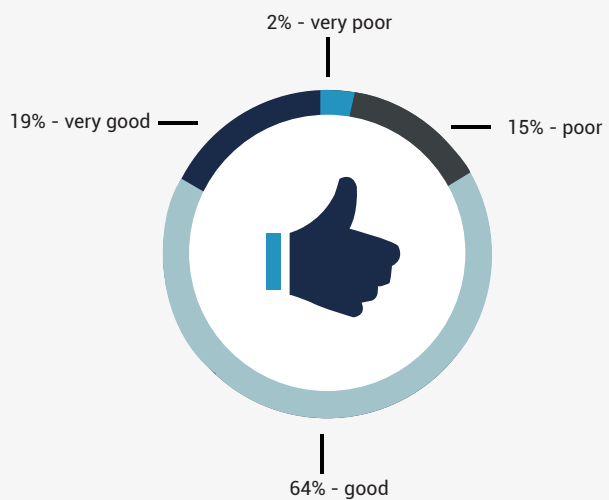
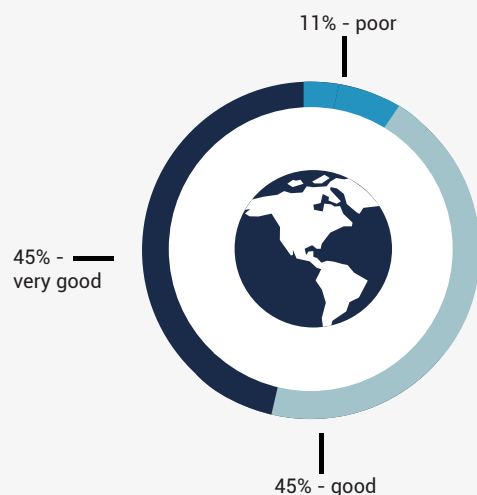


Figure 13: Motivated by YEP Water to work in water sector abroad

When asked whether YEP Water has contributed to their motivation to work abroad in the long run, 37% answers with 'very good', 61% with 'good' and 2% 'poor'. The young experts feedback was that because the experience has been so great, this has sparked their enthusiasm to be working abroad in the future as well, although this highly depends on the organization and assignment they are on.

In the interviews with water experts that have graduated a couple of years ago, they all claimed the same thing. If the YEP Water program had existed in the time they were young experts, they would have all benefited from this. It would have made it much easier for them to work internationally.



One of the other focus points of the YEP Water is to give Dutch young experts international experience. When they are asked whether YEP Water has provided this for them they answered as follows:

Dutch young experts that were positive about the international experience given by YEP Water, claim that this is more than just a training program and that it is really beneficial for getting international experience. The Dutch young experts that were less positive say that the assignments on top of their regular project task, was sometimes too much. Others claim that they were not guided enough or not prepared enough to be able to get the right international experience

Figure 14: YEP's contribution to getting international experience

Two specific answers from Dutch young experts were as follows:

“This is an experience that forces me to grow and adapt to the international working environment”.

“It is difficult to keep up with the assignments next to your actual work, the expectations were higher than I could deliver”

5.2.4 Dutch and Local Young Experts

53% of the young experts that responded to the survey, claim that YEP Water does a 'very good' job on providing the required personal development; 40% said YEP is doing a 'good' job and 7% answered with 'poor'. When asked whether the YEP program has contributed to getting to know themselves better, the results are similar to these percentages (57% 'very good', 41% 'good' and 2% 'poor'). The young experts claim the reason for this is that they monitor personal development well, and the coaches and mentors offer opportunities for learning. When Young Experts were asked whether YEP Water provided them with the required international experience, they answered as follows:

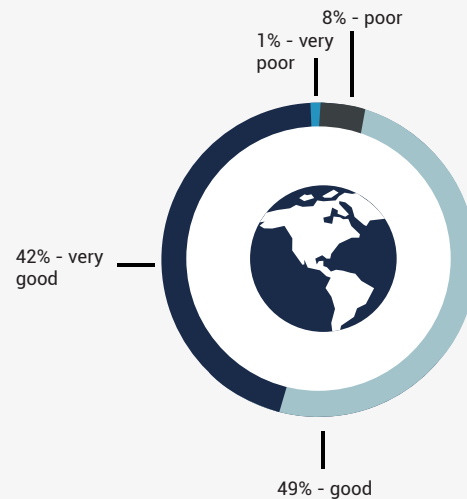


Figure 15: YEP Water providing required international experience

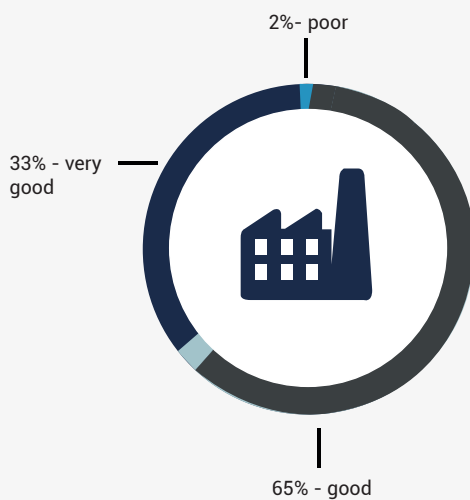


Figure 16: YEP providing motivation to work in the water sector in the long run

A local young expert commented that the YEP Water could benefit as well from organizing exchanges in between countries for the local young experts to intensify the international experience. The local young experts also valued the visit to The Netherlands in getting to know the culture better and gaining international experience through that. When asked whether it motivates them to be working in the water sector in the long run they answered as follows:

When asked whether it motivates them to be working abroad in the long run they answered as follows:

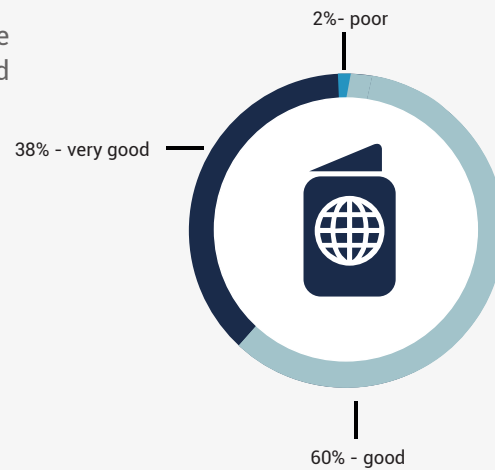
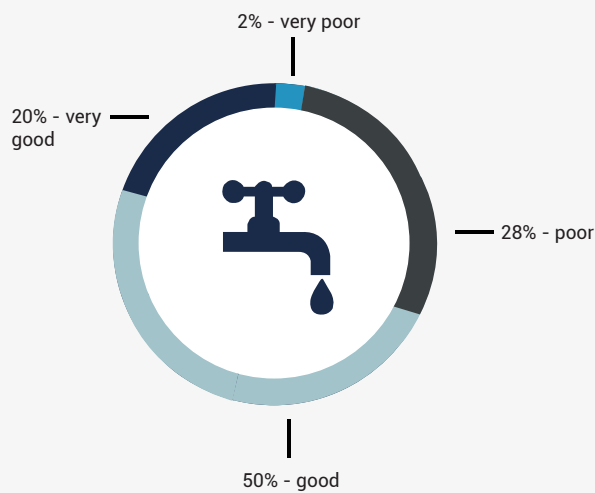


Figure 17: YEP providing motivation to work abroad in the long run

5.2.5 YEP Water's added value for organizations

In our research, the relevance of the program is also measured in terms of the benefits for the companies who are cooperating with YEP Water through hiring a young expert. 46% of the mentors, claim that YEP Water has a 'very good' influence on their company in hiring young experts abroad, and 49% claims that YEP Water had a 'good' influence on that. When asked whether YEP Water has an influence on their market value and being more competitive through it the answered as follows.

YEP contributes to being more competitive:



YEP contributes to being more competitive in quantity:

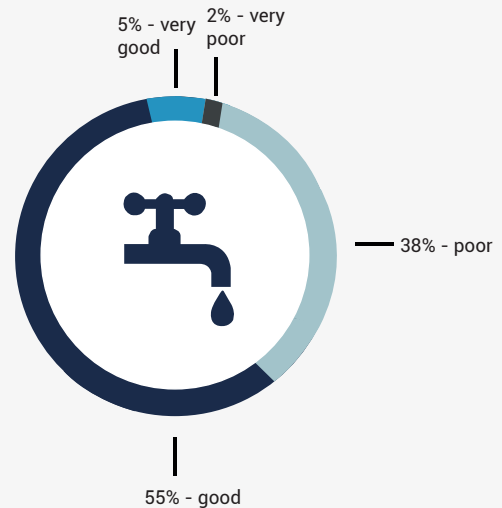
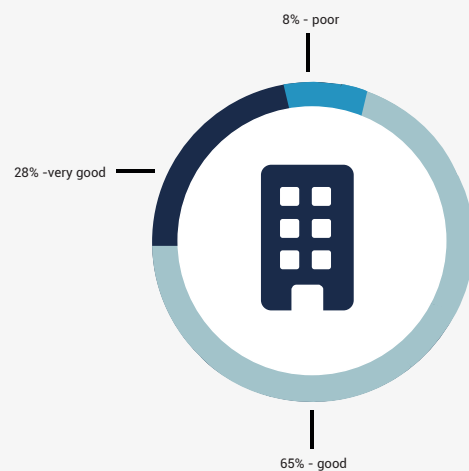


Figure 18: YEP Water providing competitiveness

When asked whether the YEP Water makes the company a more attractive employer, 74% answered 'good' and 18% 'very good'. So it seems that even though YEP Water does not necessarily provide the companies a more competitive position in the market on both quality and quantity level, the companies perceive the program as adding value to their status of being an attractive employer. One of the employers mentioned that it is sometimes hard to explain why you would hire a rather expensive Dutch employee without experience, while there are enough local and cheaper people that you can hire for the job.

For YEP Water to be successful in working together with employing organizations, the focus of YEP Water needs to align with the organizational focus, in order to be able to meet their needs and have the young expert be of value to them. Figure 19 presents the alignment between YEP Water focus and organizational focus.

 **Figure 19: The extent to which YEP Water aligns with organizational focus**



The respondents claims YEP Water:

- Can be positioned in the core objectives of the companies;
- Has very useful expertise and experience;
- Delivers highly trained experts;
- Makes sure the young expert fits with the project activities;
- Supports both the young expert and the local organization.

5.2.6 YEP program's added value to the water sector for organizations

One of the goals for the YEP program is to provide young experts a chance to gain experience in the water sector, hoping they would then stay within the sector. Although the pool of YEP Water Alumni is not very large yet, it is interesting to see whether they have stayed in the sector and are still working in the field of international development. The responses of the YEP Water are as follows:

- 100% of the YEP Alumni are still working in the water sector after the projects have ended. Most of them because they were offered a job in the water sector afterwards;
- 50% of the YEP Alumni are working in the water sector and 50% are working in the water sector and on international development. When asked why, one of the alumni answered:

“Because it’s my profession”

In the interviews there was a discussion whether YEP Water can and should influence people to stay in the sector. The respondents thought differently whether this should be one of the main goals of the YEP Water. Some of the interviewees say that its impossible to have people to stay in the sector because of such a program. One of the interviewees claims it is impossible to control their life decisions and life choices; the only thing YEP Water can do is get them excited about the sector. Another one said that even if people don't stay in the sector and end up in another sector or in politics, they can and will still be valuable for the water sector. Of course, this is very hard to measure and you can't tell, because of the fact that the program is fairly new.

The program bureau has mentioned it has a process in place to assist YEP Water alumni to make the next step in their career after YEP. Right now it is working on using an existing platform EP-Nuffic, to see if this can help the YEP alumni stay in touch more easily.

5.3. PARTNERSHIP

5.3.1. Involvement embassies

In general, embassies regard the YEP Water very positive, and claim they have a nice cooperation with YEP Water as many of the embassy staff were Associate Experts in the past him/herself and see the added value. Most of the embassies have not been involved in the recruitment of (local) Young Experts, but assist where they can in exchange of knowledge between the young experts, or getting them involved in, or updated on, the work the embassies are doing. Another embassy mentions little involvement in the YEP Water and doesn't know what is expected from the embassy or what the embassy could do to support the program. One of the embassies organized a dinner to get to know the young experts and is planning on doing this more often to bring them into contact with each other. This embassy sees the role of an embassy as being welcoming, guiding and asking questions, which is exactly the role of the embassies anyway. Young experts as 'the eyes and ears of the embassy in the field' is not recognized as a suitable role and one embassy even sees this as counterproductive as a young expert should in the first place be loyal to his/her employer and the project.

One of the embassies actually has a young expert in its office. This young expert has been involved in getting other young experts into the country as well and got the total number up from 1 to 8 in this country and has played a very big role in branding and advising about the program. Normally it is not possible to have a young expert from the program on an embassy due to the restriction on accumulation subsidies, however this was made possible by other sources of funding. In this case the Young Expert truly was the eyes and ears of the embassy.

While one of the embassies claimed they would love to get more information around the program and are not clear around their role, the program bureau tells us it puts a lot of effort in informing the embassies about their role and inform them around the YEP program. According to the program bureau some embassies are very pro-active in helping and supporting the program while others are less involved.

CONCLUSION

In general embassies are little involved in the YEP Water. It depends very much on the particular embassy. Involvement of embassies in the YEP Water can be improved by:

- Reiterate the instruction that the young expert is to visit the particular embassy so that the embassy is aware of the presence of the young expert;
- Continue the habit of sending an e-mail from the YEP program bureau to the embassy involved, so that the embassy is aware of the presence of the Young Expert;
- Suggesting embassies to follow the example of other embassies to organise meetings/ dinners/ drinks for young experts in order to share their experiences amongst themselves.
- A more formal active role is neither desirable nor feasible.

5.3.2 The functioning of the structure of the partnership

One of the focus points of this research is to see whether the PPP construction is working for YEP Water and what might need to be changed. In the interviews it was made clear that the previous programs did not have a construction like this. One of the respondents said that because the organizations have to contribute financially, they make sure that they are as much as possible involved in YEP Water. They take more responsibility for the YEP Water than in previous programs where this was not the case. Some say it is a sometimes searching for the best way to handle the PPP construction on a daily basis. Some of the respondents claim that where NWP and the program bureau would like this to be a close cooperation and partnership with MoFA, for MoFA this seems to be different: MoFA/IGG has many projects and programs to manage and the way the YEP Water is organized and managed is a very efficient, effective and reliable way to account for an important program with a high financial turnover.

One of the respondents has the opinion that for the smaller companies the costs for a Young Expert is - even in the PPP construction - still pretty high, which was reason for him not to have Young Experts in the future. This was also remarked by one of the embassies:

"The fact that host organizations have to finance part of the costs, limits obviously the scope of possibilities (for instance consultancy firms appear to be hesitant to cough up that money) which is unfortunate".

One of the respondents mentioned that the program is highly dependent on the subsidy from MoFA. What if that stops or is downsized?

5.3.3 Pilot 100% financing in Kenya

One of the issues to be examined in this MTR is the potential of missed opportunities due to the fact that it is not allowed to accumulate MoFA subsidies: YEP needs to stick to the rule that 50% of the costs of a young expert have to be financed from other sources than MoFA sources. SNV Kenya has requested a young expert from YEP Agrofood, whereas MoFA, through the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Nairobi, finances the project itself. It concerns the position as Junior Adviser Agribusiness in the HortIMPACT Program. So 'normally', this position could not be financed through YEP. Both the embassy and SNV Kenya see the project an excellent opportunity, that fits 300% in the goals as formulated for YEP (see § 3.1).

One of the respondents commented on the example in Kenya:

"The Young Expert placed in this project is also the one that was asked in an earlier stage for a Myanmar project (that could bring in MEA contribution next to the MoFA YEP contribution). However, the position with this particular Young Expert could not be accepted by the YEP program bureau, because of issue of the accumulated subsidies. It seems that the position in Kenya is the same and it has been a bitter pill to swallow for the Myanmar Embassy parties. I think the pilot is a risky endeavor. It shows the PPP can be a 'twisted setting' mixing Partner, Donor and Steering Group roles".

CONCLUSION

Keeping in mind that the prime objective of YEP is to create opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge of Young Experts in projects abroad, it would be desirable to follow a flexible approach allowing projects with an important 'learning experience' aspect. As such this 'learning' criterion could/should weigh more than the criterion on '50% of the costs from non-MoFA sources'. According to the YEP Water program bureau, EU rules on accumulation of subsidies/ unfair competition do not allow this practice and MoFA is at risk.

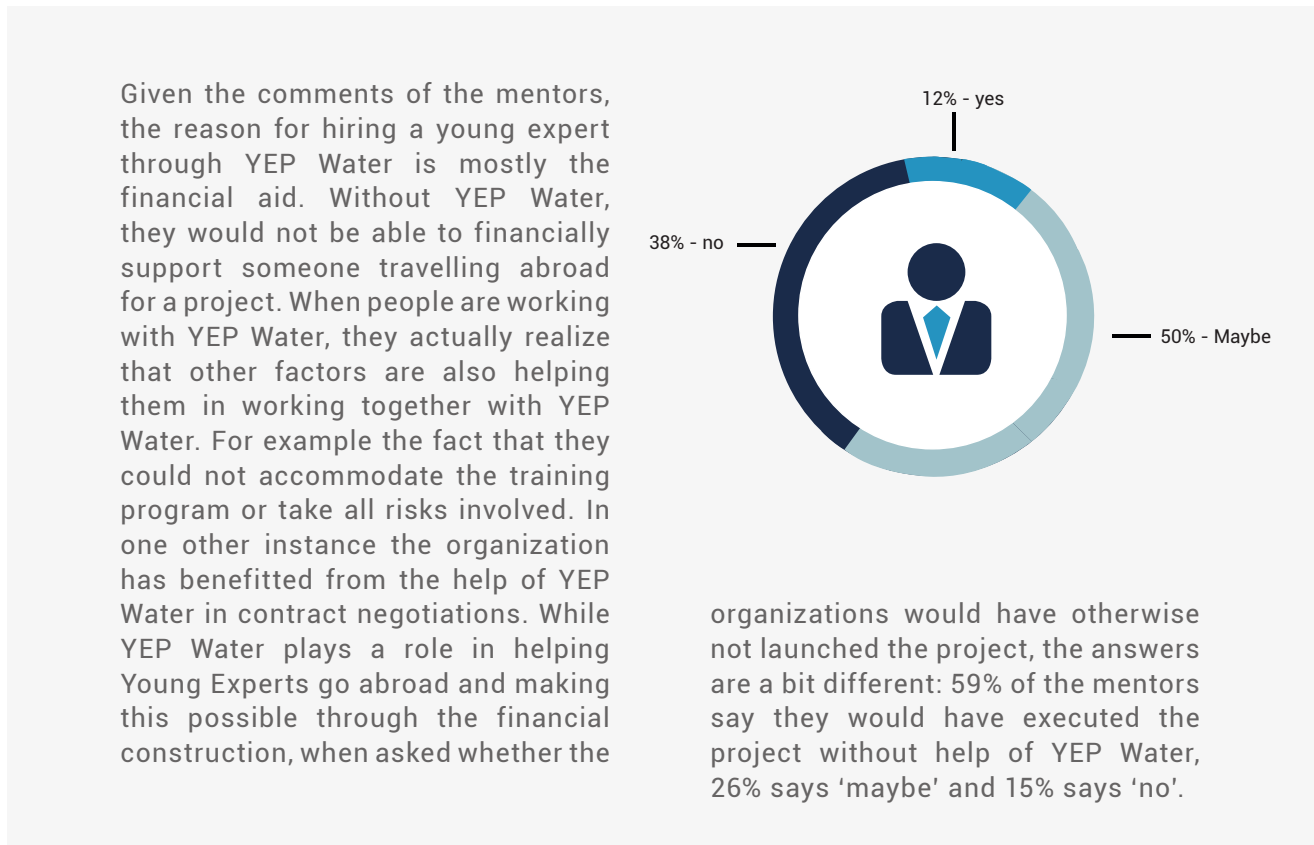
RECOMMENDATION

Apply the '50%' in a flexible way and introduce a uniform and transparent weighting mechanism, to avoid situations that can be perceived as 'unfair'. If this is not possible because of EU restrictions, special project lines could be developed: such as a 'YEP-Embassy', 'YEP-SME'/Small and medium-sized enterprises, 'YEP-NGO' with specific rules to allow a higher percentage of MoFA contribution, provided this is allowed by EU-rules on unfair competition.

5.4. EFFECTIVENESS OF YEP

5.4.1. Effectiveness for organizations

On the average the respondents have around 6 Young Experts working in their organizations. Half of those (3) are financed by the YEP program. When asked whether the organization would have hired young experts without the contribution of YEP Water they answer as follows:



 **Figure 19: The intention of hiring Young Experts without YEP**

5.4.2 Effectiveness of the training program, coaching and mentoring

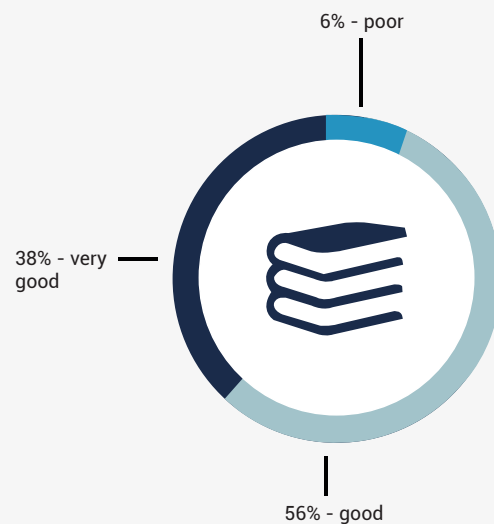
The questions around the effectiveness of the training program have been asked to all respondents of the survey except for the pool of candidates, since they haven't experienced the program or the benefits of the program.

In one of the interviews, the respondent mentioned that a large part of the subsidy that NWP receives for the YEP program is spent on training. According to the financial overview in this research 10% of the total subsidy is spent on the training program, which can be considered rather moderate. Another respondent mentioned that it is a very good aspect of the program that it works in cooperation with organizations from the sector, for example MDF. These two respondents also mentioned that it is the right decision to have the young experts a week or even two weeks in The Netherlands together: They have the opportunity to get to know each other better and the opportunity to know themselves better as advisers.

TRAINING PROGRAM

The respondents rate the training program as follows:

Reasons for perceiving YEP Water being a 'good' or 'very good' program: the young experts claim that it focuses on both the personal and technical development of the young experts. The part that focuses on personal development is indeed an eye opener to some young experts, because of the training in 'soft' skills. They claim the content is very informative and the trainers are of a good quality. The networking part and getting to know the fellow young experts is a part of the training that is highly valued.



 **Figure 20: Evaluation of the overall training program**

Although most of the young experts are positive on the training program, they also provide some feedback on how to improve it further. Below is a summary of comments of the young experts:

- More workplace learning;
- More in-depth: Some topics to be discussed more in-depth;
- Individual needs assessment: that could lead to more personalized and tailor made learning;
- The pace is sometimes slow;
- Suggestions for additional sessions like sales;
- Suggestions for having sessions locally, for example the return session.

One of the points on workplace learning mentioned here, needs an additional comment: in the current agreement of the organizations with YEP, it is stated that the learning in the workplace is the responsibility of the organization.

The young experts were asked what they thought was most valuable part of the training program. The answers were both quite spread as well as overlapping. Where some people thought something was most valuable, others thought the opposite was true: there is a big spread in what is appreciated. Overall, the topics in the following table are mentioned more often than others by the young experts.

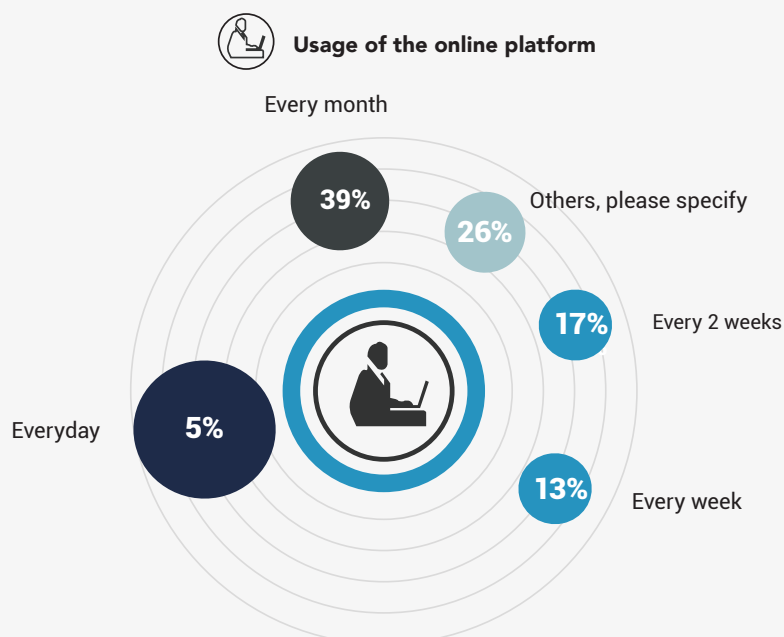
Most valuable in training program	Least valuable in training program
Networking, working together with other Young Experts and sharing experience	Master innovation
Personal effectiveness through MBTI, conflict management	Repetition of subjects, overlap in the program
Intercultural communication	Project management too basic and too much specifically according to the way of working at a particular company
Mentors and coaches	Business plan: hard to transfer to the workplace, so not motivated to do this
Trend analyses and spotting	Trend analyses and spotting
Project management	The mentor day is too general

 **Table 2: Aspects most and least valued in training program**

One of the respondents commented that it is hard to judge the training program based on the opinion of the young experts since they are already very excited to be part of the program and receiving so much personal development training.

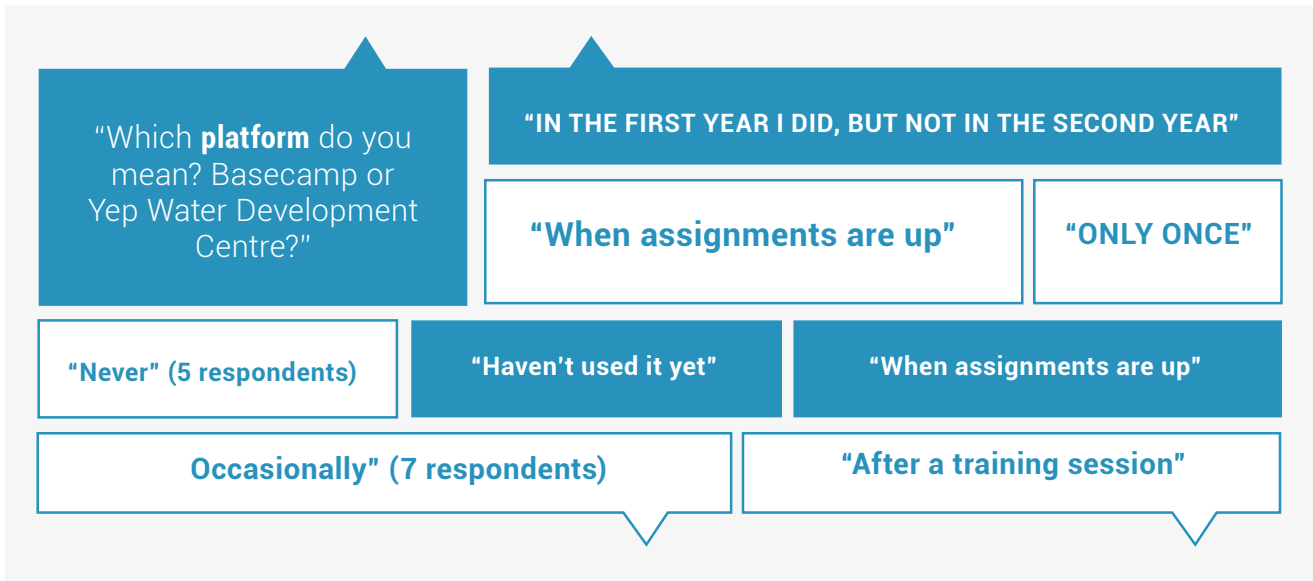
ONLINE PLATFORM

The training program also has an online learning platform. According to the program bureau this platform was put in place for sharing documents and information on the program, like dates of the trainings, assignments and information on the trainers. When young experts and the trainers were asked how often they use the platform, they responded:



 **Figure 21: Usage of the online platform**

RESPONDENTS WHO ANSWERED 'OTHER' COMMENTED THE FOLLOWING:

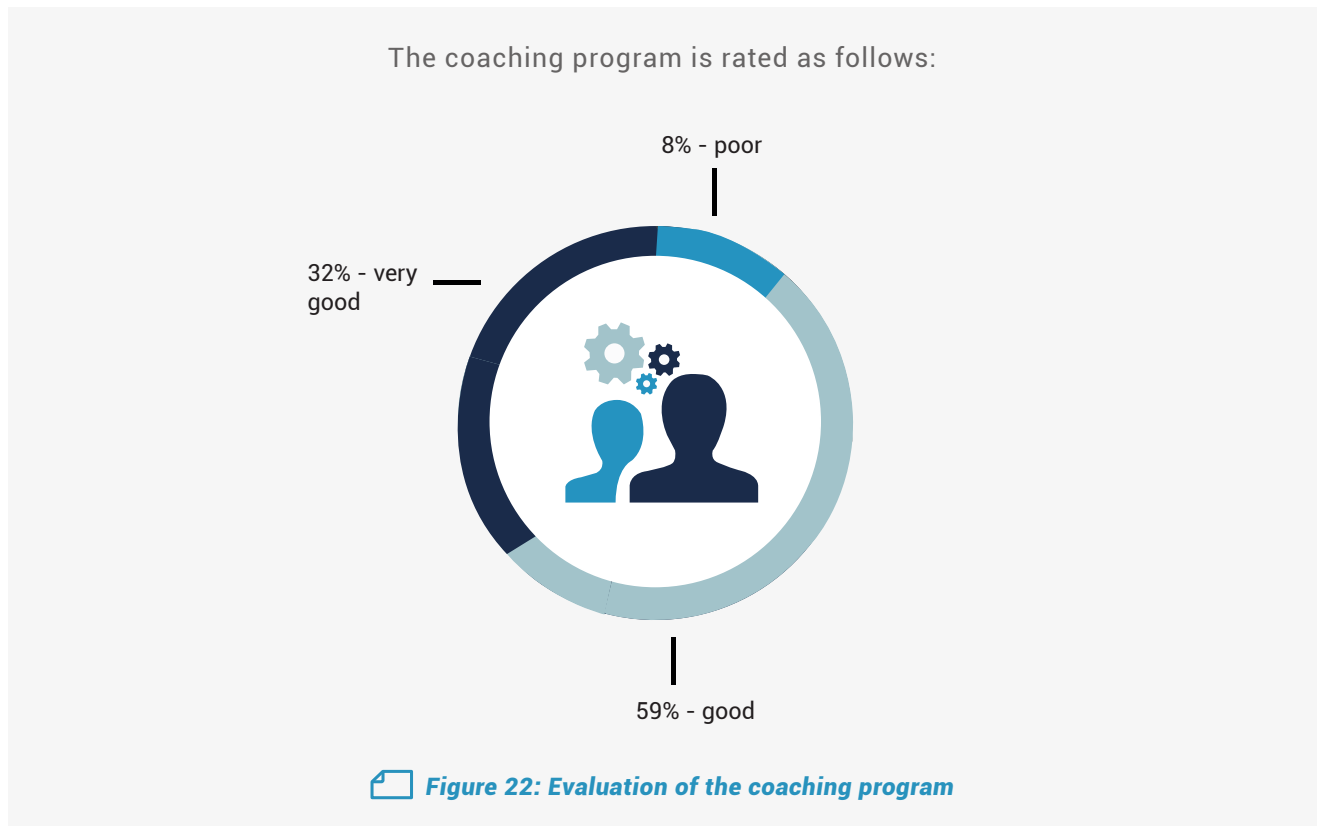


The quality of the online platform according to the respondents is: 9% 'very good', 67% 'good', 21% 'poor', 4% 'very poor'. In the comments it is stated that some are not using the online platform unless they need to do an assignment. Reasons for rating the platform 'poor' are mainly focussed on the design of the platform:



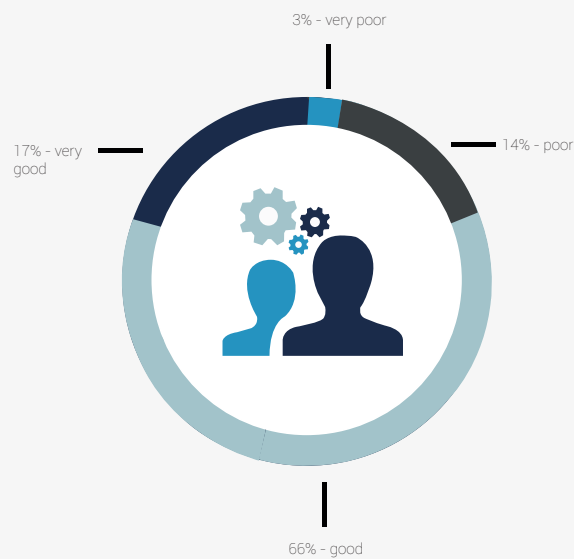
A remark here is that for the Young Experts it was not always clear what is BaseCamp and what the online platform is. Given the remarks following the questions, it seems they are based on the development centre and not on BaseCamp. One of the young experts recommended “The content that is put on the online platform is not categorized in region or context which makes it hard to decide whether it is applicable for you or not.” The program bureau indicates that it has made adjustments to the 'look and feel' of the platform at the start of YEP AgroFood which makes the design more user-friendly.

A couple of respondents also made comments about the length of the program. Some thought the week internally was too long and didn't teach them much more than if it would be only a couple of days. For the training itself some respondents commented that it could be made shorter and more intense.



In addition, young experts state that the coaches are very experienced: they have experience both in the sector as well as in coaching, which makes them beneficial to the program. They are also available whenever the Young Experts need any help. Six of the young experts indicate they have not acted on the opportunity of having a coach in the program. A reason for this, they say, is that they did not see the added value of a coach and did not know when to ask the coach for help. One of the young experts also said that it is a bit too much to have a mentor, a supervisor and a coach and that this was the reason for him/her not to request a coach. Another one said that the coaches should be more forceful in making sure they are in contact with the young experts and making sure they understand how their help can be beneficial. The program bureau mentions it puts a lot of effort in making sure the young experts are in contact with their coaches and informs them why this is seen as important.

The mentoring is rated as follows:



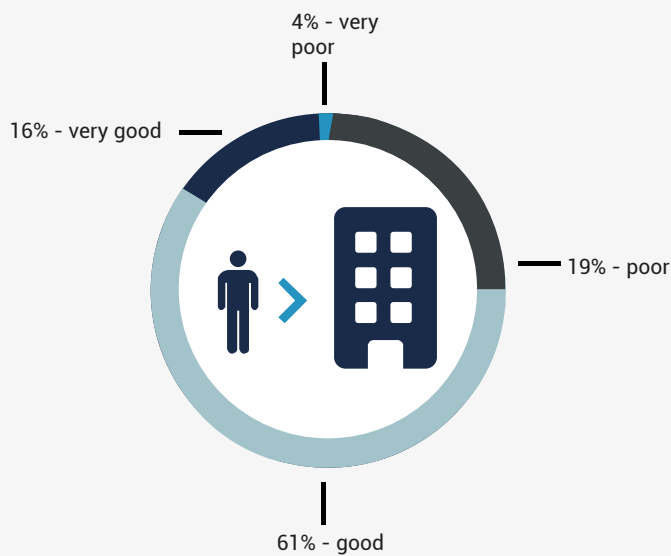
 **Figure 23: Evaluation of the mentoring**

This question was also asked to all respondents with the exception of the pool of candidates. In the comments it shows that the young experts mix up the term coach and mentor and respond with a copy on their answer to the coaching question. The young experts that know the difference claim that it is good to have a separate mentor and coach.

Most respondents claim they do not see mentoring it as an official program of YEP. They regard it as the responsibility of the hosting organization. The program bureau confirms this by saying that the mentors are its point of contact for evaluation and reporting and the focal point in the organization of the young expert.

It seems that young experts who have a clear mentor in their organization and who know why to contact that person have good experiences. They claim their mentors can help them with their daily issues and are very experienced in the field. In some cases, the mentor was not assigned or left to another country and it seems that when the mentor is not in place in the beginning, there is no urgency in setting this up later. These young experts remain without a formal mentor during their project. Some of the respondents indicate that it is quite a lot to have a Dutch manager, a local manager, a coach and a mentor as they all have different expectations and needs.

One of the mentors in the interviews mentioned that while YEP is setting up the mentor, it is still the responsibility of the organization to make sure this is moved forward. This moving forward is sometimes neglected by the organization and that is a loss for the mentoring part. This mentor claims that a mentor can play a big part in the embedment of the young expert in the organization.



When asked whether the mentoring is helping the young expert to be embedded in the organization, they answered as follows:

 **Figure 24: The extent to which the mentoring is helping the young expert get embedded**

Reason for these answers is mainly that they do not see the mentoring program as a specific formal program of YEP Water as described above. Secondly, respondents feel this is mainly the responsibility of the young expert themselves to make sure they 'land' in the organization and make use of the different support systems of YEP Water.

In an additional interview with one of the mentors, the role of the mentor in embedding the young expert in the organization was further discussed. The mentor said that lack of embedment of the young expert in the organization is one of the biggest risks of a program like YEP. The young expert needs guidance on the politics of the local situation, on practical things like getting a visa, but needs also a focal point in the organization. This is important for the experience of the young expert, for their project and the rest of his career. This mentor claims:

"To be able to be really working in the standing organization and to develop experience abroad the embedment in the organization is a key factor"

According to him, the mentor plays a vital part in this, since he can be the guide for the young expert making sure that he/she is embedded in the organization and that you can tell the difference between young experts who were properly embedded and the ones who were more isolated.

In an additional interview with one of the young experts some more background was presented around their understanding of the mentor program. This person said that if you don't have a lot of contact with your mentor, or they leave in the beginning of your project it is hard to understand what their role is. Later, the young expert realized that a mentor could be very beneficial in dealing with (local) cultural communication and differences, which is an added value of the mentor instead of the coach.

The young experts, coaches and trainers were additionally asked what other forms of learning would enhance the learning process. One of the Dutch young experts made a comment that it will be hard to add anything to the program since some young experts feel that the program is overloading them with assignments and things to do, which is sometimes hard to combine with their actual work. Some recommendations to increase the efficiency of the learning program are:

- Basecamp is not a success for the new batch of young experts. One of the young experts considers it a 'chaotic' platform;
- More online meetings, virtual classrooms or topic centred groups, where important topics can be discussed. For example via Skype. This can also be organized between local young experts;
- Short online courses or other additional training like webinars or video's;
- Facilitation of peer2peer learning, having peers review your work;
- The Red Cross has this kind of learning platform with a large range of webinars, with exams and certifications. These webinars are on a wide range of topics from technical or specific tools of Red Cross to general personal/professional development issues.

CONCLUSION

The mentorship program of YEP Water is valuable but underdeveloped.

RECOMMENDATION

Reinforce the mentorship by providing clear guidance to the mentors and integrate this into the monitoring and reporting format.

5.4.3. Pool of candidates

To get a better understanding of the status of the pool of candidates they have been asked the reason why they are not working on a project for YEP yet. They mention a lack of matching vacancies, not having the right experience for the current projects, limited presence in particular regions like South America, rejections, having found a job via their own network.

5.4.4. Contacting YEP

In the graph below it shows how often people have contacted YEP in the last 3 months.

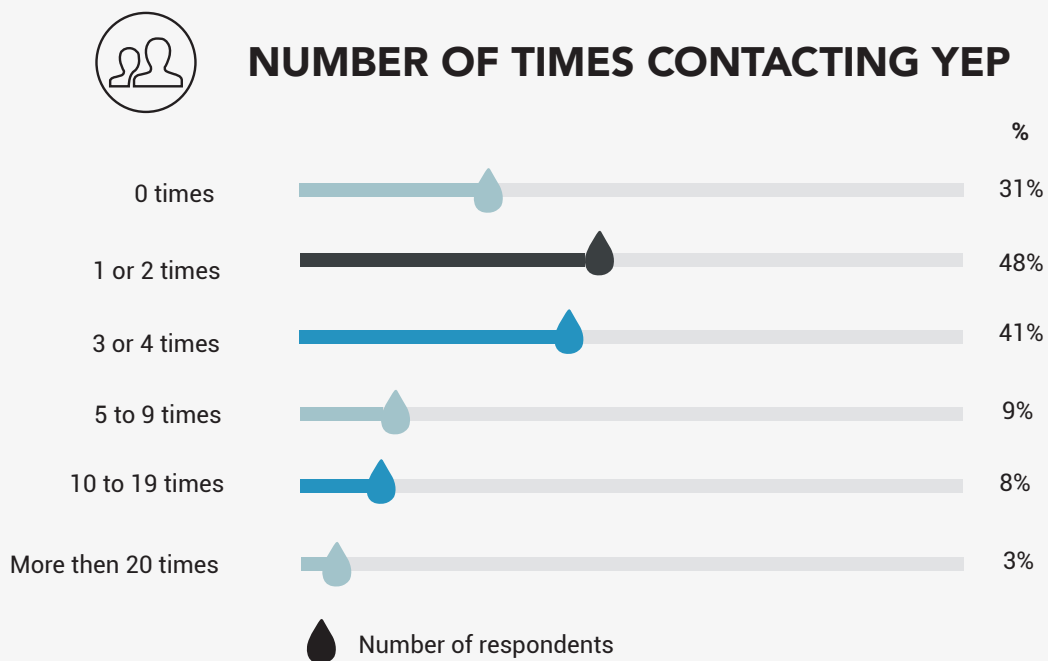
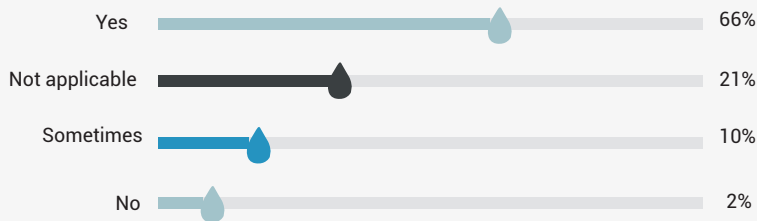


Figure 25: The number of times contacting YEP

Most respondents have contacted YEP Water between 1-4 times in the last 4 months, which is around once a month. A few people have contacted YEP frequently, even more than 20 times a month.



SATISFACTION LEVEL CONTACT



When they contacted YEP Water, this is how often they got what they were looking for.

Figure 26: Satisfaction level of contacting YEP

Respondents say that whenever they contacted YEP Water, most of them had a quick and open response to their questions. One Dutch young expert would have liked more information on the practical things around the program for example visas. Overall, people are satisfied when they contact YEP program bureau.

When asked whether people have contacted YEP alumni, 20 people skipped the question and 56 respondents answered with "0 times".

5.4.5. YEP branding

Brand awareness for a program like YEP is important. Since brand awareness will make sure that people keep subscribing, companies will keep entering projects and it will be beneficial for the program in the long run. Information on whether people are familiar with the program will tell us how the brand awareness is at the moment. When asked whether YEP is a program that people are familiar with in the water sector, the answers were as follows:



BRAND AWARENESS OF YEP

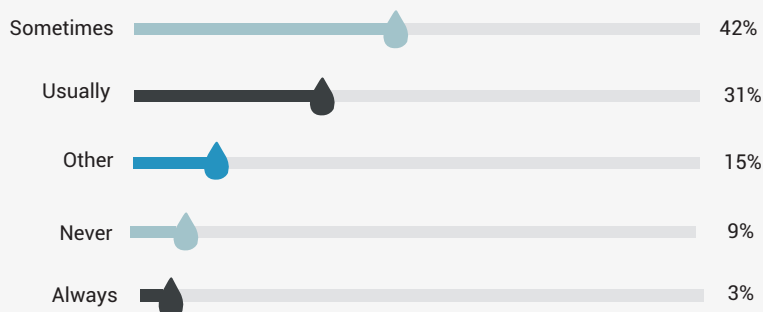


Figure 27: Brand awareness of YEP

The second question around brand awareness is whether people would actually know what YEP is when it is mentioned. When YEP is mentioned in a conversation, 16% claims people never know what YEP is, while 2% claims people always know what YEP is. 49% answers that people sometimes know.

One of the respondents of the interviews advised to increase the 'brand awareness' of the program by creating ambassadors for the program. Not only the alumni would be ambassadors, but also people in politics or in corporations; when they are excited about the program, they will make sure that the program continues by getting more organizations involved and getting young experts excited as well. Several respondents think the branding of the program could be improved. One of the trainers said:

"Better marketing communication will have a positive effect on the reputation of the Dutch water sector and the increase of the number of students"

5.4.6. YEP Water Program bureau

An important factor for the success of a start-up organization like YEP Water is to be a learning organization. YEP Water needs to learn continuously from mistakes and make improvements to the current ways of working to make sure it develops as a program. This is mainly the responsibility of the program bureau. Therefore, respondents were asked whether the program bureau is a learning organization, constantly improving and learning from mistakes.

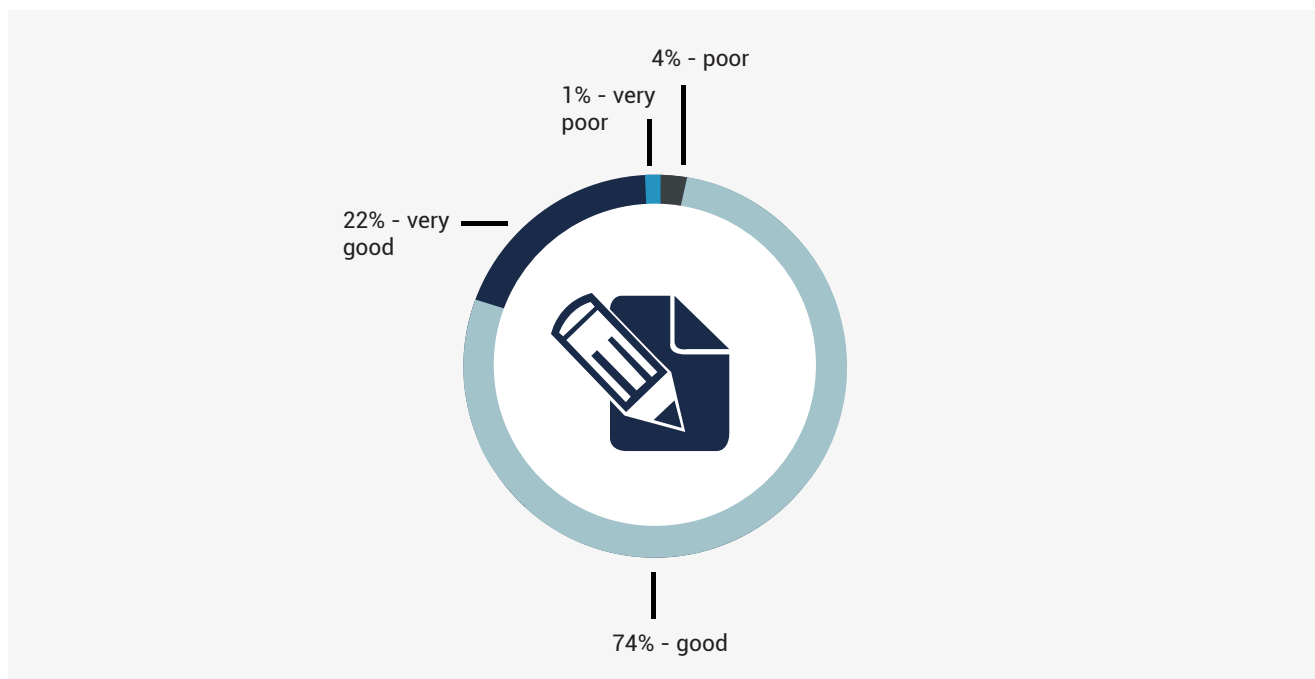


Figure 28: The extent to which the program bureau is a learning organization

The following remarks backup these scores:

"They are constantly pushing the boundaries!";	"Training for the Young Expert change over time and feedback from previous young experts is taken into account";	"Open for suggestions from trainers";	"I have seen that over the past period the processes have changed and they interact with the involving organisations and use that to improve their services";
"Constantly trying to improve in close cooperation with all concerned";	"As young expert I do not receive info on improvements made by the program bureau";	"The program continuously tries to improve the program year on year";	"Very communicative, open and transparent".

In one of the interviews the respondent claims that while the YEP program bureau has a lot of strengths when it comes to organizing and facilitating the whole process, they are less strong in being truly innovative and reinventing themselves. Most of the mentors and young experts note that the program bureau definitely listens to the feedback and tries to improve constantly.

Another respondent of one of the interviews mentioned that for the program bureau to become more innovative they need to have more guts to 'colour outside the lines'. The program bureau mentioned that they are doing a lot of things to be innovative in the form of starting new cooperations and thinking out of the box to stay successful.

When it comes to reporting, one of the respondents said in the interview that the YEP program bureau could do more on reporting on certain topics. For example, there is very little reporting on the training program. The reporting on the training program has improved, but is still not clear how exactly the program is doing. The same goes for the risks of the projects and countries. There is no overview of what risks there are, for example on a political level, and what the program bureau is doing to help and support on handling these risks. Lastly it could be very beneficial for the program to report on a Theory of Change in the future. Right now there is only a very clear Theory of Change (ToC) for AgroFood. There isn't one for Water. The reason for this is that at the time YEP Water started, the model of using the Theory of Change was not in place yet.

5.4.7. Finances of the program

To run the YEP program successfully, both private and public partners will jointly invest more than 23 million euros over a 5 year period (January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2017). This 23 million is roughly divided by 11 million euros from the private partners and 12 million by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This chapter provides an analysis of the costs, based on the input that was made available by the program bureau.

- Costs directly related to the deployment of the Young Experts (salary, housing, visa, insurance, training, travel costs, etc.);
- Program management costs

Analysis of the training costs

We requested the program bureau to calculate the average costs of the training program per young expert (Dutch and local). It was not easy for the program bureau to provide these, since the costs for the training program are budgeted for a period of 5 years and not per young expert. Other aspects that should be taken into consideration:

- In the first two years of the program, start-up costs are made by the program bureau (e.g. development of the training, YEP development centre, master classes, etc.). Therefore the costs for this period are relatively high;
- Many costs for the training program are fixed and therefore independent on the size of the group;
- Some of the young experts are in the program for one year and some are in the program for two years;
- The costs for the training in the first year of the program are higher than in the second year. Some of the young experts that are currently in the first year spend relatively more on the training budget, than they will be spending in the second year. So this will be corrected after they finalised the program;
- The training budget was raised in 2014 since the local young experts also participated in the start- and leave training (which was originally not planned).

We received the following overview of costs from the program bureau:

		2013	2014	2015	Cumm
Gereserveerde trainingsbudget		€ 70.000	€ 334.000	€ 518.000	€ 922.000
Aantal Yeppers NL		7	27	25	59
*Aantal Yeppers LK		13	22	25	60
Totaal Yeppers		20	49		119
Catering	Variabel	€ 1.136	--	--	€ 1.136
Lokale YE	Variabel	--	€ 5.720	€ 200	€ 5.920
Mentor en trainers bijeenkomsten	Variabel	--	€ 1.800	€ 7.950	€ 9.750
Online Development Centre	Variabel	€ 6.000	€ 20.484	€ 7.335	€ 33.819
Regionale training	Variabel	--	--	€ 5.872	€ 5.872
Vervoer	Variabel	--	4	€ 4.629	€ 7.895
Zaalverhuur	Variabel	€ 1.940	€ 10.554	€ 1.832	€ 14.325
Communicatie	Variabel	€ 4.500	€ 20.690	--	€ 25.189
Coaching	Vast	€ 4.091	€ 56.986	€ 83.969	€ 149.771
MBTI	Vast	--	€ 22.745	--	€ 25.189??
Start training	Vast	€ 34.282	€ 160.329	€ 90.095	€ 279.405
Training	Vast	--	--	€ 563	€ 563
Verblijf	Vast	€ 4.744	€ 135.544	€ 73.364	€ 220.999
Verloftraining	Vast	€ 289	€ 17.371	€ 36.141	€ 53.802
Trend en businesscase begeleiding	Vast	€ 3.719	€ 37.225	€ 55.278	€ 96.222
Assesment	Vast (NL)	€ 16.035	€ 38.187	€ 20.963	€ 70,000
Totaal kosten		€ 76.736	€ 530.094	€ 388.190	€ 1.024.252
Restant		€ -6.736	€ -196.094	€ 129.810	€ -102.252

Based on the information received from the program bureau we estimated the total available budget for the training program:

- The maximum subsidy for a Dutch Young Expert is € 40,000 per year. An amount of €10.000,- per year from this subsidy is used for the training program;
- The maximum subsidy for a Local Young Expert is € 12,000 per year. An amount of €2,000 per year (starting from the third round of YEP) from this subsidy is used for the training program;
- The total available budget for the training program is approximately: € 2,300,000³. In total there will be 363 “years” of Young Experts in the training program⁴. The average training budget per Young expert per year is € 6.336. We are convinced that this number, although the program is designed for a period of five years, gives a rough indication on the size and efficiency of the training program.

Until 2015 a total of 119 YEP-years have been spent (see figure) for an average of € 8,607 (€1,024,252/ 119). This average is higher than might be expected on the available budget. This however is, according to the program bureau, caused by the comments made in the beginning of this section.

The training costs are divided as follows:

- Start training: 29% (is expected to decrease when there will be less “first years” in the program);
- Residence: 21.6%;
- Coaching: 14.6%;
- Trend and business case: 9.4%;
- Assessment: 7.3%;
- Leave training: 5.3% (is expected to increase when there are more second years in the program);
- Online development centre: 3.3%;
- Remaining costs: 9.5%.

The program bureau is convinced that the available budget for training is sufficient to cover all the costs over a period of five year. Although we agree with the program bureau that every training program has start-up costs that have to be covered by all participants, we are also concerned that the challenge to keep the training costs within budget are underestimated by the program bureau. Based on the average costs per young expert per year the remaining budget is €5,228. There are simply fixed costs that have to be made for every young expert (e.g. residence costs, coaching, assessment).

3) The available costs for the training program is calculated as follows. An average of 16% of the YEP'ers will stay in the program for one year and 84% will stay in the program for two years (based on the first 4 rounds of the program). In total there will be 108 Dutch YEP'ers of which 17 will stay in the program for 1 year and 90 will stay in the program for 2 year. Furthermore there will be 90 Local YEP'ers (starting in round 3) of which 14 will stay in the program for 1 year and 76 will stay in the program for 2 year. In total there will be $[(107 \times € 10,000) + (90 \times € 10,000) + (90 \times € 2,000) + (76 \times € 2,000)] = € 2,302,000$.

4) 107 Dutch first years + 90 Dutch second years + 90 local first years + 76 local second years

Analysis of the program management costs.

The analyses of the program management costs were based on the audited and approved annual reports of 2013 and 2014. The program bureau agreed with the MoFA that a maximum of 10% of the total costs of the program is spent on program management.

The available budget for a period of 5 years is approximately € 2,300,000 (€ 460,000 per year on the average). The average costs to run the program are € 5,822 per young expert per year (based on a total of 215 'first year' Young Experts and 180 'second year' young experts during the program). Of course not all the program management costs are spent on hours that are invested directly on young experts. On the other hand this average gives us a feeling of the overall costs of the program per young expert.

The total costs are as follows

2013 € 361,607, of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• € 205,389 staff (57%)• € 43,492 on OOP-costs (12%)• € 112,730 via the sector (31%)	2014 € 529,332 of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• € 282,613 staff (53%)• € 50,492 on OOP-costs (9,5%)• € 196,227 via the sector (37%)
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The average program management costs in the first two years of the program are approximately €445,500 which is in line with the average program management costs of the program. Around €582,000 (€ 291,000 per year) is financed by MoFA. The remaining budget (35%) is invested by the sector.

When we relate the program management costs to the number of young experts in 2013 and 2014 the average program management costs are higher than might be expected:

2013 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• € 18,080 per young expert including the investment of the sector• € 12,444 per young expert excluding the investment of the sector	2014 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• € 10,800 per young expert including the investment of the sector• € 6,798 per young expert excluding the investment of the sector
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Most of the costs for project management (55% including the investment of the sector and 84% excluding the investment of the sector) are related to the staff (hours). In total the staff spend 350 days in 2013 (1.75 fte) and 604 days in 2014 (3.02 fte). The average fee (per day) is € 511 (€ 64 per hour).

The program management costs were mirrored with program management costs from subsidizing programs with a comparable size and comparable amount of projects to be funded. Based on this comparison the costs for the program management are relatively high. Most of the comparable subsidizing programs are executed for 10% of the total grant (€ 1,200,000 in this case). Herewith the comment must be made that the program management costs of these programs are completely covered by the government. But the program management for these programs is 100% funded by the government. Within YEP Water 35% of the program management costs are covered by the sector. In comparison with the other programs the program management costs of YEP Water are approximately 12.5% of the subsidy [(€ 2,300,000 * 65%) / € 12,000,000].

5.4.8. Observations Theory of Change AgroFood

Keeping the findings of the current MTR in mind, and studying the ToC AgroFood, we get the impression that it contains many aspects that are outside the scope YEP, keeping in mind the 3 main objectives mentioned in § 3.1:

- Support to the AgroFood network (Human Capital);
- Support to innovations. Experience with YEP Water show that it is unrealistic to expect this from Young Experts.

5.5. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE RESPONDENTS

The respondents were also asked for recommendations. They were asked for:

- General recommendation;
- Recommendations for the future;
- Recommendations for the training program.

We provide a summary of the answers of these questions or specific recommendations in the form of quotes of the respondents.

General recommendations:

- **Length of the assignment at YEP:** One year is generally considered too short for getting the 'real experience'. Several interviewees also claim that two years is too short to understand the complexities of working in the international context and that three years would be the optimum duration. They claim a longer assignment would be a much better commitment to the organizations and would make sure that the Young Experts have a very good basis for the rest of their career;
- **Preferred candidates:** Often, young experts come from the organization and are put forward as a preferred candidate. When this happens, no new people or Young Experts are coming into the sector. They are people who are already in the sector. Also a lot of projects are filled before they get to the pool of candidates;
- **Age:** Several respondents indicate that the average age of the Young Experts is too high.
- **Underestimation of the Young Expert:** One of the mentors had a point of attention for the other mentors in the program:

"Make sure you trust the Young Expert because it is easy to underestimate their networking and political skills."

- **Alumni:** Building a community can help the Young Experts to stay in touch for now and in the future. At a competitive program they have done this by creating a logo for the group and branding that. That branding already made them a community;
- **Dutch versus English:** One of the respondents expressed difficulty in the program bureau being too much focussed on Dutch organizations. For example having a contract with a local organization while communicating in Dutch. Or having a local mentor who can't fly into the Netherlands whenever there is a meeting for the mentors;
- **Online learning:** Respondents give a lot of suggestions on the digital learning part: how to make better use of technology for the learning process and having more online learning resources available for the Young Experts.
- One of the comments of the respondent of an interview was a bit more around the fact that some countries are not on the original list of countries, while they still can be a very good place to do a project; for example Serbia

Recommendations for the future

- Mentoring program, comment from a Young Expert:

“Special follow-ups on the mentors should be made by YEP Water Program bureau to ensure the mentors are really mentoring the young experts. A procedure should be put in place to replace the mentors who are not available”;

- **Alumni:** Respondents stress the need for a strong alumni network. The qualitative development of the alumni network to make sure we monitor these people over time and they keep in touch with each other. One specific recommendation in an interview is:

“Putting an alumni in the steering committee to make sure that the Young Experts are represented there as well”;

- Partnerships, coming out of an interview:

“Getting the water team of the Ministry more involved”;

- **Learning visits:** Several Young Experts and mentors made a remark on exchanging Young Experts and having them visit other countries and other assignments. According to one of the respondents of a competitive program for young professionals, learning visits helped their program be even more successful program. They were asked to write a report about this a well;
- Expansion, idea from one of the Young Experts:

“For example to the Americas, since a lot of Young Experts are interested in working there”;

- Pool of candidates, someone from the pool:

“Better expectation management for the pool of candidates, what can they expect and what can they do to speed up the process”

Recommendations for training program

- **Continuous learning:** Several Young Experts have made a remark on their need for more continuous learning in the workplace. For example by extra online courses or having work groups and calls in the mean time. One of the Young Experts suggested to also have local coaches to help this process. Another one said:

“A strategy should be put in place to encourage Young Experts to be sharing how they are progressing in their work and the challenges faced for continued learning”;

- **Personalized learning:** Several respondents made comments about the fact that learning could be more personalised and adapted to the individual needs of the learners. This could be done by doing a learning need assessment at the beginning for example. One Young Expert suggested:

“Giving people a choice to see which sessions they would like to attend – in making it more personalized”;

- **Peer2Peer:** Several Young Experts said that it is needed to improve the interaction between the local and Dutch Young Experts during the training program in the Netherlands. Specifically because the Dutch Young Experts have already spent a week together when the group comes together. Some respondents don't understand why the local Young Expert is not attending that first week of personal development, specifically because sometimes there is a gap in knowledge and experience, where the Dutch Expert has an advantage in this.
- One Young Expert specifically pointed out a recommendation for the close of the assignment:

“A final come-back would have been useful. After the second year nothing happens and it feels as if

NET PROMOTER SCORE

The Net promoter score is a standard for customer satisfaction. This is measured by asking the customer whether they would recommend the product or services to people around them. Respondents who score the service a 0-6 are called critics, 7-8 is passively satisfied and 9-10 are promoters. Obviously the goal is to have as many promoters. The benchmark of organizations in the US is that average companies score less than +10 and high performing organizations between +50 and +80. This is in percentages, although NPS always speaks of +50 to +80.

THE NET PROMOTER SCORE OF THE YEP PROGRAM IS AS FOLLOWS:

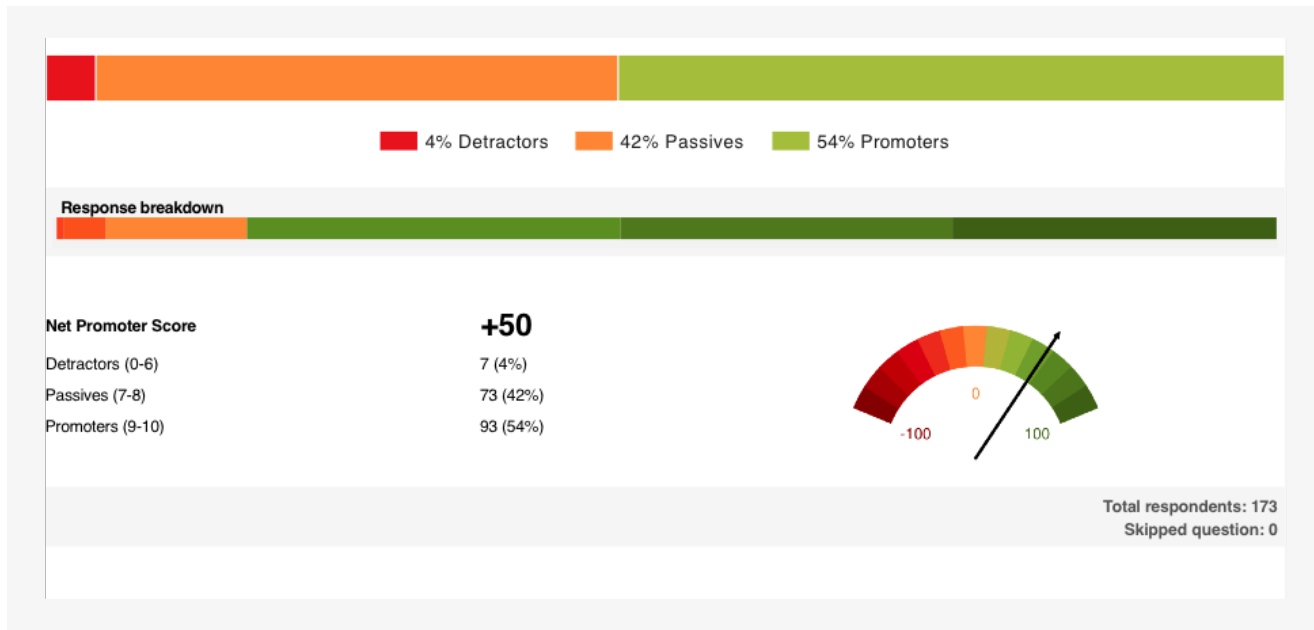


Figure 28: The NPS score for YEP Water

If you look at the benchmark this means that on a customer satisfaction level the YEP program is scoring in the range of high performing organizations, they are above the threshold of 50 with 54% promoters.

6. ANALYSIS OF THE COLLECTED DATA

So far the report was based on the specific and objective outcomes of the survey and interviews. In this chapter we present the interpretation of the results by the research team. This means that this is based on our perception of the outcomes of the research and not necessarily based on the opinions of the respondents.

6.1. THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROGRAM

Shortage of staff and aging of the workforce are challenges for the water sector. These challenges are addressed by YEP Water. By creating a pool of young experts that gains **experience in working abroad**, YEP Water addresses these challenges. The focus of the program is to create a pool of young experts with experience abroad and to help to develop themselves on a personal and professional level. This is a very useful step in the (early) international careers of young experts. However, looking at the interviews and surveys, there is far less focus on the **international development part** of the program. 'Abroad' is a term more often used, which means that the work could be done anywhere outside of The Netherlands and not necessarily in developing countries. There are a couple of ways in which the program is focused on international development. The projects are primarily selected based on their contribution to international development. Secondly the young experts have been given assignments to look at the trends and return with new insights to The Netherlands. However, these assignments are often seen as an extra burden next to the regular work they are already doing and the other assignments of the training program. Thirdly most countries on the list of countries are developing countries. The fact that this is not often mentioned in the motivation to be working with YEP or in the feedback to the program shows that the perception of the added value is much more on 'international' than on 'development cooperation'.

Local organizations mention that, where the YEP Water is helping the young expert to gain experience in working internationally, the organizations themselves are not experiencing a closer working relationship with The Netherlands because of the YEP Water. Whereas this is not the most important goal of the program, it would have been an added benefit of the program for the developmental and international cooperation agenda of The Netherlands.

When it comes to the basic reasons the program was put in place, like being a **breeding ground** for talents and building an **international network**, YEP Water is **meeting a lot of these needs**. We think that YEP Water could putting more focus on the **'sustainability'** part of the program. While the program bureau is putting a lot of effort in the current projects and current young experts, both the participating organizations and the young experts express their concern whether the program will have a lasting effect. For organizations this could be in having a network of talents that have experience in the field and for young experts it is building a resume for the long term. The program bureau mentions the exit conversations on personal development and the assistance in finding a job afterwards with the help of the network of the NWP and trainers and coaches. However, there is no broad program bureau focus or process in place that assures the Young Experts or organizations benefit from the program on a longer term. One of the things YEP Water is doing, is getting the alumni involved as much as possible. But when referring to the alumni network in the interviews, respondents often claim it is hard to build a real community out of an alumni network and companies and universities are struggling with the same issue in other networks.

The YEP program is **making it easier** for young professionals to work abroad. The program is not particularly a motivator for young experts to work abroad. Many of the young experts say they already had the idea of working abroad and YEP made this possible for them. Organizations claim the financial aid is a very important aspect of the program to make it possible to hire young experts. However, the program is not making the organization or enterprise more competitive, except the fact that employing young experts makes them a more attractive employer.

It is interesting to see that all YEP Water alumni are still working in the water sector. **Building capacity** for the sector is a major goal for the program. Through the program, young experts build-up relevant experience and their resumes that helps them to stay in the sector and they are excited/interested enough to stay in the water. Despite the fact that the YEP Water is relatively young, it is to be expected that YEP Water has a positive effect on the water sector.

A better branding of the program could help the program to have more impact: YEP Water should be a positive trademark for someone's resume. As long as only 3% of the people 'always' know what YEP is, there is still some branding to be done.

6.2. THE PARTNERSHIP COMPONENT OF THE PROGRAM

When we look at partnerships it seems that YEP is not fully making use of the partnerships with **embassies** yet. It seems there are a lot of opportunities in working more closely together with the embassies, which could also help the branding. As embassies are an integrated part of MoFA, MoFA/IGG could play a role in involving embassies more intense.

The program depends on **MoFA funding**, which is a risk. What if the focus of MoFA changes and what if YEP does not get the same funding? Also it seems that there are different views on the cooperation between NWP and MoFA. Both parties seem to have different expectations of each other. Where NWP wants to be in closer contact and have a more close relationship, it seems that MoFA sees it more as client – contractor relationship. Also, it seems that MoFA doesn't have enough resources to be able to provide a more close cooperation and therefore puts a lot of trust in the NWP to manage the program.

When it comes to the investigation of missed opportunities and the pilot with 100% funding in Kenya, we can fully understand the reasoning of trying to fund this. Especially when looking at the evaluation of the Associate Expert program (MDF, 2006 – see also § 2.5) that formed the basis of YEP, mentioning that some of programs suffered from lack of good learning experiences. Associate Experts were seen as 'cheap labour' and that there was little attention to learning in the past. Young Experts need a learning environment and well-wrought programs and projects to build-up experience, and the horticulture project in Kenya is providing such a learning environment. However, it becomes very difficult and not transparent if decisions on exceptions to the 50% rule are being made on an 'ad hoc' base in the Steering Committee. There should be a transparent weighting mechanism to decide on what types of projects need to contribute 50% from non-MoFA sources and what projects not. The program bureau informs us that EU rules prevent this flexibility. Hence, some 'special' programs need to be created to allow for this flexibility with a transparent decision making process.

6.3. THE EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY AND IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM

It is interesting to see that the perception of “**What is YEP?**” is different for different people. Both in mentors and young experts we see two groups with two different types of intrinsic motivation. On the one hand we see a group that sees YEP as a platform for getting young professionals to work abroad and to gain experience. They talk about building resumes and developing more experienced professionals in the sector. The other group sees YEP as a training program. Young experts praise the fact that they could otherwise never have been educated like this and employers claim they could never afford this type of education to their employees. It is interesting to see that YEP attracts both groups of motivated young experts and organizations.

The perception is that a large part of the subsidy of the program goes to the **training program**. While we see it is only 10% of the entire subsidy, which is reasonable.

People are **very positive** about the training program in general and appreciate what the young experts get, although the opinions on what is good about the program differ massively. Where some young experts are really excited about certain topics, others think they should be taken out of the program. This is of course the case in any training program. There are however a couple of trends that can be seen in the training program. Overall, young experts learn a lot, also on a personal level. They have a hard time keeping up with everything since they need to do assignments next to their regular project work. They are eager to learn more, as long as it doesn't take up too much more of their time. They do have a lot of ideas on how to improve the efficiency of the training, for example in moving it more to the workplace and doing more peer-to-peer sessions. Right now, the development centre doesn't seem to make their lives easier, although they do see the value of it as a way of getting their information. The program bureau is improving the user friendliness of the platform. The opinions on Basecamp as a community platform also differ. So the learning technologies used could potentially facilitate the learning much better than it does right now. By making better use of the learning technologies, online learning could make the training program more efficient and personalized.

As part of the review we have attended a part of the **first week of the training**. Although it was a very small portion of the entire training, we have the following observations to share:

- When everyone came back in the room after the training, people kept standing which is a sign of interactivity in the room;
- When the group was split into an activity they were split based on their preference in the MBTI profile, which was beneficial for the program, although one has to be aware of the fact that some people might not recognize themselves in the outcome of the profile;
- The Dutch young experts said that they found it hard to mix with the local young experts because they have already spent a week together in training. The trainers were aware of this as they mentioned it, but the group still had the feeling more could be done to get them closer;
- In the group activity they had one person observe the group process, which is a great way of making the group independent of the observations of the trainer and learn how to evaluate a group process.

The difference between the **coach** and the **mentor** is not clear to everyone. Also it is not clear to the young experts for what they can contact whom. The number of people in the support system of the young expert (coach, mentor, manager) can be sometimes too confusing.

The coaching program is very well appreciated, although the use of the coaches differs between young experts. The young experts who are using the services of the coaches are happy with their level of expertise and experience as well as their quality. However, there are also some young experts that do not use the possibility of the coach to its full potential and therefore don't see the added value of it. The opinion on where the responsibility for a more proactive approach should be differs. Some young experts say it is their responsibility to contact their coach, while others want their coach to be more forceful in contacting them and showing their value to them.

The mentoring is something that could potentially mean much more to the program. Most people don't recognize this as a program and the program bureau confirms that it is not meant as a program as well, like the coaching program. A couple of young experts say that they never had a mentor due to circumstances and this was never picked up later in the project. What the exact responsibility is and what their role is in supporting the young expert is not picked up by all organizations. When the organization does take this role seriously and guides the young expert properly, the young expert gets help in making sure he/she understands the context and situation of the organization and the country, which facilitates his/her task. The mentoring could play major role in making sure the young experts are embedded in the organization.

On contacting YEP the overall impression is that the program bureau is doing everything it can to be supportive to whomever contacts them. They are always open for suggestions and questions and it seems they are organized as well. Which was also the impression we got after looking into their shared drive and how things were organized there.

When it comes to the perception of the program bureau itself it seems that the overall impression is that they are a learning organization, learning from feedback and making adjustments accordingly. During this study we have found this as well, where people make suggestions that are already adjusted for later batches of students, for example having mentoring days to educate the mentors. Some respondents made comments on the fact that organizing things and making improvements is something different than being innovative. They questioned the innovative character of the program bureau. When discussing this with the program bureau, it was able to mention and show a lot of examples on how it is thinking outside the box and being innovative in its way of working. So it is interesting to see that the perception sometimes differs from the examples shown by the program bureau.

Finally we would like to make a remark on the **perception of the program bureau**. When it comes to analysing the data and discussing the results with the program bureau we have found discrepancies on more than one occasion in the perception of the program bureau and the actual activities of the program bureau. While some embassies ask for more information, the program bureau say they put a lot of effort in informing them and keeping them up to date. While the program bureau has a particular process in place to make sure the coaching program is embedded, some young experts claim they haven't used their coach because they weren't sure about the added value of this for them. While some respondents of interviews wonder whether the program bureau is innovative enough, they could mention quite some examples on being innovative and thinking outside of the box. Where you can't make

7. CONCLUSIONS, ANSWERING ALL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this chapter we present the conclusions of the findings of our research presented in the previous chapters, following the structure of the (sub-) questions that was given in the Terms of Reference.

7.1. THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROGRAM


To what extent does YEP Program address the problems as experienced by organizations and companies working in the water sector, the young graduates and the recipients of technical assistance in water?

YEP Water is an answer to the concerns expressed by the Dutch water sector in 2011 that it will not be able to contribute to the Dutch water ambitions in the development context in the future as the sector lacks young talent and lacks international development expertise. Based on this challenge the following objectives for YEP have been formulated:

1. Building international experience amongst young high potentials in the water sector;
2. Creating international opportunities for personal development of young high potentials;
3. Set-up a long-term presence in several countries by supporting sustainable net works in selected countries and realise new opportunities for the Dutch economy (TRADE) and development cooperation (AID).

When looking at the first two objectives, YEP performs in an excellent way. The respondents recognize a shortage of junior staff with experience abroad on the one hand and aging of staff on the other hand. Aging of the workforce is recognized as a big issue in the water sector. YEP addresses these issues in a professional way by supporting young professionals to gain experience abroad, helping them to start an international career in the water sector and by creating a pool of experienced professionals for the sector. On top of this, the program offers training and development of these young experts. While the list of countries and the selection of projects is focused on developing countries, this study shows that the perception of the respondents is more focused on working internationally than working on international development.

While the focus of the program is not on supporting local organizations to be working better with Dutch companies we see that YEP is being a support system for the young expert whenever cultural or political issues arise in a project, so it facilitates the Dutch Water sector in performing more professional in the international development context.



It is harder to draw conclusions on the third objective, setting up a long term presence in several countries and realise new opportunities for the Aid and Trade agenda. We think it is too early to draw conclusions on this aspect, but the first signs are positive: 87% of the respondents say that YEP Water is contributing to a sustainable presence and international networks abroad and 50% claims that YEP makes them more competitive. However, it has not really become very clear what MoFA intends to do with the increased workforce as the number bilateral funded projects is decreasing and many organizations active in developing countries, especially NGOs are sizing down or closing doors as a direct result of the same MoFA policy.

Does YEP serve a useful network of applicant organizations, Young Experts and alumni? What further improvement can be made to this respect?

The program bureau pays a lot of attention to the networking part of the program: events are organized in such a way that networking is stimulated and the program bureau is actively assisting young experts in finding jobs, also after they have left the program. When it comes to being a network of opportunities beyond the program we can conclude that this depends primarily on the effort of the organization itself and the effort of the young expert.

YEP makes it certainly easier for the young experts to be able to be employed abroad. The added value for the participating organizations is both the financial aid and the training program. The program is not seen as a program that makes organizations more competitive.

YEP has built a network of alumni, which is obviously still growing given the fact this is a mid term review. Several respondents have mentioned their concern when it comes to efforts that are needed to put into an alumni network into working order. We conclude that the successful rollout of the alumni network needs attention of the program bureau.

The program could benefit from more efforts in the form of brand awareness to boost its influence in future: the ultimate goal could be that the YEP experience on one's resume stands for quality and success.

Do YEP Alumni stay in the water sector? What tools within the program exist to facilitate this and which opportunities would still need to be further developed, as part of the program or via other (alumni) programmes (e.g. Nuffic)?

The alumni network is currently modest in size due to the time the program is running. Currently 100% of the alumni are working in the water sector of which 50% are working in the international development sector. Although this aspect depends on personal circumstances and choices of the young experts, we can conclude that the program is providing the young experts a positive experience as far as working in the international development sector and the water sector is concerned. The program bureau stimulates alumni to stay in touch by implementing a platform that makes it easier to keep in contact. The program implemented several forms of communication to the alumni and the alumni are informed and stimulated to go visit seminars and conferences in the water sector. It might be interesting to connect the alumni to other networks as well.

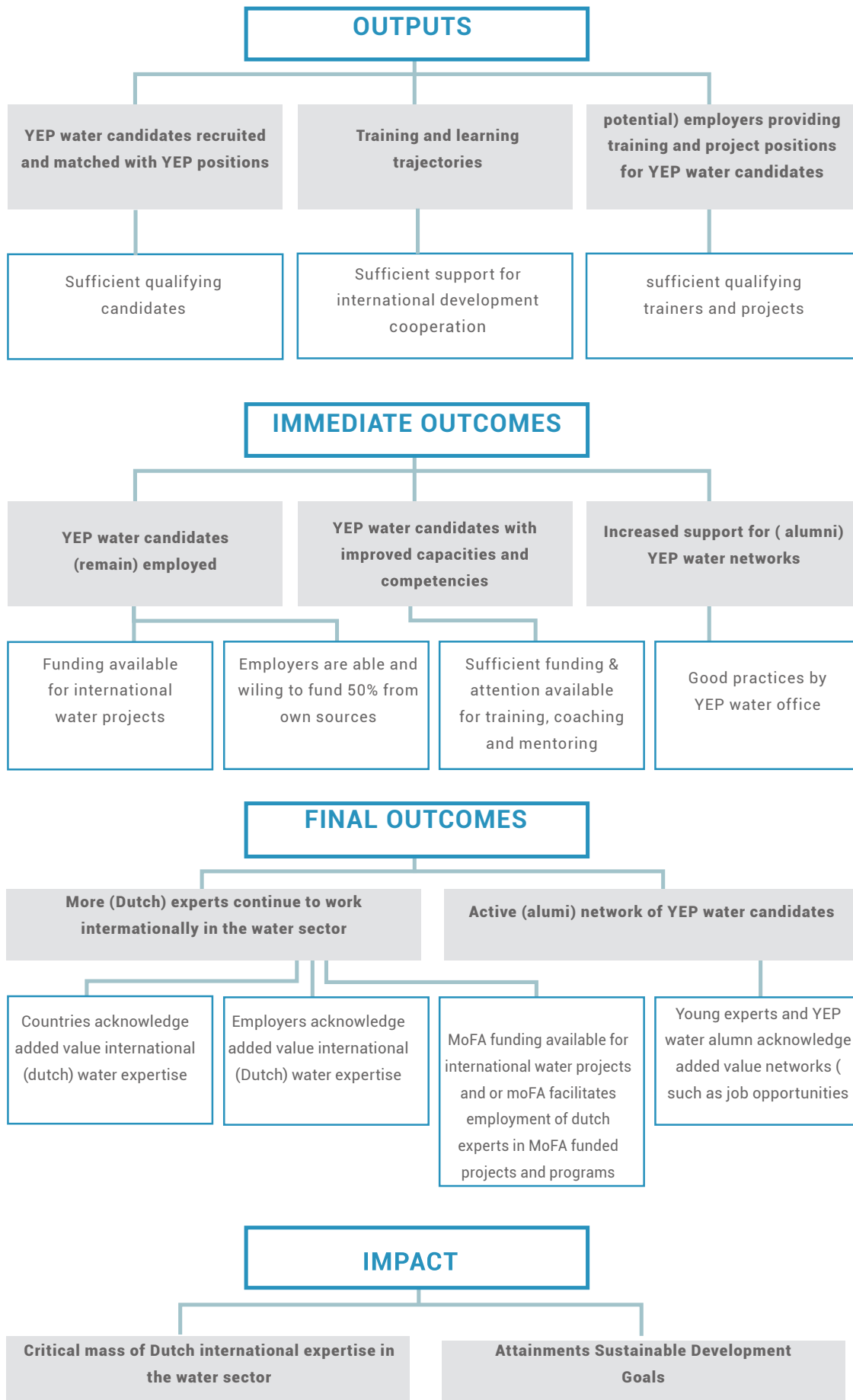
What is the additionality of the public contribution to the YEP program, what would happen without the funding?

YEP depends on the grant that the program receives from MoFA. This is an important risk for the program. The water sector is fragmented and, based on the results of this MTR, we conclude that the sector does neither have the power nor the organizational capacity to run the program without the financial support of the Ministry; NGOs would not have the capacity to participate without the 50% contribution and some SMEs already find 50% contribution too high. The grant that the participating organisations receive is an important reason to join the program.

Are the assumptions underlying the program sound and does the Theory of Change need further improvement, if yes, in which way?

At the start of the program there was no Theory of Change of YEP water, since there was not a model in use by that time. Based on the outcomes of the MTR, we prepared the following proposal for the ToC YEP Water. This is based on the ToC of YEP AgroFood, removing aspects like 'innovation' as the feedback from the young experts shows clearly that too many 'additions' conflict with the already full agenda of the young experts: the focus should be on learning in existing project environment and by adding too many additional tasks the program would be overshooting its targets.

Main objective YEP Water: Support the continued availability of international expertise in the water sector



7.2. THE PARTNERSHIP COMPONENT OF THE PROGRAM

How are the embassies being involved in the program and how can this be further improved?

The program bureau communicates regularly with the embassies: informing them on the status of the program, as well as announcing the deployment of new young experts in their country. Still, some embassies claim they are not sure about their role and need more information on the program to be of better assistance. Other embassies are proactive and organize dinners for the young experts and assure they answer questions and discuss issues around the cultural differences and political situation in their country. The involvement of the embassies seems to be dependent on the engagement of the embassy itself and could easily be stimulated by MoFA.

Due to the restriction of accumulating subsidies it is not possible to finance a young expert at an embassy. There is one exception so far where a local organization funded this and this is seen as a benefit for the branding of YEP in the particular country as well as for the embassy itself.

YEP is set up as a partnership between the Ministry, NWP and the (water) sector, yet the Ministry can at the same time be regarded as the contractor. How is this structure functioning and what lessons can be learned?

Although the stakeholders value the open and pleasant character of the communication between the MoFA, NWP and the water sector, we conclude that the expectations of MoFA and the YEP program bureau differ. Where the program bureau states that it would like to see a closer relationship with MoFA, it is clear that there is a contractor-client relationship, in which MoFA has limited manpower resources and time available for the program on a day-to-day basis. So, the structure is functioning satisfactorily but should not lead to false expectations. MoFA also needs to give clear guidance on the future directions of YEP to the program bureau.

How do the applicant organizations assess the PPP (Public-Private Partnership) nature of the program?

The participating organizations contribute 50% of the finances to the program. This contribution has a positive effect on the engagement and commitment of the organizations and the applicant organizations are satisfied, except the ones that find the 50% contribution too heavy (see also discussion on embassy posting).

What lessons learned from this PPP and what lessons learned from other PPPs can be applied to this program?

The PPP is contributing to the engagement of the participating organizations and assures that organizations contribute responsibly to the success of the program. For MoFA, the PPP character is an excellent way to contribute actively, share experiences and contribute to the YEP Water goals in an effective and efficient way. The PPP character however, should not be used to 'bend the rules' as this can easily create situations that might be perceived as 'unfair', see discussion on the Kenya pilot.

7.3 THE EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY AND IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM

Given the set budget and goal of the program, what would be the ideal ratio between the number of employed and trained young experts, and the nature and intensity, including costs of the training program?

Visions on the program differ: one group regards YEP as a platform for promoting young professionals to work abroad and gaining experience, while others emphasize the fact that it is a training program. In general, everybody appreciates and values the training program. Opinions on what is good and what needs improvement differ. This is mainly caused by the fact that the program is not personalized enough (general courses). The program also focuses on formal and social learning (that are in fact only 30% of the learning needs) and too little on learning on-the-job.

Not all young experts use the different learning options that are offered. For example, the coaching program is highly appreciated, but there are at the same time young experts that are not using the possibility of being coached by a professional. This is the same (or even more) for the mentor and the digital learning environment / Basecamp. We conclude that there is a group of young experts that do not use the full potential of the learning program.

On the average, there is approximately € 6,000 per year available for the training program. Compared to trainee programs this is a budget that might be expected. However, the program office could be more critical on the way the available budget is spent to assure that the program reaches its full potential.

How is the program bureau performing in terms of efforts and expenses and what further improvement could be made regarding its efficiency and effectiveness?

The program bureau performs on a very professional level. Nearly all stakeholders appreciate the clear communication provided by the program bureau. Furthermore the program bureau is regarded as a learning organization. The program office is open for suggestions from stakeholders and constantly trying to improve in close cooperation with all concerned. The back office is professional as well. A clear example is the way the digital information is structured.

Although everybody within the program fulfils his / her role, the YEP program manager is clearly the centre. It seems that the program manager is key to the success of YEP Water. This is an asset but at the same time a risk for the continuity of the program. What would happen if the program manager would need to quit for one reason or another?

The program management costs are relatively high. Programs with a comparable size and number of projects are usually managed for a percentage of around 10% of the overall subsidy (12 M€) instead of 10% of the overall costs (23 M€). A comparison based on the actual costs funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reduces the number to 12.5% of the grant provided by the Ministry. The main cause that the costs are higher than might be expected, seems to be both the number of days spent by the program bureau and the relatively high tariff. However, it needs to be stressed that the costs that are labelled as 'management costs' include many more tasks. Furthermore, the program management costs in the first two years were higher than might be expected based on the number of young experts in the program (average of 13.8 days spent per young expert per year). The program bureau was not able to provide insight in how much time was spent on different activities. Perhaps the time spent can be spread more efficiently over different staff members?

To what degree is the water sector as a whole involved in YEP Water and what are the most important factors determining participation or non-participation?

The YEP program has built a broad network in the water sector. Many organizations are deploying Young Experts via the program. The stakeholders in the sector are also directly involved in the organization of learning activities (e.g. master classes for the Young Experts). Usually the partners are volunteering to support the program office.

Getting organizations in the sector involved does not mean that everybody is aware of YEP. One of the ways the involvement of the sector was investigated in the research was by asking whether people in the sector are familiar with the program. The results of the survey show that 3% is 'always' familiar with YEP in conversations, whereas 31% is 'usually' familiar and 42% is 'sometimes' familiar. In these conversations 16% never knew exactly what YEP was while 49% sometimes knew. This shows that the brand awareness of the program in the sector can be improved.

Using quantitative & qualitative survey, how satisfied are the stakeholders with the YEP program?

Overall there are a lot of positive responses to the program, coming from all different stakeholders on all different levels. Positive responses are mostly around the following subjects:

- The program bureau is constantly adapting and making changes to make the program better;
- The program bureau is supporting in many ways like negotiating contracts or helping in situations where there are political or cultural issues;
- Increased brand awareness of the program could be beneficial for the program;
- The coaches and trainers are experienced and of high quality.

When it comes to feedback on the program it mostly around the following topics:

- The workload of the training program specifically while being in the workplace can be high. Where Young Experts have to do assignments while doing fieldwork as well. Efficiency could be met by using more possibilities for training on the workplace;
- The average age of the current Young Experts is relatively high;
- Keep a constant focus on the sustainable effect of the program since that is a challenge for the future;
- Mentors could playing a bigger role in the embedment and support of the Young Expert

One of the ways to measure overall satisfaction is by using the Net Promoter Score, which we have asked all the respondents of the survey. The program scores 54% promoters in the NPS, which means that the program falls in the category of high performing organizations since it is within the range of +50 - +80.

Can this program learn from other Young Expert programs based on a selection provided by YEP Program bureau

As per the SWOT analysis of our research, the strengths of YEP is that it is focused on water, it has a long term involvement and an in-depth experience due to the training program. Compared to JPO it is relatively cost-effective as costs of JPO at multilateral organizations are high. The weakness compared to other programs is that there are some people in the pool of candidates waiting for a position and eager to get started but YEP has not been able to match them with a position. The opportunity for YEP is that projects nowadays require all-rounders execute international projects and this is a good fit with YEP. A threat for the YEP Program is that traineeships such as VEI Water provide short-term trips and demanding assignments as well.

On top of this YEP can learn from other programs, for example that JPO has outsourced their back office to an external organisation. They claim that this is very efficient. JPO claimed that when it comes to the duration of the program it could be beneficial for the Young Experts to have a duration of 3 to 4 years since that has been proven to really make a difference for the careers of their young professionals.

YEP has strict rules regarding accumulation of subsidies. However these currently exclude employment of Young Experts that are fully financed by embassies, which might be missed opportunities for the program. What would be the best approach to this issue?

This discussion is not restricted to embassies. In Kenya, the premise that it there was a learning opportunity 'not-to-be-missed' has led to a situation where the posting of an AgroFood candidate in a project sponsored by the embassy was honoured whereas, according rules regarding accumulation of subsidies, this would not have been possible. This has created a situation that can easily be considered as 'unfair' towards other opportunities 'not-to-be-missed'. We refer to a particular SME that could not raise 50% own resources and decided to quit YEP, whereas this could have been an excellent learning opportunity, may be better than others that were honoured. In theory, YEP could design a decision tool based on the 'value' of a particular learning experience of a particular project, but this does not seem a very practical approach. The best approach is to have several dedicated YEP program streams: YEP Embassy, YEP SME, YEP NGO with special rules.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of YEP Water's Monitoring Plan and what recommendations can be given to further improve it?

Generally YEPs' monitoring plan works well.

8. CONSTRUCTIVE LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 GENERAL

Before getting into the specific recommendations on the subtopics of the program, some general recommendations are made in this chapter:

- The program bureau works hard, spends a lot of time on informing all stakeholders, and keeps the business running while at the same time it improves the program. However, the different stakeholders do not always recognize the efforts of the program bureau. Just think of examples like the engagement of embassies or innovative program management. We recommend a more targeted communication per stakeholder (or group of stakeholders), to assure specific stakeholders know specific things on the program that interests them. The program bureau needs to be aware of the perception of the different stakeholders and use this perception in favour of the program. So instead of communicating more, we propose to focus the communication more. We also recommend the program bureau to better market their activities. An example is the investment of the program bureau to create possibilities for the young experts after finalising the program. This is unknown by different stakeholder groups but has added value for the program. Another example is the support that the program bureau provides to the young expert in dealing with cultural and political issues in certain countries.
- Coherent with the previous bullet we recommend the program office to 'work less hard' and instead outsource activities and empower their network. The enthusiasm and commitment of the program bureau to the program has the effect that nearly all initiatives come from the program bureau and almost all the work is done by themselves, whereas it is sometimes more efficient and effective to outsource a part of the work to other organizations that are willing to support the program bureau. We recommend spending more time on empowering other people and organizations. Create ambassadors with certain responsibilities, have the mentors take more responsibilities and make more use of the alumni.

- It would be very beneficial to do a NPS score, preferably a 360 degrees NPS score, every year to have a benchmark of the satisfaction of all the stakeholders. This is a very quick way to measure the overall satisfaction with the program and the outputs and outcomes of the program.
- The program is highly dependent on the program manager; both from an organizational, innovation as well as an improvement point of view. We recommend that the program manager transfers the knowledge, experience and network to selected team members. This will at the same time pave the way to also transfer a part of the tasks and make the program more cost efficient.

In the following section we will go into more detail on the specific recommendations on the topics of the research which are: Relevance, Partnership and Effectiveness.

8.2 RELEVANCE

Sustainable change for the sector. On the one hand, the program has made an excellent start and is valued highly by the stakeholders. On the other hand the program needs to prove itself on the long run as well. We recommend that YEP creates a long term plan to make sure there is a sustainable contribution from the program to the sector. Three aspects should be included in this plan.

Theory of change

With this research we have proposed a first draft of the theory of change. We would like to encourage the program bureau to make sure there is a final version before the summer. Secondly the reporting of the program should take place based on the Theory of Change to see whether the program is still meeting the needs of the organizations in the sector.

Branding of the program

We recommend working with YEP ambassadors that are in key positions at the stakeholders of the program. The ambassadors are both the ears and eyes in the sector and contribute to the exposure of the program. Secondly the program itself needs to maintain the high level of education if it wants to make a difference in resumes. In the branding of the program the program bureau is working hard to keep the current stakeholders updated. Exposure would benefit from effort to excite people outside of the current group of stakeholders.

Alumni network of the program

Right now the alumni's are being kept engaged to inform them on events and informing them on the YEP program. The alumni could have a more intensive role in the program for example by organizing master classes, promoting the program in their current roles and coaching the current Young Experts. If the alumni play an active role in the activities of YEP they not only stay involved, but are also contributing to the program on a voluntary level helping the program bureau to outsource some tasks to them.

8.3 PARTNERSHIPS

Dependency of MoFa

The program is highly dependent on the grant of MoFA with the exception of some additional financing (mostly in-kind) from the sector. The program bureau is currently investigating other forms of financing. Our recommendation would be to have a broader range of financial sources to reduce the dependency on MoFA. At the same time we realise that this is extremely challenging in the fragmented water sector. Furthermore we recommend investigating the possibility to be more flexible in the percentage of subsidy that is granted to the different projects. In some cases it might be enough to only finance the training program while in other cases a subsidy of 50% is not sufficient for an SME or small NGO.

PPP construction

When it comes to the PPP, the expectations are different within the program bureau and MoFA. We recommend that a joint session is organised in which the partners focus on the expectations, roles and responsibilities for the coming period. Secondly we urge MoFA to give asap to the YEP bureau on what direction the program needs to develop: Whether they should continue developing new generations of Young Experts with MoFA funding or switch into the monitoring role and prepare an exit strategy.

Cooperation with the embassies

The embassies are potentially strong partners that might be crucial for the sustainability of YEP. Since some of the embassies are really engaged while others are not, we recommend the program office to investigate what is working for the engaged embassies and find a way to get more embassies engaged. In the current situation a lot of efforts are done to communicate with the embassies but the communication does not always seem to be effective. The program office needs to get the embassies intrinsically motivated. We recommend a more personalized approach for the different embassies to make sure they are all engaged as much as possible. Suggestions are to involve MoFA more effectively, set-up regular calls with the different embassies or have local organizations take more responsibilities on getting the embassies involved in the program.

One of the ways of getting more buy-in from embassies could be to have young experts be employed by an embassy. There should also be a solution for the fact that right now a young expert cannot be hired by an embassy because of the EU rule that prevents accumulation of subsidies. Creating a special YEP-Embassy program could do this, but to avoid 'unfair' competition, this should go hand-in-hand with a YEP-SME and YEP-NGO program.

8.4 EFFECTIVENESS

Program bureau: in addition to the general recommendations we advise the program bureau to set-up a more detailed time registration system. This helps to obtain more insight into the time spent and where there are opportunities for efficiency improvement opportunities.

Training program. The training program is a very big part of the effort of the program bureau and gets a lot of credits from the trainers, young experts and organizations.

It seems there might be a couple of adjustments possible to make sure the program is more effective:

- Following the 70:20:10 approach in the design of the training. A substantial part of the current training is classroom training. The latest learning theories teaches us that people learn only 10% in formal setting (classrooms), 20% in social setting and 70% on the job. Although the program bureau has an agreement that the companies are responsible for the learning on the job, the program can make an important contribution to this aspect of learning as well. We advise redesigning the training in the Netherlands according to the 70:20: 10 model thereby increasing the efficiency and reducing the (expensive) time in classrooms.
- Personalised learning. We recommend making the training program more personalised in line with the recommendations of the young experts. Every young expert now has to follow the same program and the same elements within the program. If part of the training program could be adjusted to the personal needs of the young experts it could be reduced in time as well and improving its efficiency. For example, certain activities within the training program could be 'optional' for the Young Expert or via an 'à la carte' menu having them choose what is most relevant for them.
- Outsourcing of learning. Beside the trainers that are hired for the program we recommend to set-up cooperation with educational institutes and / or universities to support the training program. Cooperation with experienced educational institutes will probably have a positive effect on both the quality of the program and the effectiveness.

Besides the changes proposed in the training program we recommend giving more responsibility to the mentors in the program. Currently not all young experts have a (local) mentor. When every young expert has a mentor who can help him/her with their local issues (politics, bureaucracy), close to their office this will have a positive effect in helping the young expert to be embedded in the organization and the local network.

Further investigation.

Currently the involved stakeholders state that YEP is giving them a better image of being a good employer by hiring young professionals. At the same time YEP is not yet making them a much more competitive player. It would be interesting to investigate how YEP can add more value to the competitiveness of an organization. If you can make a real difference for a company in this field as well they will become great ambassadors for the program, continuing to hire young experts out of the program but also promote the added value of the program to other organizations. We recommend giving more attention to this aspect.

APPENDIX A INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The asterisk * denotes a required question.

1. Name

*2. Age

*3. Email address

*4. Level of Education

*5. Years of work experience

*6. How many of those years have you been working the water sector?

*7. Name of the organization

*8. Size of the organization (in number of FTE - Full time employees

*9. Type of organization

*10. Relationship with YEP

*11. Why do you have a relation with YEP: What is your motivation?

*12. What challenges do you experience when working on water in the international development context?

*13. Which of the following challenges do you recognize?

*14. How does YEP address these challenges according to you?

*15. What is your view on the fact that the YEP is restricted to developing countries?

*16. To what extent do you think the program office is a learning organization, constantly improving and learning from mistakes?

*17. Why (not)?
*18. When you are in conversation within the water sector are they familiar with YEP?
*19. If you talk about YEP do people know what it is?
*20. To what extent did YEP influence you in terms of motivation to employ young graduates in water abroad?
*21. Additional comments:
*22. To what extent does YEP contribute to being more competitive as an organization?
23. Additional comments
*24. To what extent does YEP contribute to being more competitive in quantity? (for example getting more projects)
25. Additional comments
*26. To what extent does YEP contribute to being an attractive employer?
27. Additional comments
*28. To what extent does YEP align with the focus of your organisation and/or the organizations that participate?
29. Additional comments
*30. To what extent does YEP contribute to a breeding ground for young talent?
31. Additional comments
*32. To what extent does YEP build up CV's and networks?
33. Additional comments

*34. To what extent does YEP provide the opportunity to work and live in other cultures?
35. Additional comments
*36. To what extent does YEP create a pool of experts with experience abroad?
37. Additional comments
*38. To what extent does YEP create a network of opportunities beyond YEP?
39. Additional comments
*40. To what extent did YEP motivate you to work in the water sector abroad initially?
41. Additional comments
*42. To what extent do you think your YEP experience will contribute to your motivation to work abroad in the long run?
43. Additional comments
*44. To what extent do you think your YEP experience has an influence on your partners attitude on you working abroad?
45. Additional comments
*46. To what extent did YEP give you the anticipated international experience for Dutch young professionals?
47. Additional comments
*48. To what extent do you think your YEP experience will contribute to your motivation to be working in the water sector in the long run?
49. Additional comments
*50. To what extent does YEP create the opportunity for an attractive job?

51. Additional comments
*52. To what extent do you think your YEP experience has contributed to getting to know yourself better?
53. Additional comments
*54. To what extent did YEP give you the anticipated international experience?
55. Additional comments
*56. To what extent did YEP give you the anticipated personal development?
57. Additional comments
*58. To what extent is YEP contributing to sustainable presence and international networks abroad?
59. Additional comments
*60. To what extent is YEP contributing to the brand awareness of the Dutch water sector in International networks and companies abroad?
61. Additional comments
*62. How many times did you contact YEP in the last 3 months?
*63. If you contacted YEP, did you get what you were looking for?
64. Additional comments
*65. How many times did you contact YEP Alumni in the last 3 months?
*66. If you contacted YEP Alumni, did you get what you were looking for?
*67. How many Young Experts within your organisation are working on development projects?

*68. How many Young Experts in your organization are (partly) financed by the YEP-Programme?

*69. Would you have hired the Young Experts without a contribution out of YEP Water?

*70. Why (not)?

*71. Would you have executed the projects without a contribution out of YEP Water?

*72. Why (not)?

*73. Are you still working in the water sector after you left YEP?

*74. Why (not)?

*75. After you finished the YEP program, where are you working now:

76. If you are not working in the sector or internationally after YEP please specify the specific reason:

*77. How would you rate the quality of the trainingprogram?

*78. Why?

*79. What is the most valuable in the trainingprogram? And why?

*80. What is the least valuable in the training program? And why?

*81. How would you rate the quality of the coachingprogram?

*82. Why?

*83. How would you rate the quality of the mentoringprogramme?

*85. To what extent is the mentoring programme helping the YEPper to become embedded in the (local) organization?

86. Additional comments

*87. How often are you using the online platform?

*88. How would you rate the quality of the online learning platform?

89. Additional comments

*90. What recommendations would you give to improve the training programme in general? Any aspects that should be improved, added or removed?

*91. What other forms of learning, for example online study groups, would you like to see more of in the program?

*92.1. How likely are you to recommend the YEP program to a colleague or friend?

93. What would you like to add that might be relevant for the evaluation and that has not been discussed yet?

94. Which recommendations can be given to further improve the future impact of the programme?

*95. What is the reason you are not working on a project via YEP yet?

APPENDIX B OVERVIEW WHAT QUESTIONS TO WHOM

question asked
 questions not asked

Yep midterm review	Steering Committee	Program office	Active Dutch young experts	Active local young experts	Pool of candidates	YEP mentors	YEP coaches	YEP trainers	YEP alumni
* = required									
1. Name									
*2. Age									
*3. Email address									
*4. Level of education									
*5. Years of working experience									
*6. How many of those years have you been working in the working sector?									
*7. Name of organization									
*8. Size of the organization (FTE)									

Yep midterm review	Steering Committee	Program office	Active Dutch young experts	Active local young experts	Pool of candidates	YEP mentors	YEP coaches	YEP trainers	YEP alumni
*9. Type of organization									
*10. Relationship with YEP									
*11. What is your relationship with YEP: What is your motivation?									
*12. What challenges do you experience when working on water in the international development context?									
*13. Which of the following challenges do you recognize?									
*14. How does YEP address these challenges according to you?									
*15. What is your view on the fact that the YEP is restricted to developing countries?									
*16. To what extent do you think the program office is a learning organization, constantly improving and learning from mistakes?									
*17. Why (not)?									
*18. When are you in a conversation within the water sector are they familiar with YEP?									
*19. If you talk about Yep do people know what it is?									

Yep midterm review	Steering Committee	Program office	Active Dutch young experts	Active local young experts	Pool of candidates	YEP mentors	YEP coaches	YEP trainers	YEP alumni
*20. To what extent did YEP influence you in terms of motivation to employ young graduates in water abroad?									
*21. Additional comments:									
*22. To what extent does YEP contribute to being more competitive as an organization?									
*23. Additional comments:									
*24. To what extent does YEP contribute to being more competitive in quantity? (for example getting more projects)									
*25. Additional comments (14):									
*26. To what extent does YEP contribute to being an attractive employer?									
*27. Additional comments:									
*28. To what extent does YEP align with the focus of your organisation and/or the organisations that participate?									
*29. Additional comments:									

Yep midterm review	Steering Committee	Program office	Active Dutch young experts	Active local young experts	Pool of candidates	YEP mentors	YEP coaches	YEP trainers	YEP alumni
*30. To what extent does YEP contribute to a breeding ground for young talent?									
*31. Additional comments:									
*32. To what extent does YEP build up VC's and networks?									
*33. Additional comments:									
*34. To what extent does YEP provide the opportunity to work and live in other cultures?									
*35. Additional comments:									
*36. To what extent does YEP create a pool of experts with experience abroad?									
*37. Additional comments:									
*38. To what extent does YEP create a network of opportunities beyond YEP?									
*39. Additional comments:									

Yep midterm review	Steering Committee	Program office	Active Dutch young experts	Active local young experts	Pool of candidates	YEP mentors	YEP coaches	YEP trainers	YEP alumni
*40. To what extent did YEP motivate you to work in the water sector abroad?									
*41. Additional comments:									
*42. To what extent do you think your YEP experience will contribute to your motivation to work abroad in the long run?									
*43. Additional comments:									
*44. To what extent do you think your YEP experience has an influence on your partners attitude on you working abroad?									
*45. Additional comments:									
*46. To what extent did YEP give you the anticipated international experience for Dutch young professionals?									
*47. Additional comments:									
*48. To what extent do you think your YEP experience will contribute to your motivation to be working in the water sector in the long run?									

Yep midterm review	Steering Committee	Program office	Active Dutch young experts	Active local young experts	Pool of candidates	YEP mentors	YEP coaches	YEP trainers	YEP alumni
*50. To what extent does YEP create the opportunity for an attractive job?									
*51. Additional comments:									
*52. To what extent do you think your YEP experience has contributed to getting to know yourself better?									
*53. Additional comments:									
*54. To what extent did YEP give you the anticipated international experience?									
*55. Additional comments:									
*56. To what extent did YEP give you the anticipated personal development?									
*57. Additional comments:									
*58. To what extent is YEP contributing to sustainable presence and international networks abroad?									
*59. Additional comments:									

Yep midterm review	Steering Committee	Program office	Active Dutch young experts	Active local young experts	Pool of candidates	YEP mentors	YEP coaches	YEP trainers	YEP alumni
*60. To what extent is YEP contributing to the brand awareness of Dutch water sector in international networks and companies abroad?									
*61. Additional comments:									
*62. How many times did you contact YEP in the last 3 months?									
*63. If you contacted YEP, did you get what you were looking for?									
*64. Additional comments:									
*65. How many times did you contact YEP alumni in the last 3 months?									
*66. If you contacted YEP Alumni, did you get what you were looking for?									
*67. How many Young Experts within your organisation are working on development projects?									
*68. How many Young Experts in your organization are (partly) financed by the YEP-Programme?									
*69. Would you have hired the Young Experts without a contribution out of YEP Water?									

Yep midterm review	Steering Committee	Program office	Active Dutch young experts	Active local young experts	Pool of candidates	YEP mentors	YEP coaches	YEP trainers	YEP alumni
*70. Why (not)?									
*71. Would you have executed the projects without a contribution out of YEP Water?									
*72. Why (not)?									
*73. Are you still working in the water sector after you left YEP?									
*74. Why (not)?									
*75. After you finished the YEP program, where are you working now:									
*65. How many times did you contact YEP alumni in the last 3 months?									
*87. How often are you using the online platform?									
*88. How would you rate the quality of the online learning platform?									
89. Additional comments									

YEP Mid-Term Review	Steering Committee	Program office	Active DutchYoung Experts	Active Local Young Experts	Pool of Candidates	Yep Mentors	YEP Coaches	YEP trainers	YEP Alumni
*90. What recommendations would you give to improve the training programme in general? Any aspects that should be improved, added or removed?									
*92.1. How likely are you to recommend the YEP program to a colleague or friend?									
93. What would you like to add that might be relevant for the evaluation and that has not been discussed yet?									
94. Which recommendations can be given to further improve the future impact of the programme?									
*95. What is the reason you are not working on a project via YEP yet?									

