

Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

FINAL REPORT

Review of

Danish Youth Council – DUF

- with a special focus on results and partnerships

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List of Acronyms

| | |
|--------|---|
| AFD | Ambassadors for Dialogue |
| AEBR | Association of Baptist Churches in Rwanda |
| CBO | Community Based Organisations |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisation |
| DAPP | Danish Arab Partnership Programme |
| DBS | Danske Baptisters Spejderkorps |
| DKK | Danish Kroner |
| DUF | Dansk Ungdoms Fællesråd (Danish Youth Council) |
| DMRU | Dansk Missionsråds Udviklingsafdeling |
| FUMSA | Federation of Ugandan Medical Students Association |
| HMC | Humanitarian Action, Migration and Civil Society (Department) |
| HPR | Healthy People Rwanda |
| HRBA | Human Rights Based Approach |
| IMCC | International Medical Cooperation Committee |
| JRC | Jordan Red Crescent |
| KFU | Kvalitet og Faglighed i Udvikling (Department) |
| KFUM | Kristelig Forening for Unge Mænd |
| LST | Les Scout Tunisiens |
| MEDSAR | Medical Student Association of Rwanda |
| MENA | Middle East and North Africa (Department) |
| MoFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| MPA | Mini Programme Agreement |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| STF | Straight Talk Foundation |
| TQS | Technical Quality Support (Department) |
| UNGR | Ungdomsringen |
| URK | Ungdommens Røde Kors |

1. Introduction

The Danish Youth Council (DUF) is a Danish service and interest organization working to promote children and young people's participation in organizational life and democracy. DUF was established in 1940 and has since then worked to strengthen young people's conditions and influence in Denmark and internationally. In the international area, DUF works to build capacity of member organisations through advisory services, courses and dissemination of information. DUF administers the Project Pool and the MENA Pool, which support the cooperation between DUF member organisations and partners in Global South/MENA.

The above services and funds are as part of Denmark's official development assistance financed by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). Inside the MoFA the relation to DUF is managed by the Department for Humanitarian Action, Migration and Civil Society (HMC) and by the Department for Middle East and North Africa (MENA), who together also provide the funding to DUF's international work.

1.1 Objective and scope

The review of DUF was carried out between October and December 2016 by a review team of external consultants. The review was requested by HMC. As per the Terms of Reference (refer to Annex 3) the objective of the Review is to assess DUF's performance in delivering results under its agreements with the MoFA. The Review has a special focus on results and partnerships and it includes an assessment of DUF's financial management and organisational capacity to operate development programmes under the MoFA agreements. Recommendations from the Review shall provide an input to the MoFA's on going dialogue with DUF. The review has a focus on activities funded between 2012 and 2016.

The Review issues a number of recommendations, which are summarised in a Process Action Plan in Annex 1. These require a formal response from DUF and an agreement with the MoFA on follow-up action. In addition, the Review puts forward a number of observations throughout the text. These are for consideration only and do not require a formal response.

1.2 Approach

The Review has involved document reviews, several exchanges with staff at the DUF secretariat, meetings and interviews with DUF member organisations, interviews and fieldwork with partners in South/MENA (Jordan, Uganda, Rwanda), focusing on a sample of 11 projects being implemented in Jordan, Uganda and Rwanda as well in a number of other South/MENA countries.

The specific projects sampled are listed in Annex 4 together with information about the names of the partner organisations in Denmark and in the South/MENA. The process has included a number of meetings with MoFA and followed by debriefing meetings with MoFA and with DUF. The sample

of projects has been selected to enable the Review Team to assess the nature of partnerships and results created through projects financed by DUF.

The assessment of results focuses on results in partnerships and of partnerships. The former refers to qualitative changes in the partnerships over time whereas the latter refers to the degree to which the projects financed by DUF achieve, or are likely to achieve, their outputs and outcomes as defined in the approved project applications. Interviews with the sampled organisations have also focussed on how they relate to and make use of DUF services and how they are involved in information and communication activities in Denmark. Separate interview guides for Danish member organisations and South/MENA partners have been developed (available in Annex 7).

The Review Team's assessments of the individual projects have informed the general assessment and conclusions in this report but the individual assessment are not reported. The sample has been structured to capture the different modalities (partnership, pilots, network, preparatory studies and youth leader exchange) offered by DUF under the Project Pool and the MENA Pool. The sample includes different actors and different thematic issues. A direct-implemented DUF project and an extended partnership are also included in the sample.

Although the sample of projects represents only a small proportion of active DUF grants, the Review Team considers the sample sufficiently large and structured to identify salient issues in relation to the role of DUF in contributing to results and partnerships through its fund management and capacity building services. The findings from the sample have further been corroborated by interviews with key stakeholders such as staff from the DUF secretariat and in the DUF system.

The Review was carried out by external consultant to MoFA, Martin Enghoff (team leader) and Thomas O'Brien Kirk (finance management and administration expert) together with external national consultant Tamara Abbadi in Jordan, Max Anyuru in Uganda, and Jean Felix Ntango in Rwanda. Lena Hothes from HCM, Kurt Mørck Jensen from MENA and Gunvor Bjerglund Thomsen from DUF participated as resource persons in part of the review country visits.

The views and recommendations contained in this report are those of the Review Team only. They are not necessarily shared by DUF, the partners interviewed or the MoFA. The team would like to thank all the people met for their support and assistance, which greatly facilitated the Review process.

2. DUF as an organisation

2.1 Membership

DUF represents 72 children and youth organizations at a national level in Denmark that combined have about 600.000 members, nearly 5000 local organizations and over 100.000 volunteers. In addition to working nationally in Denmark, some of the DUF member organisations are also engaged in international development activities. The member organisations cover a very diverse field of

organisations conducting socially engaging activities for children and young people, and they focus on topics such as youth politics, scouting, religion, environment, youth clubs, theatre, international exchanges and international projects. The number of members that seek advice on and use funding for DUF international projects is in the order of 20-30 organisations.

2.2 Leadership

DUF's highest authority is the Delegate Meeting, which meets annually and represents all member organisations. DUF's political leadership is entrusted to an elected Board, which takes an active role in the national as well as the international work of DUF. A General Secretary appointed by the Board heads DUF. The Head of international department is in charge of the daily management of DUF's international work.

2.3 International department and staffing

The international department is organised in four teams – the MENA Pool team, the MPA (Project Pool) team, the Communication, M&E and Learning Team and the crosscutting Pool team. The division into teams reflects the department's main function in managing the two Pools, providing a wide range of capacity development services and supporting the implementation of own projects. The department is staffed with eleven full time staff. The team setup is assessed to be well qualified with comparatively strong and relevant experience in international youth development issues. Their expertise and approach are highly appreciated by the member organisations consulted by the Review Team. DUF international department capacity is responding well to the needs of the member organisations and its capacity is clearly relevant in relation to the type of organisations and project supported. DUF international department is assessed to be a committed entity where learning and service improvement are in focus.

2.4 Strategies and values

DUF strategic goals. DUF's core values are participation, dialogue, volunteerism and influence. DUF promotes communities where people are committed towards one another. DUF actively engages young people in democracy, society and organizations; locally, nationally and internationally. DUF seeks actively to engage more members and a diverse range of member organisations in international work. The direction and mandate of the international work in DUF is outlined in the international strategy 2015-2017. The strategic goals in the international strategy are:

1. Member organisations have strengthened their international engagement
2. Youth organisations in Middle East, North Africa and the developing countries have gained strengthened organisational capacity and influence in their own societies
3. Dialogue and mutual understanding is strengthened among youth across national, ideological, sectarian and other divides
4. Member organisations are ensured enabling framework conditions for their international work.

Strategic goal for the Project Pool. The Project Pool and the MENA Pool, both funded by the MoFA, constitute the backbone of DUF's international work. The strategic goals of the Project Pool as outlined in the agreement with MoFA are:

1. Youth organisations in developing countries have increased their capacity and/or practical experience with exercising influence in their own society
2. Youth organisations in developing countries have been strengthened to manage organisations and projects in an accountable and effective way
3. International work is further rooted in DUF member organisations.

These strategic goals have remained largely the same during the period under review. The first two strategic goals are related to results in the South, they are focused on the capacity of the South partners. Overall, the DUF strategy and the goals for the Project Pool are found to be well in line the Policy for Danish Support to Civil Society.

Strategic goals for the MENA Pool and projects. The agreement with MoFA on the MENA Pool and the DUF-facilitated activities in the MENA region has the following programme objectives:

1. Youth organisations in the MENA region have increased capacity in and practical experience with influencing own societies and contributing to reform and democratization processes
2. Youth and youth organisations in MENA and Denmark have increased capacity in and practical experience with dialogue and cooperation across political, cultural, geographical and other divides
3. Danish youth organisations are further committed to support and engage in reform and democratization processes in the MENA region by using and developing their own organisational experiences and competences, as well as through participation in public debates and events.

The strategic goals under the agreement with MENA are well in line with the Strategic Framework for the Danish Arab Partnership Programme. The strategic goals of DUF and the Project Pool fit well with the MENA Pool strategic goals, but it is also noted that the MENA strategic goals have more focus on the organisations using their capacities in practise to contribute to changes in society.

Theory of Change and SDGs. DUF has developed a theory of change, which, in short, focuses on DUF's role in facilitating that their member organisations value democratic culture, youth to youth collaboration and access to international engagement. This then promotes changes in the member organisations in Denmark and in partner organisations in the South/MENA so that more democratic practises, better competences, increased influences, more volunteers, international engagement and peaceful collaboration are created. Ultimately, this will then lead to the promotion of democracy as a way of life. The theory of change explains well how DUF and its members will act as change agents. In its strategic framework, DUF has so far not addressed the SDGs and how they relate to the work of DUF. This could with advantage be done for the upcoming strategies across both the national and international departments.

2.5 Communication, advocacy and transparency

DUF as communicator and facilitator. DUF is engaged in a range of communication and advocacy activities financed as part of the agreement with MoFA. Part of this is done directly by DUF and another part is done by providing support to the communication and advocacy activities of the member organisations. The DUF facilitated activities includes DUF website, Facebook and DUF magazine as well as a host of different communication and advocacy activities such as participation in and arranging of conferences, debates, meetings, and contact to politicians. DUF sees its role as facilitator of platforms for its member organisations for them to engage in communication and advocacy on international development issues. DUF has effectively provided a platform for their member organisations in relation to provision of input to Danish development policies. Overall, it is assessed that DUF is performing well in its role of undertaking communication and advocacy directly as well as in support of the member organisations. However, DUF could consider to do this more strategically.

DUF website. The DUF website has been through a major restructuring. The website functions well in terms of providing communication to members and to a lesser extent as communication outside the member organisations. It is clear and there are good entry points for the interested members, and it is user friendly. There is, however, problems with the English version of the website, something DUF is aware of and is working on.

DUF communication and transparency. DUF is overall transparent in its communication. However, on the website, there is no access to documents such as reports to back donor, monitoring reports, meeting minutes and documents related to the various applications and active grants. For the sake of transparency, it should be considered to make such documents available through the website.

DUF–MoFA Dialogue. It is assessed the DUF-MoFA dialogue related to the two different agreements has been implemented as planned and with good participation and input from both sides. DUF has implemented and addressed the various points raised in the dialogues. There has not been major obstacles in the on going dialogue.

2.6 Involvement of member organisations in international work

Project groups in member organisations. Project groups under the member organisations are the direct implementers of the DUF-financed projects and they are typically consisting of 5-9 volunteers who spend on average for two to four years in the project groups. All project groups are working under a larger member organisation and all project group's proposals have to be approved at the member organisation level. Support from DUF plays a key role for the volunteer work in practically all the organisations. Collaboration among project groups within the same organisation varies from organisation to organisation ranging from close to no collaboration. With limited collaboration there is clearly loss of learning opportunities.

Organising international work in member organisations. In some of the member organisations there is good synergy between national and international work, whereas in others it is rather poor. The support from secretariats of member organisations to project groups varies, but is generally focused on financial management support, and it is generally rather limited. This problem is discussed further in other parts of the report. DUF needs to continue to strive for better backstopping to the international work from some of the secretariats in the member organisations. Within member organisations it should as a minimum be ensured that knowledge and experience from DUF-financed international projects is exchanged among “in-house” groups.

Interest among volunteers in member organisations. There appears to be a relatively steady interest among the member organisations in being involved in international work. None of the sampled organisations reported of significant increase or decrease in youth being interested in this kind of work. The total pool of interested volunteers in the member organisations is difficult to judge, but during the review period it appears that there have been a rather systematic gap between volunteer groups applying for international projects and the available funding. A number of member organisations report that there are constraints in getting more project groups established (funding, time, resources issues). A continued proactive and innovative approach from DUF in involving member organisations in promoting interest among volunteers would be useful.

3. Mobilisation and engagement in Denmark

Results in mobilisation and engagement. The MoFA support channelled through DUF has as one of its important aims to ensure popular anchorage and engagement in development activities in Denmark through communication and information activities carried out by the DUF member organisations. The projects supported by DUF are all involved in activities to promote popular mobilisation and engagement around development activities in the Danish context. The overall picture is that there are significant achievements in popular support and mobilisation in the very diverse work on communication and information undertaken by the different members. Also, in terms of engagement, the Review Team finds good results such as the engagement and commitment of the many volunteers involved in the in the different project groups, as well as the understanding, support and engagement in international development work in the member organisations, which takes the various projects as their point of departure.

Communication within and outside organisations. In its annual reporting to the MoFA, DUF informs that communication activities on international projects carried out by its member organisations are being implemented widely and both target their own organisations using websites, emails, newsletters, meetings and social media, and target the wider public through meetings, newspapers, fundraising, festivals and information campaigns. This general picture is confirmed by the project groups consulted by the Review Team, which also confirmed that the most widely used avenue of communication is within their own organisation or associated organisations. MENA/South Partners

are also, in several cases, involved in the information work when they are in Denmark on exchanges or trainings.

Direct youth engagement. The projects themselves help engage youth in Denmark. Volunteers are applying substantial interest and resources in the work and they become key spokespersons for engagement in international development. The direct youth engagement is very valuable as a way of promoting popular engagement in development work. The work with the youth is a fundamental aspect of creating long-term popular foundation in Denmark. The partnerships and its associated interactions with South/MENA partners provide a significant value to the Danish volunteers, and through this, they get a significant understanding of development issues and activities. It certainly also adds to their skills. The DUF funded projects are able to include and reach out to a good number of non-traditional development actors. This is an important aspect of popular engagement.

Information and communication to the wider public. All the project groups are involved in communicating to the wider public in one way or another. Some are doing it successfully, others have more limitations. The diversity is significant. Although, DUF does provide counselling and training on how to go about communication activities in Denmark, a good number of the projects groups felt a need for more counselling during project implementation on practical aspects of communication to general public in Denmark. A point, which is also noted in other parts of the review report.

Linking the national and the international. DUF has within the last years been giving added focus on how the member organisations can link and anchor their international work with their national work. Amongst others the initiative “Reflex” has been launched jointly with the DUF national secretariat, which amongst others, is building capacity in the member organisations on how international and national work can benefit each other and create value in the organisations. There is a wide variety among the member organisations on how well the linkage between the international and national work is being applied. Some are very good at this, whereas in others, the international work is living a rather isolated life, implemented by some volunteer groups but not having strong backing in practice from the organisation. DUF recognises the problem and seeks to address this in communication with the organisations.

4. DUF capacity development services

DUF offers a range of different capacity development services including courses, workshops, meetings and counselling for individual organisations. DUF also has a well-equipped toolbox with good positions papers, tools and guidelines. The Review Team has assessed these services based on interviews with sampled organisations, a review of DUF’s documents and meeting with DUF. Overall, DUF capacity development services are found to be well developed and delivered. Generally, they respond to the capacity needs of the member organisation.

4.1 Counselling

The majority of the staff in DUF International Secretariat are involved in advising in relation to the DUF-funded projects. Counselling the member organisations is a core aspect of the work. Around two thirds of the advisory staff time are reportedly used for different forms of counselling for different organisations at different stage in their project application and implementation. The advisors are having a direct and trustful relation to the member organisations. The DUF counselling is generally reported by the member organisations in the sample to be very useful. Likewise, DUF's own system for feedback is also reporting a high level of satisfaction with the counselling. The counselling is focused on the process of getting funding from the two Pools. The counselling is instrumental in the member organisations being able to access funding for projects. There appears to be a good level of consistency between the counselling and how the award process handles proposals. Generally, the counselling is reported to provide useful advice that ensures better formulated projects with better scope for success during implementation.

4.2 Courses and workshops

Overview of courses and workshops. DUF provides on average around 20-25 courses and workshops related to international work per year reaching an average of 300-400 young volunteers representing some 20-30 member organisations. In addition, there is a major partner seminar every second year and a major project management seminar every second year. Since 2014, DUF has implemented three Explore courses to introduce member organisations to opportunities in new specific countries. The Review Team finds that nearly all of the sampled DUF member organisations are very positive in their assessment of the value of DUF courses and workshops. DUF's own monitoring of the value of the courses and workshops, based on participant feedback after trainings, also rates this positively.

Courses on practical project implementation issues. All of the organisations with DUF-funded projects have utilised DUF courses to a larger and lesser degree and found that they could apply the learnings in project implementation. Some members, however, do express a wish for training related to hands-on practical knowledge in project implementation. Expressed needs among several member organisations are to learn more about practical approaches to: 1) monitoring results especially when working with issues like advocacy and capacity development; 2) how to do information work in practise in Denmark; and 3) more training on solving practical issues in project financial management during actual implementation of projects. The Review Team, hence, *recommends* that DUF seek to provide further capacity development services related to hands-on practical knowledge in project implementation including topics such as monitoring of results, undertaking information work in Denmark and addressing financial management in project implementation.

Networking and experience exchange. Networks among different member organisations exist and examples of good network activities facilitated by DUF are found, however, networks among peers (thematic, geographic) could be improved and is something that many member organisations would be willing to be part of in order to exchange experience on specific topics/contexts. DUF could usefully put further emphasis on arranging more thematically focused network meetings and experience exchange workshops among members with comparable interests and levels of experience.

Facilitating some form of knowledge sharing platform or information bank might also be considered. It is *recommended* that DUF investigates opportunities to further facilitate networking and experience exchange among the various project groups with common interests.

Provision of and access to courses. DUF offers courses and workshops in Copenhagen and to a lesser extent Aarhus, still some member organisations find it difficult to participate. A possible idea would be to further develop online access to participation in courses and meetings and/or to document courses and make them available on the web/homepage to ease access. South/MENA partners' access to courses is naturally much more limited. Given the value of access to these courses, further opportunities for making courses more accessible for South/MENA partners should be investigated. As regards to coordination with other capacity service providers, such as CISU, Globalt Fokus and DMRU there appears to be a good complementarity, and DUF ensures that the youth volunteer organisations can get the type of support at the level they need. The various organisations meet regularly to share planning and ensure complementarity in delivery.

4.3 Tools and guidelines

DUF has developed a range of tools and papers to guide organisations in improving their performance. These are generally of a high quality and developed at an appropriate level that can be managed by relatively inexperienced youth volunteer organisations. The majority of the member organisations and partners in South/MENA consulted by the Review Team found the tools and guidelines provided by DUF were very useful and user friendly. Tools, specifically on finance as well as on monitoring could be further improved with input from member organisations.

5. Grant Award Process

5.1 The Project Pool, the MENA Pool and the extended partnership modalities

The support modalities offered by DUF are briefly outlined below. The descriptions are based on the guidelines developed for the Project Pool and the MENA Pool. The fact that two pools are implemented with two different funding arrangements from MoFA do create extra transactions costs for both the MoFA and DUF in terms of separate guidelines, separate results frameworks etc.

The Project Pool and the MENA Pool. The Project Pool has five annual calls for applications, and offers a variety of grant modalities that can be applied for including partnership projects, pilot projects, preparatory studies, partner identification, partner development, network activities and youth leader exchange. In total, seven different modalities with different requirements and criteria. Although, this is a significant number of modalities, it appears that member organisations and partners make relative good use of the modalities and the Review Team generally finds a good coherence between them. The aim of the MENA Pool is also to support the cooperation between volunteers in Danish youth organisations and their partners in MENA countries through various modalities as outlined in the guidelines. The MENA Pool has, within DUF, the same guidelines and the same

modalities as the Project Pool. The Review Team finds that the two Pool modalities in set up and in practise are very similar. The reason for having two separate Pools appears largely to stem from the fact of having two different funding sources guided by two different strategic frameworks within MoFA.

The extended partnerships. The extended partnership is a modality specifically designed for two programmes that have been taken over by DUF from the Danish Arab Partnership Programme. It is a modality that cannot be applied for. Their status within DUF is currently that they will be implemented for the agreed time period, but what will happen thereafter is not yet decided. The two extended partnerships in the DUF portfolio have major differences between them, with one of them having significant payment of staff, more focus on professional development work and less focus on volunteer work. So, the approach in one of the extended partnerships is very different from the other DUF-funded projects, whereas the other extended partnership has more resemblance with other DUF-funded projects. [Paragraph removed because of confidential information]

5.2 Application process

Overall assessment of application process. The application process for the two Pools is similar and generally found to be working well. The formats are generally found to be comprehensive and containing useful information. The applications also serve as project documents and, largely, the requirements for the applications are found to be useful for project implementation. Most of the organisations consulted by the Review Team find the application process satisfactory. Access to counselling is in that respect found to be essential for the application process with DUF being seen as a good facilitator in the application process.

Timing and stages in the application process. The availability of many different modalities can at times for some of the applicants be a challenge, since application procedures are not always clear to the applicants. With five annual rounds of applications, there is good scope for the members to time their applications accordingly. However, there are often long time lapse between the applications from one stage of project development to the next stage. This has less to do with the timing of application process, but more to do with the time constraints on the side of project groups.

5.3 Assessment and award process

Overall assessment of grant process. The management of grants on behalf of MoFA calls for relatively thorough and transparent procedures to ensure legitimacy to its members, the wider public and to the MoFA. Overall, the grant award process is assessed to be well managed and living up to required professional and democratic standards.

Assessment process. The background for the assessments is prepared by the international department in DUF, and based on this the appointed grant committees (one for Project Pool and one for MENA Pool) undertake the assessment process. There is a relatively close linkage between the advisors doing the counselling to the project groups and their preparation for the assessments of the same projects. Somehow, the independence of the process is not fully secured, but the Review Team do find that the

process is the best that can be expected given the nature and size of the projects being funded through the Pools. Projects are financially relatively small and are specifically related to youth/volunteer activities, so, while full independence in the process would be the ideal, the cost of implementing independent professional assessments in this system and the appointment of qualified assessment consultants, both constitute obstacles to such an assessment system.

The grant committees. DUF has two grant committees appointed by the DUF Board and consisting of representatives of member organisations. They meet five times a year. Continuity in the grant committees is being sought and appears to be achieved rather well. The grant committees are being well informed by and have a good professional dialogue with the international department. Grant committees are represented at the evaluation seminars and one member participates in turns in DUF monitoring visits. The grant committees do not see any major difference between the Project and the MENA Pools.

Transparency of the grant process. For the individual member organisations the process is transparent with good feedback throughout the process. Although, there is oversight information on awarded grants on the DUF website, there is no accessible information (project applications, documents) available on DUF website related to the on-going projects. It is also not possible to see what project has been applied for and not awarded in the different application rounds. The Review Team notes that for the sake of transparency and mutual learning such information would be useful to make accessible on the website.

Criteria and award. So far all projects living up to the qualification criteria have been supported. New guidance for how to prioritise among applications that are found worthy of support can be used in a situation where more projects are found to be qualified than there is funding available. Focus in the prioritisation is then popular anchoring in relation to the projects. The process of prioritisation in the grant committees still has to be implemented and learning on prioritisation from other pooled funds organisations in Denmark might be a good idea.

5.4 The DUF Pools

Financed through the Pools, there was by end of 2015, 48 active partnership projects implemented by 22 member organisations and their partners in 22 different countries.

The Project Pool. The Project Pool had in 2014 financed 28 projects with a value of 2,8 million DKK and in 2015 the total value of projects financed increased to 4,75 million DKK. The portfolio consists of a wide diversity of project types including partner organisational development, provision of youth activities and youth empowerment, capacity development of volunteers, outreach to the wider population with education, awareness and empowerment activities.

The MENA Pool. The MENA Pool has in 2014 financed 12 projects at the value of 1 million DKK and in 2015 projects at the value of 2,06 million DKK were financed. MENA activities are expected to continue at approximately the same level in the coming years. Overall, around half of the MENA Pool projects are dealing with organisational development of partners as key focus area although

some of these projects also have an additional focus on reaching out to a larger target group. Since 2013, there has been an increasing focus on advocacy in the projects. Especially among the larger projects (five or so), there is a focus on working with outreach to larger target groups. Trainings in relation to MENA Pool have to a great extent utilised the input and experience from the DUF-facilitated project on promoting dialogue and understanding between youth from different cultures and countries “Ambassadors for Dialogue”. The member organisations applying for the MENA Pool has a significant focus on projects in Palestine. Hence, the future country focus in the DAPP will have a major impact on the MENA Pool.

Draw on the different Pools. Over the years, there have been fewer applications than the pooled funding available for the both Pools. Only in recent year (2016) where the budget available has been reduced is it expected that the applications are at the level of funding available. DUF has made much effort in attracting more eligible applications in line with the budgets available. With the Explore initiative, this now seems to have resulted in more applications.

6. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

One of DUFs challenges is to summarise results from its many activities at an outcome level – not least in view of its very diverse project portfolio of many small projects with many different partners. Moreover, it should also be recognised that DUF is not a direct implementer of projects funded through the Pools, and that DUF can only, as a fund manager, influence the monitoring taking place at project level and subsequently use data from projects for summarising results at the DUF level. This Chapter assesses efforts made by DUF in terms of monitoring its portfolio and documenting change. It starts out, however, by assessing the basis of such a system, i.e. the M&E at project level.

6.1 Project level monitoring and evaluation

Project M&E assessment. The overall assessment of project level monitoring and evaluation is that it is relatively well undertaken given the size, resources and timing of the various projects. The project monitoring does provide a reasonable picture of progress in the various projects. Projects are being monitored by member organisations and partners and most partners have regular contacts to each other (skype, mail, Facebook, Whatsapp), where project progress is presented and discussed. Generally, the projects are well monitored at the level of activities and results *within* the partnerships such a volunteer capacity development and organisational changes, but there is limited monitoring *of* partnerships such as addressing results in the wider society.

Results framework and indicators. Each of the projects funded by DUF has a results framework guiding their implementation. Overall, the Review Team finds that the sampled projects have relatively suitable objectives and outputs presented in the results frameworks. They are at a level that is realistic for the type and size of projects funded. However, when it comes to indicators and means of verification within these results frameworks, the performance is more uneven, some have a realistic

set of indicators and means of verification, whereas others have far too many indicators and too many different means of verification. This also translates into an uneven performance when it comes to monitoring and evaluation in the different projects. A more consistent guidance from the side of DUF counselling on development of realistic indicators and means of verification would be desirable.

Monitoring contribution to change. In most of the projects there is also a goal of contributing to change in society in one way or another, but few of the projects are able to monitor such contribution to change. There is an expressed interest among many of the project partners to know more about how their respective projects are impacting on people and contributing to change. The problems associated with monitoring of impacts has been noted earlier in the 2015 impacts assessment commissioned by DUF, and DUF is working on providing better guidance and frameworks in relation to the monitoring of impacts. The Review Team considers that there are opportunities to more systematically get feed back from focus groups of beneficiaries related to the various projects on their perceptions on how the projects have impacted their situation. Using perceived trends in change as the parameter rather than establishing costly baselines would be valuable. This applies to projects under the pools as well as DUF-facilitated projects. Such feedback would add more systematically to the collected success stories of change, which are being collected at the moment.

Monitoring partnership development. Although development of strong partnerships is a core objective of both Pools and the monitoring of partnership development is encouraged in the required partnership agreements, little appears to be done to regularly monitor how the partnerships develop. No indicators for such development are provided in the applications reviewed by the Team. The Review Team notes that further monitoring on the development of partnerships would be useful and it appears that partners are interested in undertaking such monitoring.

Use of monitoring in management and reporting. The consultations with member organisations and partners shows that monitoring is being taken seriously and certainly undertaken as best they can, but it also reveal a tendency to do monitoring for the sake of being able to report (i.e. monitoring during one-of visits by volunteers from member organisation) while there is relatively little focus on the use of monitoring as a way of learning for the sake of guiding project implementation. Danish volunteers in the project groups are generally playing a lead role in monitoring of projects. The role of partners in the South/MENA is sometimes less clear.

Recognising the limitations in level of activities in small volunteer based project collaborations, it is still deemed possible to have a further focus on the grant assessment and in the counselling on how the monitoring and documentation of results will be made in practice including more guidance on how monitoring of contribution to changes could be done. This would likely contribute to better monitoring in the respective projects. It is *recommended* that DUF further works on improving counselling and training in practical monitoring as a management tool and as a tool for getting more systematic feedback on project contributions to changes in society.

6.2 DUF-level monitoring and evaluation

Assessment of M&E in DUF. Overall, it is assessed that monitoring and evaluation at the level of DUF is relatively well functioning and includes work in progress in terms of improving impact and results monitoring. DUF has worked continuously and with commitment on improving the M&E system. The monitoring and evaluation done in relation to the Project Pool and the MENA Pool are largely done in the same way.

M&E tools available at DUF level. DUF has a number of approaches to documenting results that can help inform monitoring of the goals in the DUF strategy and in the agreements with MoFA. These include: (1) Compulsory evaluation seminars with oral reporting for finalised projects, (2) Written final reporting from projects, (3) DUF monitoring visits done every year to a number of sampled projects, (4) Interviews, questionnaires and gathering of impact stories. While these approaches all constitute useful contributions to documenting progress and results of specific projects, DUF should further try to aggregate results, as the findings at project level in themselves does not ensure a comprehensive documentation at a more summarised level. It is, however, important that demands and guidelines do not become too complicated and time consuming for the member organisations and the partners in the South/MENA.

Summarising results. Summarising results would arguably require a more systematic review and analysis of the results provided by the individual project reporting (and ensuring that such information is more systematically available from the projects). While this would require significant work in the view of DUF's very diverse portfolio it would be possible to summarise results around certain thematic areas. In addition, as DUF is currently not reporting on levels of achievement of objectives in projects, it could also be considered to introduce a system for monitoring the level of objective achievements in the various projects to get an overview of the rate of success in meeting objectives. A paper from INTRAC provides useful guidance in that respect¹. The need for improving the summarisation of results is recognised by DUF and is something they are working on in the M&E framework.

Indicators for DUF and the Pools. The indicators for monitoring the goals in the DUF international strategy are generally aimed at measuring the activities implemented in support of the goals (numbers of implemented the activities). They do not say much about how they are contributing to change. Likewise, the Project Pool indicators are described at activity level (number of partnerships, number of organisations involved in advocacy, number of applications for the pools). In the same way, indicators do not say much about the actual increased capacity of the organisations and even less about what such capacities are used for. The MENA indicators are more related to increased capacity and practical experience with influencing societies and contributing to reform, to ability to cooperate in international partnerships and to showing progression in partnerships. As indicator they say more about contribution to change. The Review Team finds that indicators used at the highest level in DUF

¹ INTRAC M&E Papers 2016: "Summarising Portfolio Change: Results frameworks at organisational level", which recognises these challenges, but also indicates possible ways to address these challenges

and in the Pools ought to say more about how DUF, through its various funding and initiatives, contributes to change.

6.3 Reporting

DUF annual report. DUF produces an annual report for the whole organisation, where the international work is reported on at a limited scale and with some summarised statistics on activities carried out. The annual report does not give much in terms of results achieved in South/MENA.

DUF reporting to MoFA. DUF also provides two annual reports to the MoFA, one for the funding received under the agreement with HMC and one for funding received from MENA. These reports are well written, responding to the requirements laid down in the agreement with MoFA and gives a good overview of DUF activities and selected results. At the moment, the results reporting is focused on providing impact stories, but it is not known how generally applicable these stories are. Although the reports are in line with the objectives stipulated in the agreements, they provide limited systematic information in terms of impacts or contribution to change related to the work in South/MENA. This is recognised by DUF and improvement in terms of monitoring and reporting on impacts is, as reported by DUF, work in progress. The reporting to MoFA under the agreement with HMC is considered by DUF to be rather smooth and relatively straightforward to undertake. The formats have been relatively stable and allow for a good degree of flexibility. MENA reporting is considered by DUF to be more demanding as the reporting has to be done towards indicators in DAPP, where the partnership work related to smaller volunteer based youth organisations can be difficult to fit in.

7. Financial Resources and Programme Administration

7.1 Resources in Finance and Administration

[Paragraph removed because of confidential information]

7.2. Financial Management in DUF

[Paragraph removed because of confidential information]

7.3. Financial Management at Project Level

Partner diversity. DUF has a large variety of member organisations and partners in Denmark and the variety is not less when visiting partners abroad. The diversity is in many ways positive but it is noted that this also adds to the pressure on the International Department to meet calls for support at very different levels. The diversity includes partners' capacity for financial management and project administration and thereby also the work pressure on DUF's finance and administration. The diversity also relates to the differences from project to project in the context for youth leaders from Denmark and from South/MENA and to the related cost-recovery paid to youth leaders, where equal pay in

some situations leads to unequal payments in the local organisations. Further details given in Annex 2.

Partners and financial management. During visits both in Denmark and abroad the Review Team has been impressed by the partners' dedication and work for progress. The visits also indicated a need for furthering the financial management aspects in most partner organisations. Some of the larger partners are in the process of implementing larger financial management systems and this is commendable compared to their current systems. In these cases, the DUF system with excel spreadsheets were in use and workable despite challenges. The spreadsheet system was also used for smaller partner organisations and was also workable. In general, the partners were pleased to work with DUF and open for improvements in financial management, including ways to improve documentation by more auditable vouchers.

User-friendliness. The partners in Denmark and abroad have a lot of praise for the training provided by DUF, to a large extent also in relation to financial management. However, the systems used by the partners in Denmark and the local partners could be more user-friendly and be more adequate in terms of combining project management and financial management. The Review Team has seen partners and volunteers striving to make such improvements in the excel sheets used. Many of the partners would benefit from a more proactive improvement process spearheaded by DUF.

Financial Management and external audit. In relation to systems and procedures, the external audit has recommended DUF to examine the process for finalising the annual accounts with a view of improving efficiency in the finalisation. This recommendation is given for both types of pooled funds² and underlines that DUF's financial management systems and procedures have room for improvement. Part of such improvements could be to examine the implementation procedures with the partner organisations, both in Denmark and abroad. At present, the procedures for obtaining local vouchers that are auditable for the involved Danish auditors, especially re. food and transport related to seminars and meetings seem to be unnecessary cumbersome, both to the partners involved and to the Danish auditors involved in the projects.

Based on the visits to partners in Denmark and in the countries visited, the Review Team *recommends* DUF to take a more proactive approach and link up with the external auditor in order to overcome practical problems related to improved financial management at partner level in Denmark and in the partner countries.

7.4 Anomalies and C-cases.

[Paragraph removed because of confidential information]

² The external auditor's Management Letter of 8th September 2016, for Annual Audited Accounts of 2015, p. 256 and 363.

8. Results assessed in the Global South/ MENA

The assessment of results in the South/MENA is presented in this Chapter. The assessment focuses on the relevance of the objectives of projects, the quality of the partnerships, the effectiveness of the projects (are they achieving or likely to achieve their intended outcomes?) and the sustainability of those intended outcomes. Outcomes are typically defined as the immediate objective(s) set out in the DUF applications.

8.1 Relevance

Overall relevance and topics addressed. All the sampled projects are assessed to be relevant and in support of DUF's own international strategy as well as MoFA strategies related to Civil Society and the Danish Arab Partnership Programme. Overall, both Pools and the DUF facilitated projects are found to be relevant and good supporters of a wide range of relevant civil society projects/activities. The projects address a highly diverse set of topics such as, to mention a few, health education and health advocacy, sexual and reproductive health and rights, youth clubs and youth empowerment, support to empowerment of marginalised groups, development of democratic culture and politics, as well as promotion of civic engagement. Although there is somewhat more focus on dialogue and exchange in the projects funded under the MENA Pool than in the Project Pool, there is still a high degree of commonalities between the projects funded under the two Pools.

Choice of target groups. Generally, the projects are relevant in choice of target groups and although many of the volunteers involved are stemming from urban or less poor segments of the societies, the objectives of a good number of the projects include reaching out to a wide segment of the society including marginalised groups. It should be noted that relevance, as perceived by the majority of the involved volunteers, includes that the projects are trying to reach out and impact people's lives in the form of better democratic participation or better living conditions or both. This is a major incentive for being involved as a volunteer. The work of *URK/JRC in Jordan* focused on reaching out to marginalised groups to improve their conditions or the work of *DBS/AEBR in Rwanda* to reach out to single marginalised young mothers are good examples of relevant choice of target groups.

Exchange and interaction. Also, the widely used volunteer interaction and youth leader exchanges involving youth from Denmark and South/MENA are found to be a relevant feature of all projects, which is contributing to the objectives of international/intercultural learning and understanding as well as directly contributing to more relevant projects. All projects also include aspects of linking the international and the national work in the member organisations, those projects where experience from national work in Denmark is most directly linked to the international work in the projects are showing the highest level of relevance.

Relevance of DUF-facilitated projects. The relevance of having DUF as a direct implementer of some projects has been assessed at two levels, the project themselves and the linkage between these projects and the projects funded through the pools. It found that these projects, as exemplified by the

Ambassadors for Dialogue, are relevant in their own rights in the focus on international, regional and national exchanges and promotion of better understanding and democratic dialogues for improving civic engagement and contributing to positive changes for youth. But they are also relevant in their aim to provide linking and support to the projects funded through the two Pools.

Application of change triangle. The majority of sampled projects display a combination of advocacy, capacity building and youth activities (strategic services) and are in that sense well in line with the DUF change triangle. Some projects are however exclusively focused on advocacy and capacity development activities. Projects that combine all three aspects are generally found to be most relevant and better in organising volunteers around a purpose in society they contribute towards.

Advocacy. Advocacy aspects in the projects have been promoted by DUF and all the projects have some aspects of advocacy integrated in their work. The way advocacy is being planned in the projects differs significantly, ranging from local level addressing of issues to seeking national policy influence. Projects are in many cases addressing duty bearers as well as rights holders. Addressing advocacy in its many different forms in the projects is found to be relevant.

HRBA, gender and poverty orientation. The sampled projects are designed to address aspects of HRBA to a varying degree. Generally, all projects address some form of participation, most projects actively seek to promote accountability and transparency, and many projects are promoting some form of non-discrimination. DUF has actively through its guidelines and counselling promoted the integration of some of the HRBA aspects in the various projects. Most of the projects are designed to address gender equality. DUF provides good guidance on gender equality and it is a requirement that gender equality is being addressed in the projects. Although most of the projects have a focus on objectives related to aspects of civic engagement more broadly, there are a range of the sampled projects that in practise include a focus on outreach and activities relevant for poverty alleviation.

8.2 Partnerships

Characteristics of the partnerships. All of the DUF-funded projects are implemented in partnership between one organisation in Denmark and one in South/MENA. The partnerships are typically between volunteer youth project groups under DUF member organisations in Denmark and volunteer youth groups within youth organisations (or youth wings of organisations) in South/MENA.

Strength of partnerships. The Review Team has assessed the quality of the partnerships in the sampled projects. The partnerships in the sample range from having been in operation for seven years to only becoming active within the last year. The partnerships are, overall, assessed to be relatively strong and of good quality, and partners in Denmark as well as in MENA/South are clearly valuing the partnerships. The partnerships are being improved as a result of project interventions. The *IMCC/MEDSAR partnership in Rwanda* is a good example of a strong partnership that has developed over time through a range of partnership projects, where thematic approach, interest and professional background are shared, and where there are valuable interaction and learnings being achieved.

Generally, the sample shows that partnerships are stronger if there are shared values and thematic interests between the partners – something that most of the sampled partnerships can display.

Value and roles in partnerships. The partnerships are essential to many of the organisations. Some of the organisations have partnerships that are more than the projects funded by DUF and where some form of partnership is likely to continue also without DUF-funded project interventions. Still, it should be noted that in most cases the project interventions are the key to maintaining the partnerships. The partnerships are relatively equal and mutual in nature, with both partners contributing and benefitting. It is noted that most of the projects have been developed in a joint process between the Danish partner and the partner in South/MENA. Ideas often come from South/MENA partners, who are also the key implementers of the projects, and both partners tend to have strong ownership of the projects. The Danish partner often provides project management support, training, organisational approaches, strategy development and some technical knowledge.

Division or responsibilities and structure in partnerships. Sharing within partnerships is generally good, however, the division of responsibilities in some of the partnerships have resulted in less than optimal sharing of budgets and budget follow-ups. This is something that can challenge the equality in the partnerships and it could be improved in some cases. A structural challenge in some of the partnerships is the often rather small project groups in Denmark having a partnership with a larger organisation/group in South/MENA. This challenge relates to equality and is not easy to address, but a better involvement of the larger member organisation in Denmark in following and following up with the project, as seen in some of the member organisations, would partly address this structural challenge. This finding is also linked to the finding below about continuity in the partnerships.

Supporting partnerships and ensuring continuity. Although partnerships are assessed to be of good quality, it should also be noted that the organisations involved in practice are project groups of youth volunteers. This has a lot of positive impacts, but it also creates a challenge in relation to the continuity in the work and in the partnerships. Most of the volunteers are involved in the work for on average two to four years. Most of the partnerships report on challenges in ensuring continuity in the work, many are seeking to address this with good work on ensuring involvement of new younger volunteers to follow up in the project groups.

Staff, support and continuity in partnerships in South/MENA. In addition, it should be noted that a good deal of the partnerships, where established South/MENA organisations are involved, depend on paid staff that are supporting the volunteers and the continuity within the projects. This payment is typically obtained from other projects and it is reportedly quite often a source of friction within the organisations. The Review Team *recommends* that in the partnership project modality it should be considered to further open for payment of staff costs at a limited scale in South/MENA organisations, when such costs are well argued and deemed necessary in order to facilitate and support the work of the volunteer groups.

Staff, support and continuity in partnerships in North. Also related to support and continuity is the discussion of payment of staff cost in the Danish organisations, which is generally not possible in the normal DUF modalities except in the extended partnerships. The Review Team did encounter several cases, where Danish youth member organisations simply did not want to have more DUF-funded projects, even though there were more volunteer groups ready to work. The argument was based on the need for the secretariat of these organisations to follow and follow up with these projects to ensure involvement of organisation and continuity. Such work, it is argued, had costs that could not be covered. Hence, several organisations have a cap on how many DUF-funded projects they would allow. The Review Team recognises that staff payment should not be the norm but on the other hand finds that it can be argued that some staff payment in member organisations to support volunteer involvement might contribute to better partnerships and continuity. The Review Team finds that DUF should work more decisively in finding a way to making collaboration with DUF mutually more attractive. It is *recommended* to look into the pros and cons of introducing the option in the partnership project modality of limited payment of staff in member organisations to support the volunteer involvement and continuity in the projects.

The extended partnerships. [Paragraph removed because of confidential information]

Youth leader exchanges and interactions in partnerships. The Review Team has assessed the value of youth leader exchanges and other forms of exchanges between Danish and South/MENA partners in the partnerships. Youth leader exchanges are found to be, in most cases, directly linked to the implementation of partnership projects and to be contributing positively to project implementation in the partnerships and to the partnership in general. The youth leaders exchanges are clearly valuable and used by all of the partners. The *UNGR/STF partnership in Uganda* is an example of a partnership running over long time with strong aspects of exchanges and mutuality contributing to important results in terms of youth empowerment and better conditions for youth.

Conditions for exchanges in partnerships. There are, however, obstacles that are increasingly materialising in the youth leader exchanges and which are threatening the future feasibility of such exchanges. One is the increasing difficulty in obtaining visas to Denmark for youth leaders from the South/MENA and another is the increasing difficulty in relation to some of the partnership projects of getting enough Danish youth leaders to apply. The growing difficulties in combining youth leader exchanges with on-going studies are part of the problem. Applying increased flexibility in the conditions set for youth leader exchanges and ensuring that youth leader exchanges are planned for at an early stage in the partnership projects might contribute to solving this problem. The Team *recommends* that applying further flexibility into the youth leader exchange modality be considered. Given the importance of exchanges, the Review Team also believes that two project exchanges during the longer partnership projects would be valuable not only for the MENA projects (where it is part of the current procedures) but also for projects in the South. The Review Team *recommends* including more exchanges in the partnerships project under the Project Pool.

Partnership agreements and future of partnerships. The format for partnership agreements is found to be relevant and it is a requirement that all partnership projects sign a partnership agreement. In the sample, most of the project partners had indeed signed a partnership agreement. However, little is provided in the applications or in the agreements in terms of future development of partnership, future sustainability and possible exit of the partnership as well as how monitoring of the partnership development will be undertaken. None of the partnerships monitored partnership development, even if this is recommended in the DUF format for partnership agreements. Better guidance to the member organisations and partners on how to promote partnership visions for future and partnership development monitoring could possibly be provided.

Approaches to capacity development in partnerships. Training and capacity development is a central aspect of all the projects. The partnerships always involve some form of exchanges and attached to this training and capacity development are taking place. The exchange adds a strong element of capacity development for both partners. Also more traditional trainings and seminars in the South/MENA are frequently being undertaken – often delivered by local expertise, sometimes with participation of volunteers from Denmark. Training is generally assessed very positively in the sampled projects with significant impact on the volunteers in the different projects. The purpose of much of the training is for the trained volunteers to be able to provide or communicate information, training and capacity building further on to the general public especially the youth. Training of trainers is a feature in many of the projects, but how some of these chains of trainings are being applied in practise is not well known. There is need to know more about how it works and how training messages are being translated in the end.

Civil society networks and collaboration. Most organisations in the sample are collaborating with or linked to other CSOs either directly or as part of their affiliation to their “mother” organisations (of adults). Networking is found to be relatively good and can be at local, national or international level. The *IMCC/FUMSA collaboration in Uganda* is good example of how the partnership has improved networking with other CSO in Uganda and internationally with other medical student associations. The networking is important in inspiring, motivating and linking the work of the partner organisations.

Assessing partnerships under different Pools. The Review Team has assessed the partnerships under the two different Pools (Project and MENA). Although the partnerships in MENA are described in strategic documents as being somewhat different (longer in duration, building more on mutuality and trust, more equal with learning both ways) from the partnerships with developing countries in the Project Pool, this is in practise not what is found. Good partnerships, whether in the Project Pool or in the MENA Pool, show the same characteristics.

8.3 Effectiveness

Overall assessment of effectiveness. The general picture of the sampled projects is that they are largely on target. Activities are being carried out as agreed, although some have seen delays in implementation. Major delays are typically due to changes in the context far outside the direct control

of the project partners (e.g. political instability, which is more acute in MENA). Most projects are assessed to be reasonably effective and likely to achieve a number, but not all, of their intended results at outcome level. Overall, the services provided by the DUF international secretariat are found to be crucial for the success in creating results in the various DUF-funded projects.

Volunteering and value for money. In terms of human resources, DUF projects are engaging with a lot of volunteers at member level and abroad. When assessing the cost attached to the work of volunteers and the benefits their work brings out, it seems abundantly clear that DUF, in focusing on youth, holds a resource of strong value. The individual projects supported in this way are producing good value for money by reaching out to a large group of volunteers that then reach out further to many more people.

Results created by the projects. The results at outcome level take many different shapes. They typically include organisational strengthening, capacity development of volunteers and other youth, undertaking advocacy and improving outreach to people more generally. The outreach to people includes different services related to information, education, skills training and empowerment. The objectives related to the different results areas are often interrelated and several of them are present at the same time in many of the projects. Results related to reaching out to society/people appear, in the sampled project, often to be underreported. The *IMCC/FUMSA collaboration in Uganda* is a case in point where outreach related to information and education on non-communicable diseases is significant, but where reporting has focused on volunteer skills development.

Development of volunteer skills. Volunteers in the projects all report on important skills development as a consequence of their participation in the projects. Such volunteer skills development is also a key objective in most of the project. The skills development is used to create results in the projects and the skills development can in a big way be attributed to DUF trainings, seminars, tools, support to member organisation volunteers and of course funding for trainings.

Strengthening of organisations. The sampled projects all include aspects of organisational strengthening of partners in the South/MENA as a key objective for the work. The Review Team finds that such strengthening is actually taking place and that partners, partly thanks to the project interventions, in general are found to be relatively well organised and with sound organisational structures. Most of the organisations report that the projects funded through the Pools have contributed in their process of improving their democratic structures, procedures and leadership. Also the extended partnership project sampled in this review are contributing to organisational strengthening of the partner creating better involvement of youth and volunteers in the organisation. The direct DUF-funded collaboration between DUF and West East Centre in the Ambassadors for Dialogue has resulted in organisational strengthening of the West East Centre and learning from DUF in the form of approaches, techniques and management has been gained.

Advocacy. Advocacy activities are being increasingly implemented in the projects, advocacy trainings are undertaken, and many of the projects show good results in terms of improved advocacy. The way

that *Straight Talk Foundation in Uganda* has impacted curriculum development in live skills education for schools is an illustrative example. For some advocacy have been a very new way of working, but there has been good facilitation and focus from the side of DUF. Results in advocacy are very different in nature and target duty bearers from the local to the national level and seek to influence policies, perceptions and practises.

Youth to youth work and mobilisation. Youth to youth work is a key feature in the projects and the Review Team note that when it comes to informing and learning there is clearly an advantage of youth communicating to other youth. In this respect, the significant mobilisation of youth volunteers as change agents becomes a crucial tool to reach out to the youth. The projects demonstrate a remarkable mobilisation of volunteers working with the South/MENA partners and a concomitant multiplication of results. Several hundreds of volunteers are involved in some of the projects. Mobilisation of volunteers is the single most important feature of the projects that contributes to effectiveness in achievement of results. The widespread use of volunteer involvement in all the DUF financed projects means that projects are achieving good results with a relatively limited use of financial resources.

Selection of topics and duration of projects. Effectiveness of projects are in some cases negatively impacted by choice and timing. Some of the sampled organisations have seen previous projects where topics chosen were outside the capacity of the organisation or the volunteers involved in project implementation. Complex income generating activities and micro-credit schemes are cases in point. Also timing seems to be an issue in some of the projects. Very short project durations of 3-6 months that are seeking to implement complex activities are not contributing to effectiveness. The Review Team note that the DUF counselling and grant award system should continue to be aware of such problematic topics and timing issues in the project application process.

Results in extended partnerships. [Paragraph removed because of confidential information]

Results in DUF-facilitated projects. The sampled project related to direct DUF-facilitated projects, the Ambassadors for Dialogue (AFD), has created significant results at the national level in Jordan as well as at the level of international exchange. In Jordan, the Review Team finds that key results relate to the significant skills development for the many national/international ambassadors, of whom 30-40 are active at present and are applying their skills. It also appears, although not reported sufficiently in the project, that results are created in society from the many dialogue activities undertaken by the teams of ambassadors at schools, universities, CBOs, community centres. Dialogue workshops and the spread of dialogue tools are likely, but not documented, to have a general positive impact on changes in society towards better understanding, more respect and less confrontations. AFD is typically addressing specific topics (rights, conflicts, bullying, better understanding) using dialogue. The dialogue tools have a purpose; they are used to create a culture of better dialogues and better ways of solving conflicts, but they are also used to address specific problems in society. The results in society are underreported in the reporting of results from AFD.

Linkages promoted in the AFD. The Review Team also finds a strong and positive link between national, regional and international activities of AFD. Many of the pool-funded projects are benefitting from being trained by AFD and there is a positive link between the pool projects and the AFD, which are ensuring results at a wider scale. The Review Team see this a good example on how DUF can contribute directly and positively to the framework for pool-funded projects. AFD national work in Denmark has so far been focused on using international ambassadors in doing workshops on schools, whereas there has been limited national activities (like in Jordan and Egypt). This is now changing and the national work in Denmark is now being promoted, this is assessed as a positive development.

8.4 Sustainability

Overall sustainability of projects. All the sampled projects are sincerely seeking to address sustainability of the interventions. Serious efforts are made to reach out and reach further in the projects and hence create sustainable impacts. Capacity development is creating skills and insights that people take with them and this is contributing to sustainability. Overall, it is assessed that a reasonable level of sustainability is being created in the various projects. Still it must be recognised that sustainability remains an issue with different project having different achievements in relation to sustainability.

Organisational sustainability. By design, DUF projects contribute well to sustainability in the sense that they seek to develop the capacity of local organisations for them to promote more permanent change in their respective countries – often with the South/MENA partner in the driving seat. All of the sampled organisations are likely to continue working also after the end of the various DUF funded projects.

Advocacy and promotion of sustainability. The sampled projects also show that advocacy promoted through committed organisations and linked to proven actions on the ground can be strong factors in creating sustainability.

Volunteer retention and sustainability. Although projects generally are good at mobilising volunteers, it should also be recognised that in certain contexts, volunteer retention is a problem. Projects where the context and the skills development of volunteers facilitate that such volunteers are employed by other organisations are seeing more problems. However, skills of the volunteers are then coming into play in other ways and are not lost. Likewise ex-volunteers can also be seen as a resource for sustainability, and some organisations are good at drawing in this resource in the form of ex-volunteers groups that support certain aspects of project implementation. Other organisations could improve on their utilisation of ex-volunteers.

Continuity and sustainability. Continuity has been discussed under the partnership section, but continuity is also an issue related directly to sustainability. Lack of continuity challenges the sustainability and most projects do report that continuity is a problem. Apart from the recommendations offered under the partnership section above, it should also be noted that the

challenge of continuity is something that has to be recognised as a factor in all youth volunteer work. Hence, projects have to be designed accordingly. DUF advisory services seem to be addressing this challenge to the extent possible in their interaction with member organisations and project groups.

Project duration and sustainability. Length of projects is in some cases short to very short. The objectives in the projects typically require longer time to be met, so short project duration has a negative bearing on the sustainability of the results. Longer duration is to some extent addressed by the partners by applying for series of projects. Recognising the limitation in the time horizons for the work of youth volunteer organisations, the Review Team would still like to encourage DUF to facilitate that project time horizons are increased to the extent possible. It is therefore *recommended* that DUF investigate options and incentives for getting more project applications with longer duration.

Financial sustainability. The organisations in the sample have different levels of dependency on funding coming through the DUF projects. Being volunteer youth organisation with limited access to funding, the general picture is that the DUF-funding plays a significant role for the ability of the organisations to implement activities. Most organisations in South/MENA would, however, likely be sustained also without DUF funding.

9. Conclusions and recommendations

The overall assessment of the Review is that DUF performs well in delivering results under its agreements with the MoFA. The organisation is sound, its procedures are in place and the international department staff are committed and experienced in youth development work. This is a sound basis for delivering results. DUF mobilises young people for international development work and has an important and unique outreach to a diverse range of youth organizations in Denmark that are being supported specifically to increase their capacity to work with international development.

The focus on volunteer work, the engagement of many people, and the outreach that the projects are having, ensure that DUF funded projects have good impact relative to the limited funding they are receiving. DUF produces good value for money. Generally, DUF is assessed to play an important role in the overall picture of Danish development assistance. It is the view of the Review Team, that the MoFA support to DUF should be maintained.

Clearly, the results of DUF's work cannot be gauged by looking at single projects in isolation. Still, the Review has shown that the projects, when seen in the right context of being implemented by volunteer based youth organisations, perform rather well in terms of relevance, partnerships and effectiveness. The sampled projects are also achieving a good deal of their intended results at outcome level.

All projects are assessed to be relevant with good choice of target groups, with a good balance of

activities in support of advocacy, capacity building, organisational strengthening and youth activities. HRBA and gender is being addressed at a reasonable level.

The partnerships are, overall, assessed to be relatively strong and of good quality, and partners in Denmark as well as in MENA/South are clearly valuing the partnerships. Being volunteer youth project groups that implements the projects, there are obvious challenges in some aspects of continuity in the partnerships. Seeking available opportunities to backstop and support the volunteer groups from the related organisations should be promoted. Exchanges in partnership are essential and should continue to be facilitated.

The DUF member organisations have also benefitted tremendously from DUF's capacity development services and learnings are applied directly in the design and implementation of projects and therefore also have an impact on the results in the South/MENA. This is a major achievement. Capacity development services including counselling, courses, workshops and trainings are highly valued by member and partners. Additional courses on selected topics related to practical project implementation and more facilitation of networking could be emphasised further. Also more online access to courses and training might be valuable.

DUF strategies and values are in tune with the strategies and policies of MoFA guiding the work with civil society and in MENA. DUF acts as a good communicator and advocate for youth in international development and as an effective facilitator of member organisations' communication and advocacy activities. The promotion of international work in the member organisations and facilitating the linkage between the international and national work in these organisations is being addressed by DUF and need continuous follow up.

The mobilisation and engagement in Denmark is being addressed by all the projects and there are significant achievements in popular support and mobilisation created by the different member organisations. Also, in terms of engagement, the Review Team finds good results, not the least in term of engagement and commitment of the many volunteers involved.

The Project Pool and the MENA Pool modalities managed by DUF are using the same guidelines and modalities. Also in practise the two Pools are implemented in the same way and partners and result are much alike. Merging the two Pools might be worth considering. The two extended partnerships are different in many ways, and especially with one of them being implemented in ways that are very different from normal DUF approaches and modalities.

The overall assessment of project level monitoring and evaluation is that is relatively well undertaken given the size, resources and timing of the various projects. The project monitoring does provide a reasonable picture of progress in the various projects. Monitoring contribution to change in societies is not functioning so well in the projects. Monitoring at the level of DUF is also showing many good aspects, however in summarising results from the many projects DUF – like many others - faces problems.

On the overall, DUF's financial management is found adequate, yet there are some key areas where DUF is having less than adequate financial management. Financial management capacity needs to be upgraded, especially at strategic level. There is a need to combine this capacity upgrading with improving systems and procedures, especially within planning and budgeting.

[Paragraph removed because of confidential information]

The Review Team provides the following recommendations:

1. Provide further capacity development services related to hands-on practical knowledge in project implementation including topics such as monitoring of results, undertaking information work in Denmark and addressing financial management in project implementation
2. Investigate opportunities to further facilitate networking and experience exchange among the various project groups with common interests
3. Ensure further work on improving counselling and training in practical monitoring as a management tool and as a tool for getting more systematic feedback on project contributions to changes in society
4. Strengthen the strategic financial management capacity with adding a full time financial controller position. The controller should refer to DUF Management, have a higher financial education and preferably hold practical experience from project related work abroad. The recommended strengthening of financial management in DUF should also be reflected in more stringent job-descriptions for key management positions
5. Re-examine the opportunities for improving management of funds flow and combining this with flexibility in the timing within the project pipeline and in regularly reviewing the project budget after the first year's project implementation.
6. Take a more proactive approach and link up with the external auditor in order to overcome practical problems related to improved financial management at partner level in Denmark and in the partner countries.
7. Consider in the partnership project modality to further open for payment of staff costs at a limited scale in South/MENA organisations, when such costs are well argued and deemed necessary in order to facilitate and support the work of the volunteer groups.
8. Look into the pros and cons of introducing the option in the partnership project modality of limited payment of staff in member organisations to support the volunteer involvement and continuity in the projects.
9. Consider applying further flexibility into the youth leader exchange modality and include more exchanges in the partnerships projects under the Project Pool.
10. Investigate options and incentives for getting more project applications with longer duration.