

A 9-month evaluation report which provides extensive and in-depth insight into the dynamics of the event and the experiences, learning and interactions of the 2014 young participants at the youth program and wider Global Landscapes Forum 2014.

# Youth in Landscapes 2014 Evaluation



Global Landscapes Forum | *Lima*

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## Introduction

This evaluation was conducted to provide us with some information regarding the 2014 Global Landscape Forum (GLF): Youth in Landscapes (YIL). A survey made up quantitative and qualitative parts was created and shared with the YIL participants. The aim of this survey was to gain deeper insight into the particular ways in which the youth event (and wider GLF) was useful and empowering for the participants, especially with regards to skills and knowledge development and application. Generally, the survey explored how participants felt about their participation, the skills they learned and their ability to apply them in their studies, work or life in general, their interactions with fellow GLF participants and their reflections almost a year after the event had taken place. Most of the quantitative (Yes/No, or Rating questions) were followed with a more in-depth question or request for explanation and further details in order to enhance understanding of their choices and answers reflecting their experiences. In this report, such qualitative data were presented where applicable/relevant, in order to further explain and consolidate the findings. A total of 22 responses to the survey were received.

Qualitative interviews were also conducted with 4 participants in order to gain in-depth and contextual insight into the personal and experiential aspects of these participants' engagement at the YIL and the wider GLF 2014.

## Findings

The findings are presented below along these categories:

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## 1- Accessibility to YIL Event and Content Communication

When asked how they heard about the conference, a majority of participants had responded that they had heard of it through social media, emails/newsletters and other outlets (via professors or other contacts). A small minority had answered that they had heard about it through the event website itself.

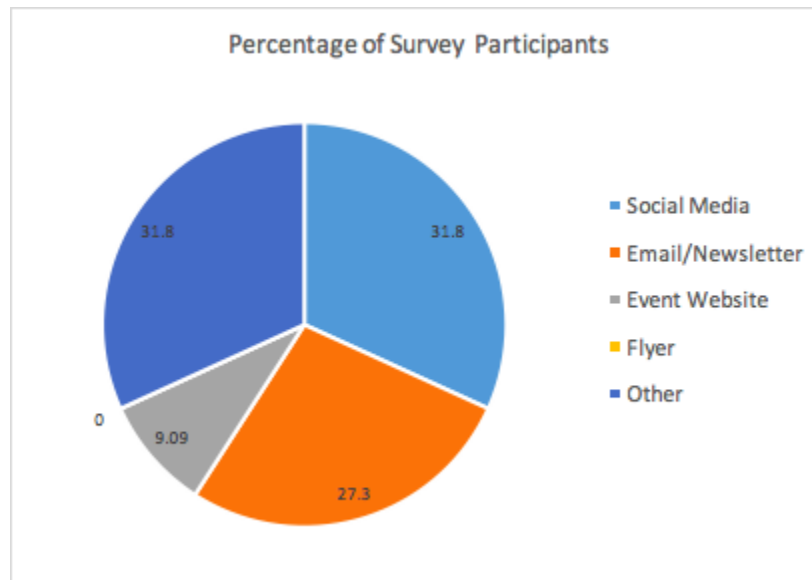


Figure 1: Outlet used to find out about GLF:YIL

When accessed, all of the participants were either very satisfied or satisfied with the contents of the webpage

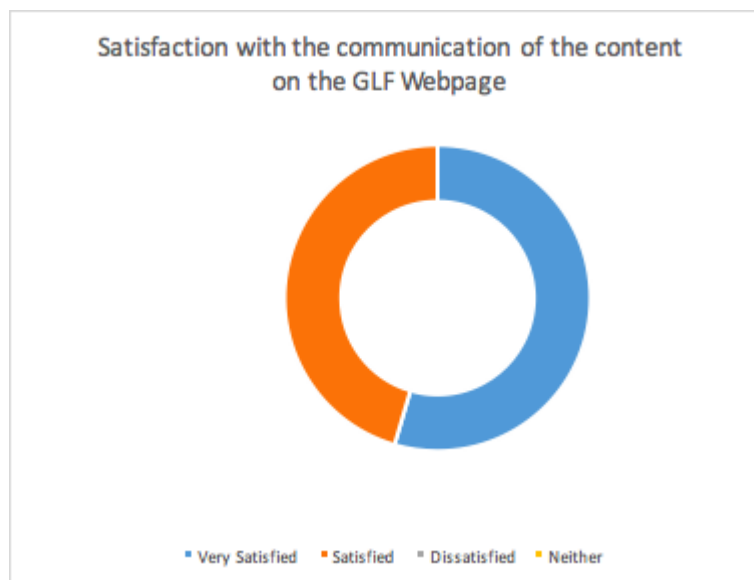


Figure 2: Satisfaction level with GLF webpage

Within such ‘very satisfied’ and ‘satisfied’ responses, the reasons seemed to range notably, such as 2 ‘very satisfied’ participants who indicated that: *‘I know how hard people have worked to update the event website’* and *‘the content was very useful to understand better what we did during the masterclasses’*; to a ‘satisfied’ participant saying that: *‘At some point it was confusing to understand where was the information I was looking for...making the website more simple could help.’* Other participants suggested *‘making more creative ways to engage youth in the online discussions’*, *‘sending homework so that people can get ready beforehand’*, and *‘sending many update messages and e-learning.’*

## 2- Masterclasses

When asked whether they had participated in the Masterclasses, most of the participants answered ‘Yes’ with the networking event being the most popular followed by pitching an idea, facilitating a discussion and understanding climate change and landscapes, respectively (Figure 1). Main reasons for participating were personal growth and development in addition to building skills and networking (Figure 2)

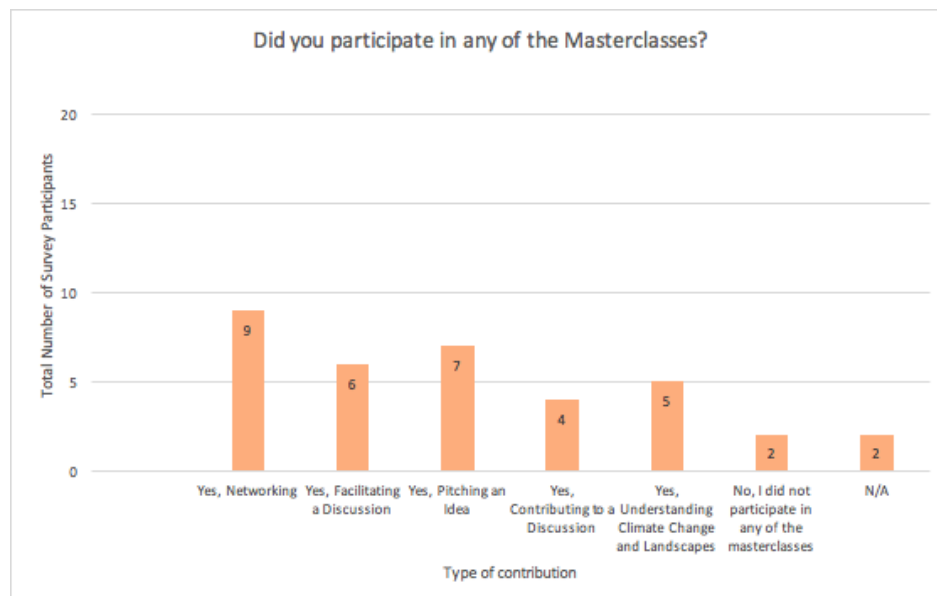


Figure 3: What masterclasses were attended

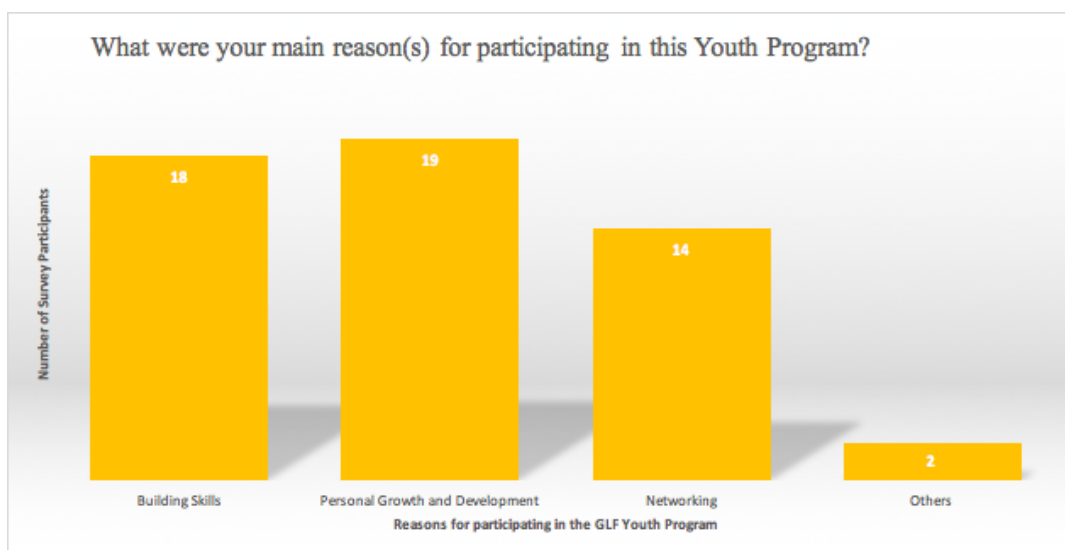


Figure 4: Reasons for attending YIL

When examining the general YIL and where survey participants saw the most benefit, the majority of answers were for the masterclasses followed by the dragon's den session.

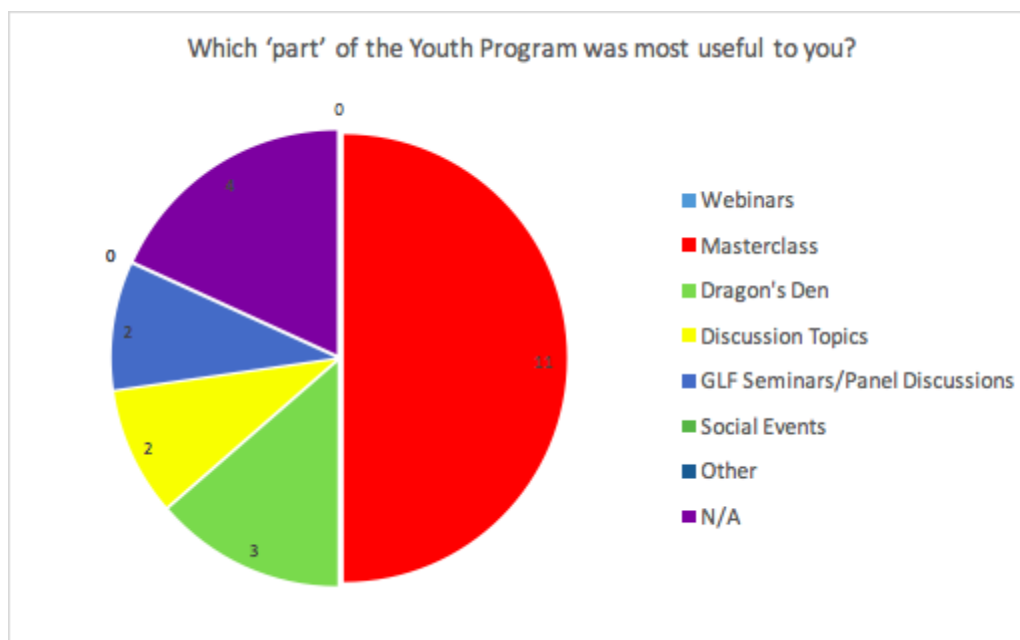


Figure 6: Elements of YIL deemed to be most useful by participants

Some participants shared particular examples of parts which they considered most useful to them, which mostly relate to individual reflection, to practical applications of theory and to networking. For example, some participants indicated the usefulness of the masterclasses, especially the networking class:

- 'Networking masterclass... Sharing with experts of NGOs ... I was able to apply it to the NGO we develop out of cop20 LaRutadelClima... It help(ed) me to put the skills into practice during cop20' '

- *'Networking class- the network activity that Martina facilitated. The one that looked like a spiderweb. Maybe have some space for a debrief. Once they are all in the network have some time to meet each other'.*

Others found the facilitation class most useful: *'facilitation class- having to stand in front of the group, making eye contact and not speaking for ~30 seconds'.*

For others, the dragon's den and pitching were most useful:

- *'Pitching - putting into practice the theory we just received in front of a professional team and the participants''*

- *'Dragon's Den. The youth is very eager and would like to learn a lot thus, inviting high level speakers (judges) in the Dragon's den is a very enriching experience listening to them with their constructive criticisms and advice in general'.*

Some participants also indicated that they benefitted from the rich discussion topics about the landscapes approach and related themes:

- *'Discussion topics, just rich conversations. The quality was very good and reflected different points of view. Everybody was super well informed on the subjects'*

- *'Value chain in the green economy (was very useful)...I work in a program about energy and environment, I need to know these themes for my work'.*

### 3- Satisfaction with the Event and Level of Expectations Met

Overall, participants were very satisfied with the event and felt that it matched up with their reasons for participating (Figure 7).

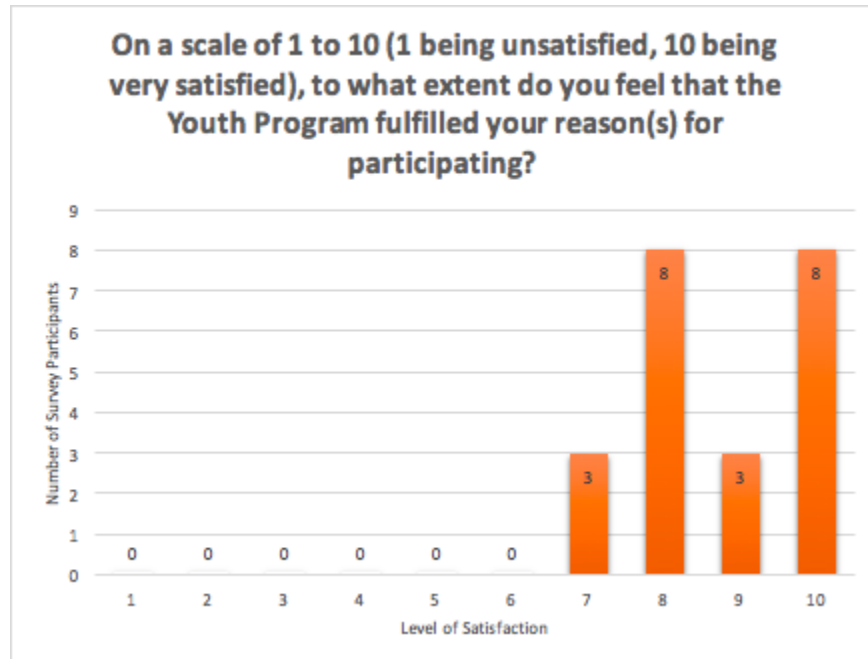


Figure 7: Level of fulfilment with regards to YIL and reasons for participating

Many participants provided further details, with most indicating that they were mostly satisfied with the space and opportunity that this event provided for them for personal and professional development and for networking, as shown in the following quotes:

- *'This was a good way to identify the personal skills I already had and to enrich them with new skills.'*
- *'I had the space to meet other young innovators and learn how each one of us is making a difference in their communities and a joined effort to find creative solutions to climate change. I also met inspiring young people.'*

Some participants explained that they were most satisfied with their ability to advance their work skills and application as a result of their participation in this event:

*'Being part of the GLF gave me the chance to improve my pitching techniques that I have been using this last months at work, also I have been teaching some of this knowledge to the members of my organization. The facilitation was another great point of the GLF the team was excellent and always were trying to make of the event the best of it. Now my organization is advocating for sustainable development in 7 regions of Peru, currently we have mobilize(d) 213 local volunteers and 155 public and private institutions.... I get to talk with misses Hellen Clark.'*

*'I had the beautiful opportunity to be the facilitator for the Spanish group in Green Economy, what can I say, that experience rocked my world, strengthened my leadership, helped me to realize that I have all the capabilities to contribute to what for me is working wrong in the way we want to develop skills in the growers.'*

Others also pointed out their satisfaction with the quality of the overall event, especially the facilitators and professionals leading the youth event:

- *'The professionals who led the masterclasses were remarkable, as well as all the logistics'*
- *'The facilitation class was very hands-on and interactive, very fun!'*
- *'The session about pitching was very high quality. We got to know the basic principles of how to pitch your idea, and could immediately put this into practice. Also, the way of dividing us in groups, enabled us to get to know the other participants.'*

Finally, one of the participants who rated her satisfaction as 10/10, explained that: *'Most of the youths selected will be able to table their ideas and issues that do affect youths in their community'*.

When asked about their preferred changes to the masterclass design and facilitation to add to the benefit of the YIL, the majority of participants selected *'more time dedicated to lectures and discussions from experts/professionals'* and *'providing more time for group interaction and teamwork to work on the landscape challenges'*. Many also selected *'participating in outdoor activities relating to the GLF and landscape challenges'*. The least selected option was *'more assignments/preparatory work before the Masterclass'*.

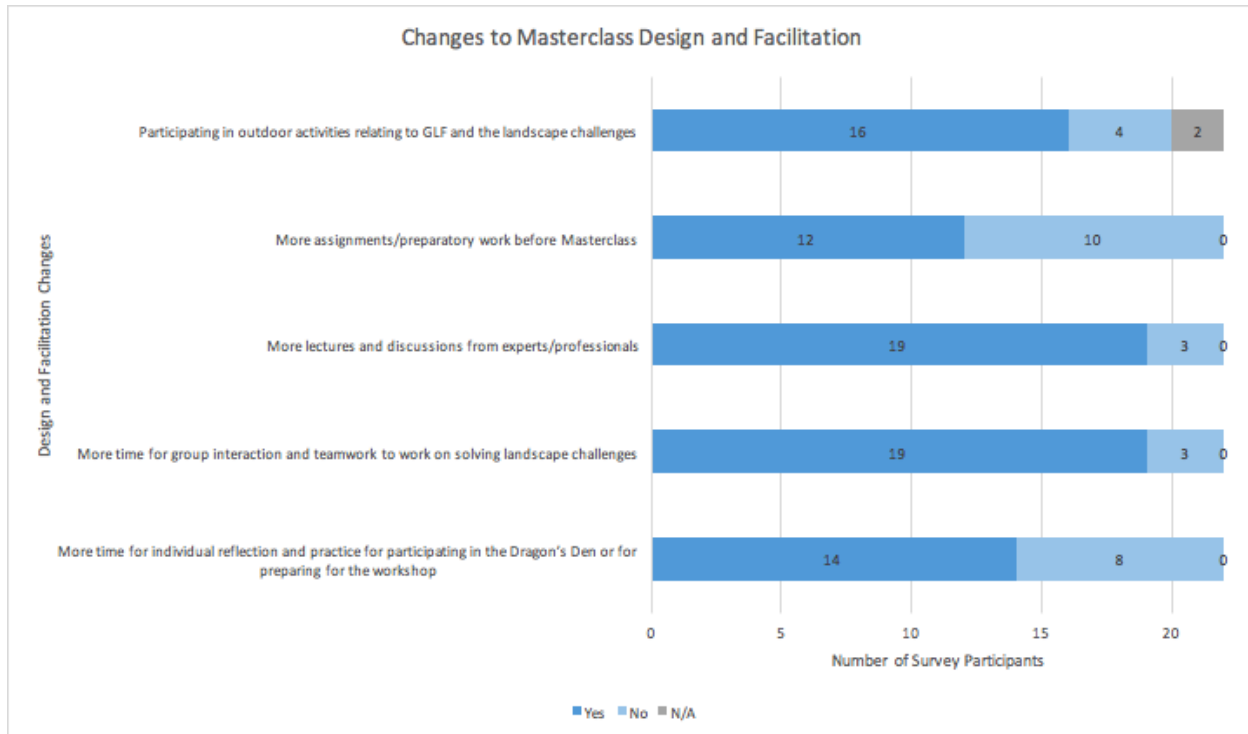


Figure 5: Preferred changes to masterclasses

#### 4- Involvement beyond the GLF

Many of the survey participants were also interested and willing to get involved in a project beyond the YIL.

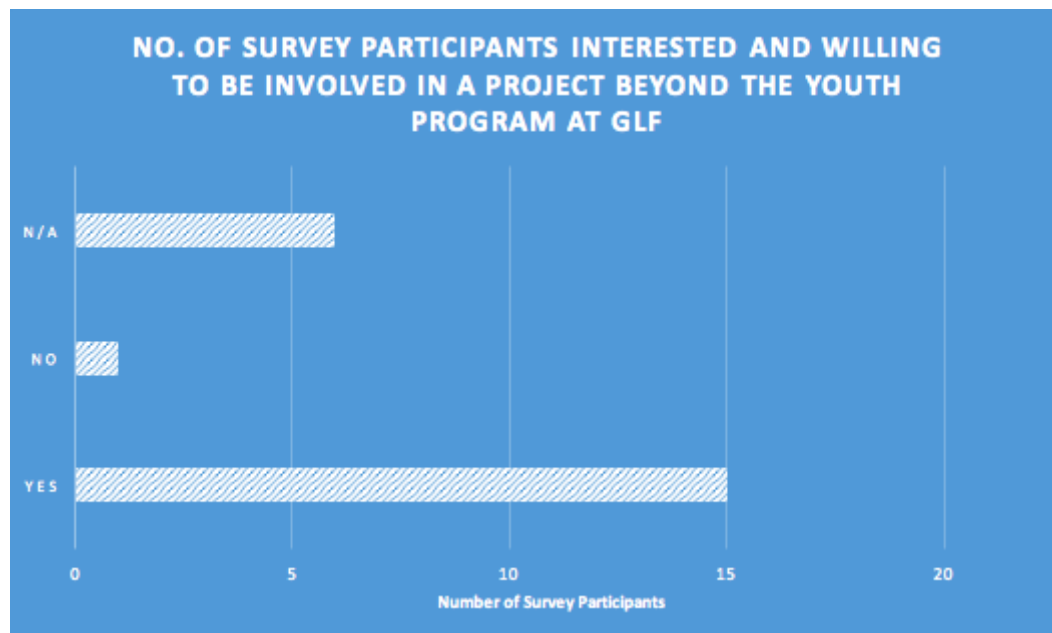


Figure 8: Number of survey participants interested in projects beyond the youth program

Many explained that they would like to get involved further in short or medium-term hands-on projects driven by their shared passion and concern, as for example:

- *'As a young professional I'm sooo interest in continue getting involve with other peers around the world. I would love to share my time, experience and skills in which I consider my passion and dream: build a culture around agriculture where we all are responsible for maintain(ing) the sustainability, from the grower until the consumer. I want to create a culture of respect for the most value(able) gift: nature'.*

- *'Yes, to see the continuity of ideas actually happening. so that they don't stay in words & ideas.'*

For a few others, they were interested to participate in projects after the GLF because of their trust in the program and its organizers: *'Yes, Because I know how good is your work and I know I will be able to learn a lot from you.'* or because it is directly related to their work: *'It could be a good opportunity to apply and learning by doing related to landscapes and landscape approaches'* and *'it is part of my job and my professional interest'.*

## 5- Skills Gained

The wide majority of survey participants felt that they had gained new skills through participating in the YIL (Figure 8) with these skills mainly used in their work and personal lives (Figure 9). Consequently, they also felt more confident applying these newly gained skills (Figure 10)

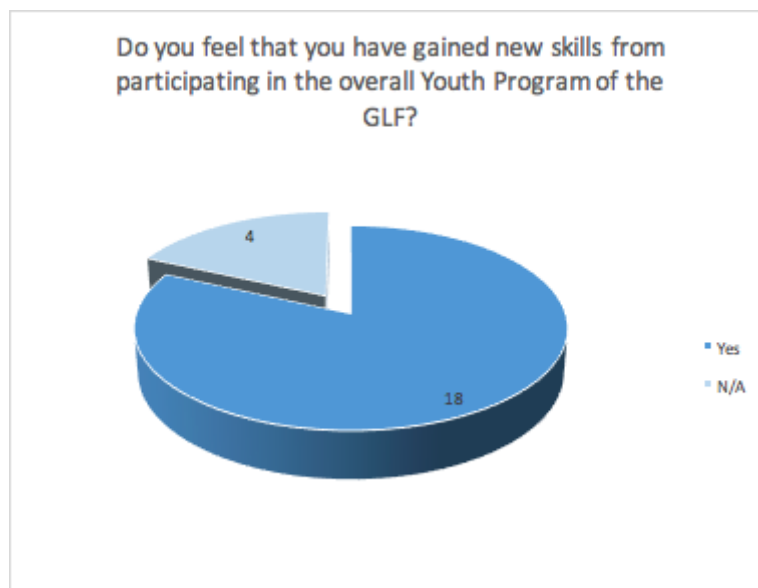


Figure 9: Whether participants felt they gained new skills

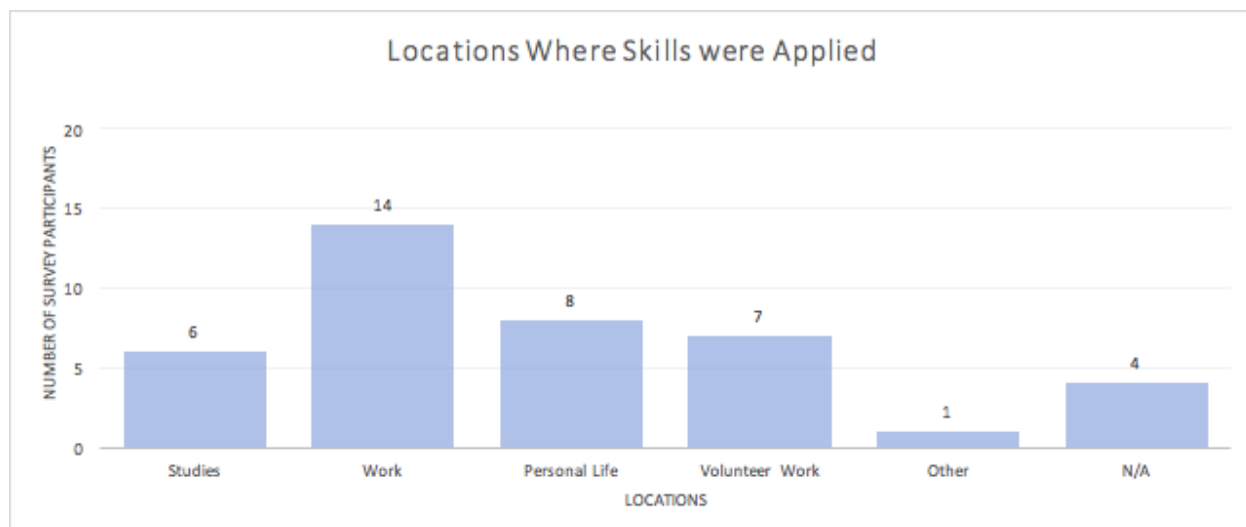


Figure 10: Where the survey participants used their skills

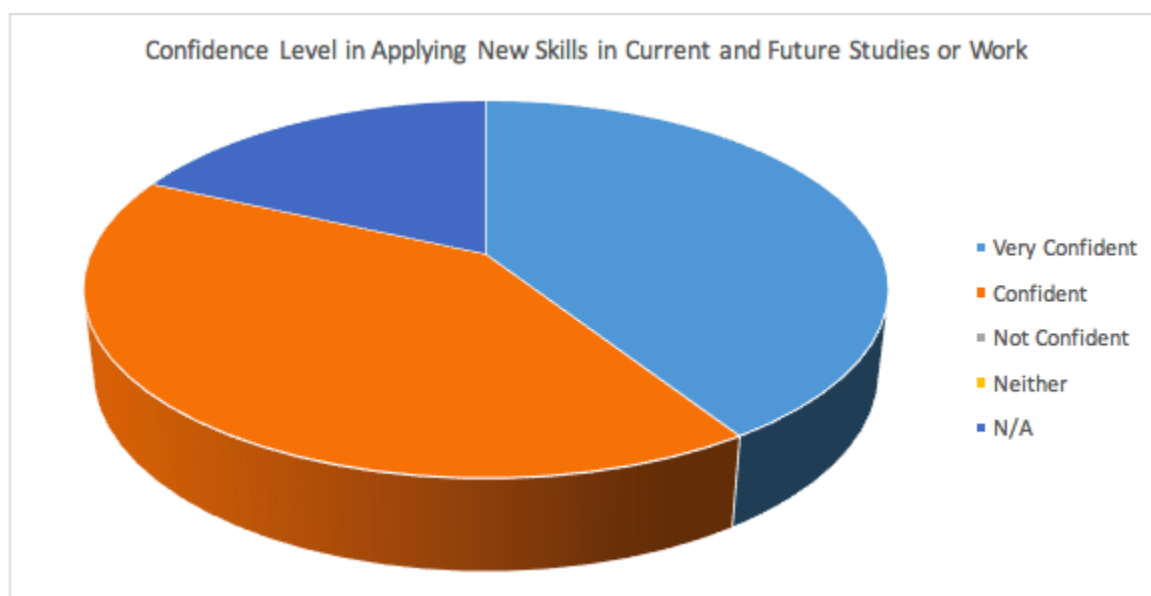


Figure 11: Confidence level in applying newly gained skills

The main skills that participants indicated that they have gained as a result of their participation in the 2014 youth program and GLF are the following:

- Confidence
- Networking
- Facilitation and pitching
- Understanding the landscapes approach

The below sub-sections elaborate further on the generated findings with regards to these skills.

### 5.1 Confidence

First, a wide majority of the survey respondents indicated that their participation at the YIL masterclasses and at the dragon's den (for the pitchers) largely helped increase their confidence levels for public speaking as well as for professional interaction and communication with work colleagues:

- *'(I learned) talking in public, expressing my ideas'*
- *'Confidence, networking, and public speaking'.*
- *'Networking, having confidence for expressing my opinion, working on a problem in interdisciplinary team'*
- *'I feel more confident to speak about climate change in an accurate way.'*

A few participants further explained how these skills helped them advance their performance in their jobs, especially in terms of their confidence and capability to communicate effectively with their work colleagues:

*'I got a new job in CIFOR after that and now I'm able to talk with some senior scientist during my work and learned from them. Also during my life I am able to improve the communication between me and my colleagues.'*

*'Oral and body language, and how to structure a speech. In my job we make workshops, so I have to facilitate debates and group exercises. Now I feel more confident. After pitching at the dragon's den I know that I can stand up and speak in anywhere.'*

*'I'm a different person after participating in GLF. It's amazing to interact with young people working on same topic. Makes me feel like I'm not alone in this...I'm the youngest in my office.'* (from Interview 3)

For another participant, the confidence he gained from the event has helped him prepare and express his ideas more convincingly and effectively for roles at the international level:

- *'The confidence to speak my ideas. Currently I am part of the Global Change Leaders program at COADY International Development Institute in Canada and it is being awesome to share the knowledge I got with the other participants and engage people in critical thinking activities. Yesterday, my facilitator said I did contribute in a great way with the program and I feel this is the result of practice and great opportunities.'*

One participant even explained profoundly how her experience with the GLF helped her develop her confidence as well as her speaking, leadership and entrepreneurial skills which she was able to directly apply in her work:

*'Confidence, Networking...Helped me in my volunteer work. I started a Project called Growing Empowerment which works with youth in rural areas in Peru empowering them to succeed in agricultural*

*ventures. We are trying to teach them how to recognize opportunities in their rural communities, strengthen their capabilities in leadership and entrepreneurship. It's amazing how the experience gave me the confidence to develop a really good pitch which allow me to change the minds of whom I needed to help. Now I had (have) a team of 30 volunteers from several areas, I could tell, none of them were (was) interest in agricultural issues but I convinced them they must to get involve(d) for their own benefit.'*

For another participant, her participation helped her enhance her communication skills generally in her life and daily communications with people:

*- 'Less shy when approaching and meeting new people, a little more confidence. To apply it, I know to be more direct without being aggressive. People now listen and it helped me make others understand that they need to be aware of other people in the room.'*

## 5.2 Networking

Second, many participants also indicated the usefulness of the program for enhancing their networking skills as well as their opportunities to connect, interact, network and collaborate with international people and with peers with similar interests and work areas:

*- 'Generally I learned more about how to network and just to talk to people from all over the world with different backgrounds.'*

*- 'During (Doing?) all these activities is important to able to connect with the people who is the right one to promote ideas and projects. Plus (it) is important to be critical(ly) conscious all the time... With practice now it is easier for me, I feel that I can move around easily'*

*- 'Networking was something I was not expecting as much. I got to interact with Manuel Sobral Filho from UNFF which allowed me to join decision making workshops with them this February.'*

*- 'I managed to develop an international NGO with people from 3 different countries. LaRutadelClima. We work on education and communications on climate change for youth.'*

One participant further explained the inspiration and energy she gained for her work from engaging and interacting with such a diverse group of participants at the youth event and wider GLF:

*'Just to be surrounded by this lovely youth energy was the energy I needed to gain confidence...I've been applying the skills I gained there, I still have a good relation with the people I met during the MasterClasses and now I'm able to expand my boundaries in order to understand better how other communities are working in how to involve youth in agriculture maintaining harmony with the ecosystem....Youth is energy, transformational energy, just for been surrounded with these powerful fresh minds, my creativity started to work.'*

This same participant also went on to explain how the pitching class (although she was not a pitcher herself, she was a facilitator) has specifically helped her in her work with youth:



- *'I can tell in all the events I had the opportunity to participate, I never felt so much energy!, I don't know if (it) was the selection process, share(d) interest with other people or a really worldwide experience, but was revolutionary to me. After the GLF I really felt overwhelming about the lack of interest from the youth in rural areas for any activity related to agriculture. I felt that because my professional experience I had the background to understand a little bit better the problematic about this big issue so I started to prepare my pitch (thank you!) was a success I involved to 30 urban fellows to the cause. Now we are enhancing rural education in Peru.'*

Another participant also expressed similar sentiments regarding youth energy:

- *'No specific example. I do feel however the strength of youth at international level, which I wasn't so sure about before. Also, participating together with so many youth feels encouraging and motivating.'*  
Two participants particularly indicated that they found the mentoring program very useful and original:

- *I had a really productive experience in GLF to interact with peers and professional. I found the mentoring section, where each juniors were assigned to seniors and professionals, one of the most distinguishing elements of GLF compared to other conferences I have attended.*

- *Yes. During the network session we could meet with professionals that would also be at the GLF. Also the buddy system was really great, as you could meet with your 'buddy' during GLF to discuss the topics of the lectures and speeches.*

### 5.3 Facilitation and Pitching

Third, the participants who attended the pitching masterclass and/or were pitchers at the dragon's den, indicated the usefulness of this class and activity for improving their ability to narrow down/focus their ideas and articulate their opinion and ideas to convince others:

- *'Networking and speaking skills... It is always very useful to be able to pitch an idea in a right and catchy way. Also the way you say things is really important as I learned.... I would need more practice with this.'*

- *'Presentation, pitching, networking... Being member of IAAS (International Association of Students in Agriculture and related Sciences) pitching your idea whether in a group of students you know or complete strangers is very helpful to put more attention and focus to your idea or project.'*

- *'Good skills in becoming more intentional and comfortable in the facilitation role. But it takes PRACTICE!'*

- *'Improved organizing/coordination and facilitating skills'*

One interviewee indicated how his experience enhanced his pitching, facilitation and coordination skills in his work setting:



*'As a pitcher, I've learned skills for my work on how to prepare my idea, narrow and focus my case study, and that there is a role for youth in landscapes approach...The Pitching Masterclass also helped me learn how to think to introduce my topic, how to motivate others...Also useful was the real-life examples that the Masterclass facilitators gave about real-life pitching for actual projects, plans, and job interviews. It was very useful listening to their experience and real-life application of these...I have gone ahead to handle more coordination and facilitation engagements. The program was helpful in my capacities in those areas. I organize workshops and it has given me oral skills for selling technical proposals and for being more confident speaker...It's also a great anecdote to share with other people about my participation at the GLF (from Interview 3)*

#### 5.4 Understanding the Landscapes Approach

Some participants indicated that their participation at the YIL and GLF enhanced their understanding of the landscapes approach, which provided them with a more holistic perspective of landscapes, thus influencing their work application by encouraging them to undertake a landscapes approach in their projects and engaging different stakeholders:

*-Facilitating skills, a little of pitching, better understanding about landscapes...We are working in the landscape level in our conservation work. Understanding what is a landscape approach has made me look at things differently (relationships within the landscapes, stakeholders and key actors are very important component, etc)... The topic of landscape approach is very timely for us and applied what I have learned and read when I got back from the conference.'*

*- 'It helped me understand that landscapes approach is not just about the economic and aesthetic focus, but also that we need to focus on how stakeholders interact within the landscape and the relation of people to the landscape. Now I am using this approach in my work...I think more how to involve the different people in the community projects.' (from Interview 1)*

#### 6- Space to express ideas and concerns

The majority of participants felt that the event (including wider GLF) presented them with adequate space and opportunities to express and share their ideas and concerns regarding landscapes challenges and climate change:

*- I was encourage to do that during the small discussion groups. I feel we all had the same space to share our thoughts and everyone was open and receptive.*

*- Yes, I could talk with young (youth) of other countries and I found in mostly we are facing the same challenges.*

*- Yeah of course even the facilitator gave me space to talk about the post 2015 agenda.*

*- Yes, the facilitators had been very encouraging so that the attendees can ask questions.*



*- I would like to express how I applied my skills acquired during GLF in order to give some ideas that can be useful for them.*

*- Yes I have, because in my group has a different person who has (have) work(ed) in many institutions where (sic) use the same idea.*

*- I was VERY much encouraged to speak and relay my ideas to the group.*

One participant explained further:

*- In my view, the program provided a good platform for interactions and blending of young people's views and ideas on landscapes issues. From personal experience in attending subsequent GLF side events, I witnessed a number of the participants speaking up and making valuable contributions to the events. I believe the youth program contributed to their knowledge and confidence.*

Some participants even pointed out that most useful were the informal and social spaces for sharing ideas with peers and professionals:

*- Yes, but outside of the youth session there were not that many ways of getting involved. And during the sessions there were many of us and not quite enough time to let everybody talk about all that they wanted to express.*

*- At the lobby and in the halls was an interesting space and in the formal events I think that in the master class*

A few criticized the time limitations:

*- We had space to give feedback, but time was very limited.*

## 7- Participation in decision-making

The majority of participants expressed that they did not feel that they had played a significant role in the decision-making process regarding the decisions and policies at the GLF:

*- I didn't feel like I was part of the decision making process. And it took me a while to figure out what the aim of GLF is other than sharing knowledge.*

*- I didn't feel I've played a role in the decision-making process, but that wasn't my objective either.*

*- Not enough. They mentioned how strong the youth were but it still has to grow stronger.*

*- Well I did not feel that we played a role in that aspect.*

Some participants had mixed feelings, mostly relating their 'participation and influence' to the role they played as facilitators or pitchers:

- *Yes, we worked together with our team to pitch an idea to the dragons. It would have been better if we had a little more time to structure our pitch*
- *I had the opportunity to be a Facilitator in Green Economy, I could receive a lot of ideas in how our food supply chain could be more environmental friendly. I couldn't say a lot because of the role I was playing but was amazing to order some of the bright ideas which I listened to.*
- *By summarizing the arguments and then elaborating a speech to the dragons den*
- *I didn't feel I played a role but I felt happy when I contributed an idea to the group where I was in during the Dragon's den.*
- *I participated very well with my colleague, I've given my ideas, that majority about my work*

One participant also indicated that she felt her main limitation was due to language capabilities and skills:

- *I do not feel as though I played a role, only because I was in the Spanish-speaking group and was unable (at the time) to fully express my thoughts and opinions.*

## 8- Recommend YIL and GLF to others

A large part of survey participants (73%) indicated that they would recommend YIL to others.

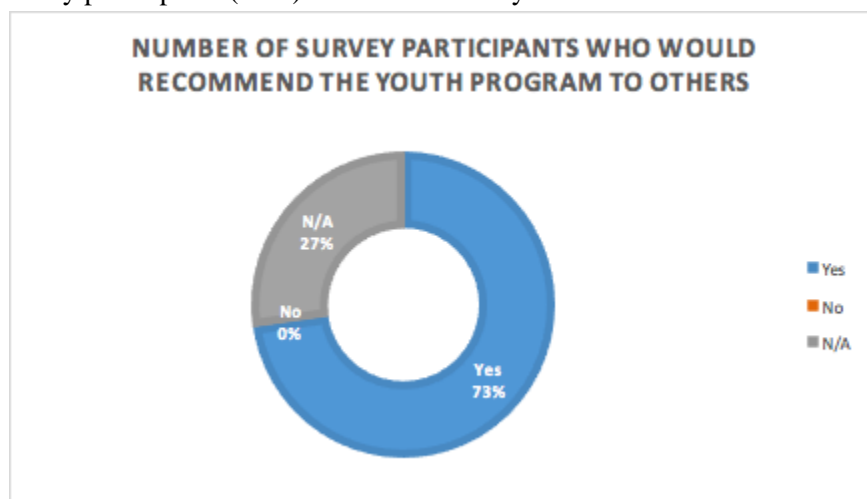


Figure 12: Percentage of survey participants who would recommend this program to others

Further explanations by some participants:

- *Great experience, networking, friendship, expand your knowledge*
- *I'm on my way, youth of this generation is conscious, responsible and have a lot of energy to be the difference on this world. I always encourage my younger (ones) to get involved, which I call: Hey you! Awake! the food you are eating doesn't grow in Supermarkets!*
- *It was one of the best programs I have ever been, inclusive for youth. Was great get to be in the same room with such personalities and leaders and being able to talk to them and learn from them.*

- It is a good opportunity for the youth. Learning new skills will aid them in their work. Meeting new people is always interesting where you can establish networking and learning new things.

- It's like a playground to explore about what is going on in the real world and allows you to share your ideas with other youth with similar ideas and get feedback on them.

- It's an amazing experience, I feel lucky to participate.

- Is a good place where someone find information, networking and good speakers.

## 9- Demographics

Many of the survey participants were from non-governmental organizations -NGOs (9) followed by those who are currently pursuing their studies (4).

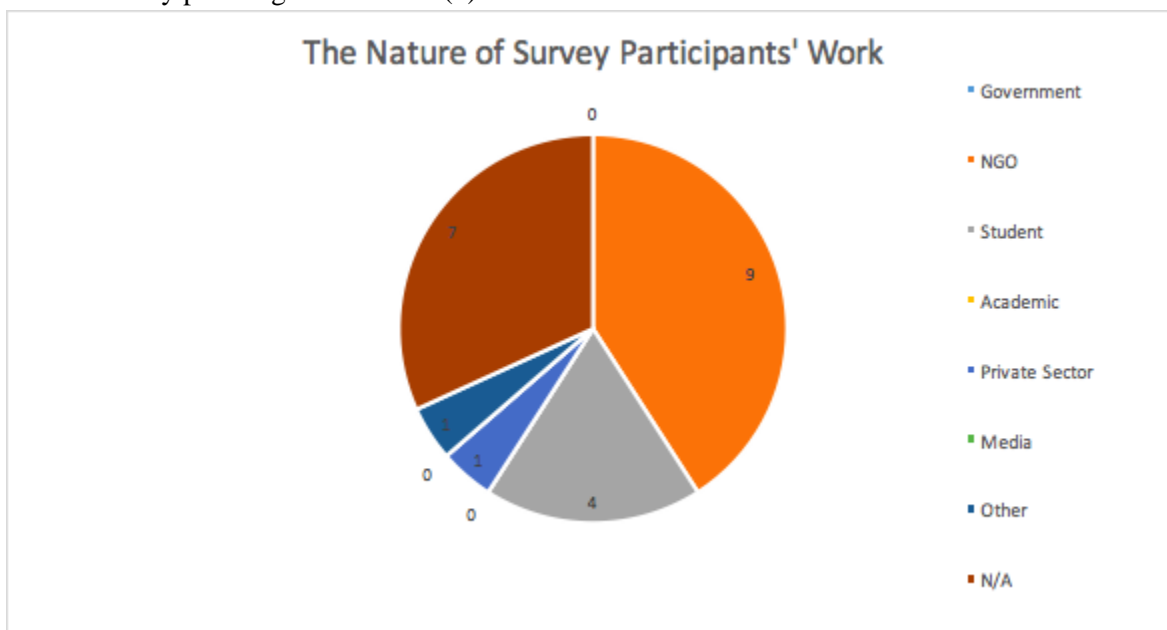


Figure 13: Nature of survey participants' work

The survey also showed that most participants were between the ages of 18 and 29. This is expected given the age restriction of YIL

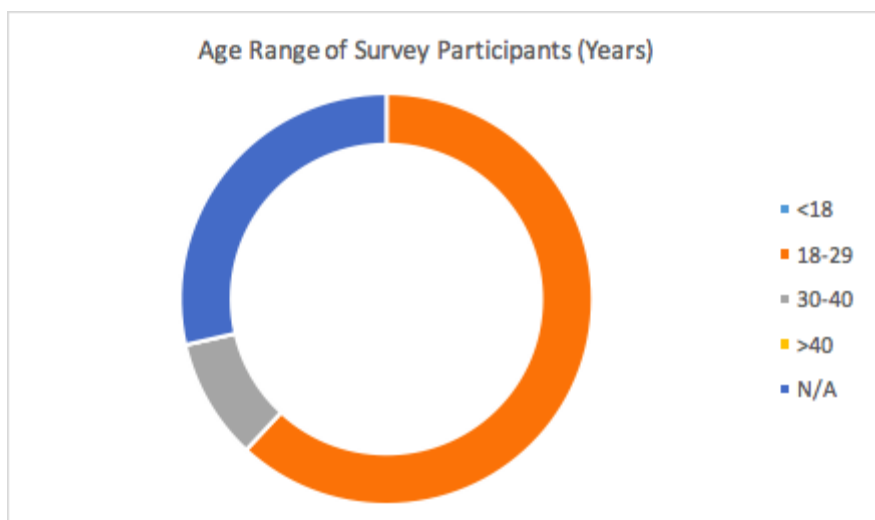


Figure 14: Age range of survey participants

Most of the survey participants are currently living in Latin America followed by North America and Europe, with Asia and Africa displaying the least amount of participants.

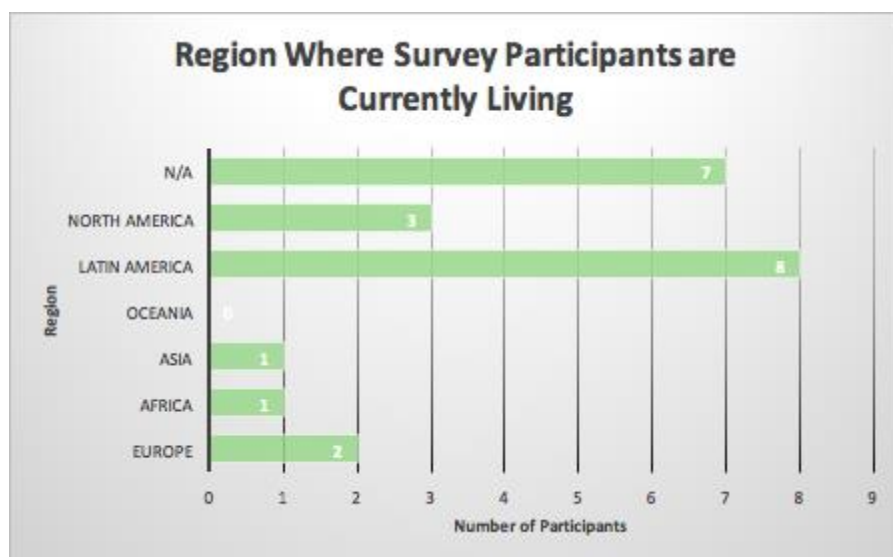


Figure 15: Where survey participants are currently living

With regards to gender differences, the survey participants were approximately equally divided between male and female, at 31.8% and 36.4%, respectively.

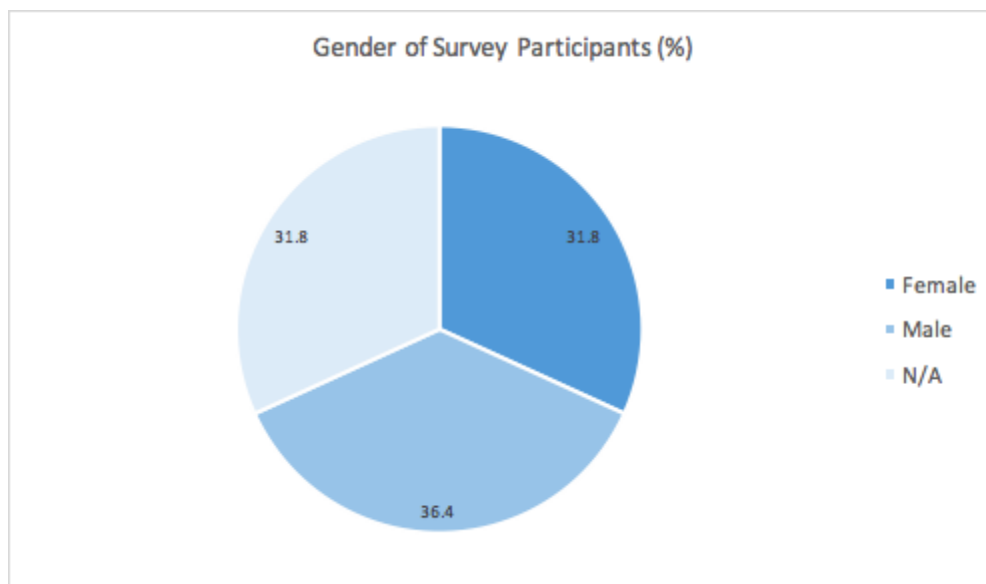


Figure 16: Gender demographic of survey participants

## 10- Recommendations

The participants provided the following recommendations for improving the format, content and coordination of future GLF youth programs and events:

- **Longer and more useful/effective time for the masterclasses and discussion sessions/workshops:**

*'By making the GLF Masterclasses more than just one day, the participants can better get to know each other and make a group feeling. Now it was very fast and I only got to talk with certain persons.'*

*'The Youth workshops on Saturday morning. The concept was really good but I was unlucky with my group. I was the only Youth participant and some of the professionals only tried to present their research to each other or didn't even want to gather ideas for the workshop.'*

*'Maybe more time for preparing the pitching at the dragon's den'*

*'More time to learn and to practice'*

*'More time and interacting more with the other participants'*

*'More interaction and discussions with other youths at the conference'*

*More exercises. There wasn't enough time for all of us to give our speeches'*

*'The ones that had to pitch their ideas to the Dragon's Den didn't have much time to prepare and to make out of the discussions of the various topics a very decent pitch. This could still be improved.'*

- **More space for social interaction and informal discussion**

*'I think the space for networking between classes was not friendly to feeling comfortable approaching new people, and the time was too short. It felt hectic.'*

*'A networking evening with food and drinks would have been way more effective as I saw this now at other conferences.'*

*'I think there was a good time and space for interactions. Could be better though.'*

*'I think there could have been a better ice-breaker and more unstructured social time.'*

*'There was no space to sit in the lunch time but is it not really such an important thing.'*

*'Since I only participated in the Dragon's den, I had no opportunity to talk and know more about other youth participants.'*

- **More in-depth discussions and creative learning methods:**

*'More examples of practical experiences on landscape approaches; On site learning (field trips or study trips).'*

*'The themes need more time'*

- **Better guidance (on the day) about the youth events and activities taking place:**

*'There were little time to interact with the youth participants because I only have been accepted/invited to participate during the Dragon's den session (maybe due to the age limit), not in the Masterclasses. During the conference itself, I had difficulty in knowing where are the other activities, when I heard, I already had to go for the day.'*

During the interview with this participant, she further indicated that *'it would be helpful and encouraging if you talk to and encourage participants face-to-face to attend the workshops, activities/...announcing what's happening next and where...instead of just posting them online or on the program leaflet...personal interaction is more encouraging and useful'* (from Interview 1)

- **Raise the age limit to enable more young professionals to participate**

*'Maybe increase the age limit to 35 or 36 so other young professionals that are just starting to find themselves doing work related to landscape themes can also participate (presencial) in the activities.'*

- **Continuous follow-up after the event with youth opportunities and skills development**

*‘Maybe you can send us by email lectures or opportunities to attend to other forums worldwide’*

*‘More encouragement and suggestions to continue and keep up the new learned strategies’*

*‘Skills on how to manage the added responsibility, the planning process of projects, and for facilitating, networking, interacting with people: learning by doing’...Also would be useful if they write an internal document about the landscapes approach and its application, so we can share with colleagues and we can use and apply the concepts in our work (from Interview 2)*

*‘I was searching for alliances but it didn’t happen. If you can send us the list of all participants and organizations ahead of time, so we can make our own research and see who is working on similar themes...so we can connect with them and network. This would help us in a) networking, b) participating more actively and helping others, and c) organizing activities and local projects in our communities. (from Interview 1)*

## Conclusion

This evaluation report provides an extensive and in-depth insight into the dynamics of the event and the experiences, learning and interactions of the 2014 youth participants at the youth program and wider GLF 2014. Overall, the findings highlight the importance and effectiveness of this youth program for enhancing young people’s understanding of the landscapes approach and the inter-linkages with the wider climate change and sustainability themes; as well as for promoting youth skills in networking at international events, facilitating discussions and confidently expressing personal perspectives, and pitching key ideas for advancing further inspiration and collaboration. Hence, the 2014 ‘Youth in Landscapes’ program has proved to be highly effective in empowering young people to contribute to, as well as to lead change in their communities and in their personal and professional spheres within the landscapes and sustainability worldview.