Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

MEKONG-AUSTRALIA
PARTNERSHIP

Guidelines for Providers of Short
Courses, Masterclasses and Dialogues

2025

CONTENTS

ANNEX

Annex 1   MAINSTREAMING GEDSI IN DESIGN AND DELIVERY

GLOSSARY

DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
GoA	Government of Australia
MAP	Mekong-Australia Partnership
MAP SU	Mekong-Australia Partnership Support Unit
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MC	Managing Contractor
RFT	Request for Tender
WBP	Work-based Project

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Guidelines

These Guidelines are intended to support Course Providers contracted under the Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP) Leadership and Skills Program to design, deliver, and report on high-quality Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Regional Dialogues. They provide a comprehensive operational and quality assurance framework to ensure alignment with DFAT's policy priorities and the broader goals of MAP Phase 2.

The Guidelines are designed to:

- Ensure consistency and quality across all MAP-funded training activities.
- Clarify expectations regarding participant experience, course structure, staffing, and reporting.
- Promote integration of cross-cutting priorities, including Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI), climate action, and First Nations participation.
- Support locally led development and the application of learned skills in the workplace and wider community.

These Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Course Provider's contract, the Scope of Services, relevant MAP templates, and DFAT policy documents.

1.2 Background: MAP Phase 2 and the Leadership and Skills Program

The Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP) is an Australian Government initiative that supports a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable Mekong subregion. Phase 2 of MAP strengthens regional cooperation and delivers practical support to Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. The Leadership and Skills Program is a key component of this broader partnership and is delivered by Tetra Tech International Development as the managing contractor for the MAP Support Unit (MAP SU).

MAP Phase 2 focuses on five thematic areas:

1. Climate resilience
2. Water security
3. Economic resilience and subregional integration
4. Gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI)
5. Preventing and countering transnational crime

The Leadership and Skills Program contributes to these thematic priorities by building the leadership capabilities of professionals across the Mekong subregion. It provides structured learning opportunities that enhance regional cooperation, strengthen institutional linkages, and support inclusive development.

1.3 Program Outcomes

The Leadership and Skills Program has two End-of-Program Outcomes (EOPOs):

- **EOPO 1**: Diverse leaders apply their skills and capabilities to contribute to development across MAP thematic areas.

- **EOPO 2**: Diverse leaders cooperate to develop inclusive solutions for shared and transboundary challenges in the Mekong subregion.

These outcomes are achieved through targeted learning interventions—Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues—that promote inclusive participation, regional collaboration, and practical application of knowledge through work-based projects.

1.4 Roles and Responsibilities

The delivery of MAP Short Courses and Masterclasses involves close collaboration between the following stakeholders:

- **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)**: Provides strategic oversight and funding for the MAP initiative. DFAT Posts in the Mekong region and the Mekong Hub in Bangkok are responsible for program coordination, participant nomination, and engagement with local stakeholders.
- **MAP Support Unit (MAP SU)**: Managed by Tetra Tech, the MAP SU supports the implementation of MAP programs and provides day-to-day coordination with Course Providers. MAP SU ensures that programs align with MAP outcomes, meet quality standards, and reflect DFAT's policy priorities, including GEDSI, climate action, and locally led development.
- **Course Providers**: Design, deliver, and evaluate courses according to these Guidelines and the Scope of Services issued under their contract. Providers are responsible for all aspects of course management, including staffing, logistics, participant welfare, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting.
- **Participants and Partner Institutions**: Participants are selected based on country and course-specific criteria. They are expected to actively engage with course activities and apply their learning through work-based projects. Supervisors and partner organisations are encouraged to endorse participant engagement and support the implementation of learning outcomes in the workplace.

2. COURSE TYPES AND STRUCTURE

2.1 Definitions of Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Regional Dialogues

The Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP) Leadership and Skills Program offers three core modalities of learning interventions—Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Regional Dialogues. These modalities are designed to be responsive to country contexts, sectoral needs, and participant profiles. While they vary in scope and structure, each is expected to contribute meaningfully to MAP's End-of-Program Outcomes (EOPOs).

Courses are regionally focused, targeting one or more MAP thematic areas, with GEDSI mainstreamed throughout the short course design, delivery and evaluation. Trilateral cooperation short course topics will support the outcome of the subregional cooperation. Short courses and masterclasses will be flexible, demand led and based on Mekong partners' priorities.

Short Courses provide foundational or intermediate-level learning and are typically suitable for participants who are seeking to strengthen their core technical and leadership skills. Short Courses are structured to include pre-course engagement, in-Australia delivery (where applicable), and post-course follow-up, with an emphasis on applied learning through work-based projects.

Masterclasses are high-intensity, expert-led training modules designed for experienced professionals, senior leaders, or specialists. These focus on advanced knowledge and practice in a narrowly defined thematic or technical area. Masterclasses often feature expert dialogues, case studies, and facilitated peer exchange.

Regional Dialogues aim to promote cross-country learning, policy dialogue, and the exchange of perspectives between government, civil society, academic institutions, and private sector representatives. Dialogues are typically shorter in duration but broader in scope, with a strong emphasis on collaboration, regional integration, and joint problem-solving.

All three formats are demand-responsive and thematically aligned with one or more MAP priority areas.

2.2 Delivery Modalities: In-Australia, In-Country, Hybrid, Online

Courses may be delivered through one or a combination of the following modalities:

- **In-Australia Delivery**: The core learning component is delivered in Australia. These programs offer valuable exposure to Australian institutions, policy environments, and technical expertise. In-Australia components often include site visits, guest lectures, and cross-cultural networking opportunities.
- **In-Country Delivery**: Courses are delivered entirely within one or more Mekong countries. This format may be more appropriate when regional accessibility, contextual relevance, or external constraints (e.g. travel restrictions) make Australian delivery impractical.
- **Hybrid Delivery**: A combination of in-Australia and in-country components. Typically, this involves pre-course orientation and post-course workshops in a partner country, with the core component delivered in Australia.
- **Online Delivery**: When in-person participation is not feasible, online formats (synchronous and asynchronous) are used. Online courses must incorporate inclusive engagement strategies, user-

friendly platforms, and dedicated support for participants' connectivity, accessibility, and time management.

The choice of delivery modality will be informed by the course objectives, target participants, thematic content, and DFAT's preferences. The Scope of Services will specify the required format.

2.3 Course Components

MAP Short Courses and Masterclasses must be structured to include the following elements, with flexibility to adapt to context and cohort:

Pre-course preparation and engagement
Pre-course components serve to orient participants, establish learning baselines, and initiate work-based project planning. These are typically held 4 to 6 weeks prior to the core component and are usually conducted in-country. Pre-course activities should include:

- An introduction to the course team and objectives
- Orientation to the learning platform and support services
- Initial review and discussion of work-based project topics
- Needs assessments and baseline testing (knowledge, GEDSI awareness)
- Clarification of expectations, responsibilities, and logistics

Pre-course engagement also allows providers to refine course content based on participant profiles and learning needs.

Core learning and networking
The core learning phase is where the primary instructional content is delivered. For in-Australia courses, this includes structured sessions (lectures, workshops, site visits), peer learning, and opportunities for exposure to Australian practice and institutions. The duration may range from 1 to 12 weeks, depending on course design and objectives.

Key considerations for this phase include:

- Active learning methods tailored to adult learners
- Contextual relevance and regional case studies
- Practical integration of GEDSI and climate content
- Site visits, expert panels, or networking events where applicable

Post-course activities
The post-course component is delivered within three months of the core phase and usually held in-country. It provides a forum for reflection, presentation of work-based project outcomes, peer feedback, and continued engagement with MAP and DFAT stakeholders.

This component must include:

- Presentation or peer review of work-based projects
- Discussion of lessons learned and application of skills
- Reinforcement of course objectives and cross-cutting themes
- Participant feedback and course evaluation

Online mentoring or follow-up sessions

Courses may include 3–4 mentoring sessions between the core and post-course phases. These sessions support work-based project development, provide coaching on technical content or leadership, and sustain participant engagement. Mentoring may be group-based or individual and should include opportunities for participants to ask questions, receive guidance, and share progress.

Mentoring plans should:

- Be outlined in the Course Proposal
- Align with WBP milestones
- Involve relevant course personnel, GEDSI specialists, or external mentors

2.4 Flexibility and Contextual Adaptation

Course design must be contextually relevant and adaptable to the cultural, professional, and institutional realities of MAP participants. Providers are expected to:

- Incorporate insights from pre-course needs assessments
- Partner with local institutions or alumni to enrich course delivery
- Adjust teaching methods, materials, or case studies to fit the regional or national setting
- Consider geopolitical, institutional, and linguistic dynamics of the Mekong subregion

Providers delivering multiple courses across the same thematic area should demonstrate a progressively refined and locally informed approach in successive deliveries. Each iteration should build on lessons learned, participant feedback, and innovation through local or alumni-led contributions.

3. WORK-BASED PROJECTS

3.1 Purpose and Strategic Importance

Work-based Projects (WBPs) are a foundational component of MAP Short Courses and Masterclasses. They provide participants with an opportunity to directly apply course learning to real-world workplace challenges, priorities, or opportunities. WBPs serve as a bridge between the theoretical and practical elements of the course and are instrumental in ensuring that the course has a tangible and sustainable impact at the institutional and community levels.

WBPs are also a key mechanism for demonstrating the value of MAP investments to DFAT and partner governments. By facilitating the transfer of skills into practice, WBPs contribute to institutional strengthening, sectoral innovation, and progress towards MAP's End-of-Program Outcomes.

3.2 Alignment with Workplace and MAP Themes

Each WBP must be aligned with:

- The participant's current or aspirational role
- The thematic focus of the course (e.g. climate resilience, economic integration, water security, etc.)
- At least one MAP cross-cutting priority: GEDSI or climate action

WBP topics should be relevant, feasible, and responsive to workplace or community needs. Participants are encouraged to focus on areas where they have influence or leadership responsibilities and to engage stakeholders in the design and future implementation of the project.

The Scope of Services for each course may require WBPs to contribute to organisational reform, policy improvement, enhanced service delivery, or the implementation of new tools, approaches, or processes.

3.3 Planning During Pre-course Component

WBP planning begins during the pre-course component, usually facilitated through in-country workshops or virtual sessions. This stage introduces the WBP framework, expectations, and timeline, and allows participants to:

- Reflect on their learning goals and organisational needs
- Brainstorm project ideas aligned with course themes
- Draft an initial WBP concept note or outline

Course Providers must support this process by:

- Introducing a WBP template or workbook (provided or adapted from MAP SU)
- Offering examples of previous WBPs or models of good practice
- Facilitating group or individual coaching sessions during the pre-course phase
- Encouraging participants to consult with their supervisors for endorsement

WBP topics may be requested at the application stage, but should be finalised through structured support and feedback during the pre-course period.

3.4 Advancing GEDSI Through WBPs

All WBPs must demonstrate integration of Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) considerations. This includes:

- Identifying how the project will address or reflect the needs of underrepresented or marginalised groups
- Describing how project activities will promote inclusion, accessibility, or gender equity
- Reflecting on potential barriers to GEDSI outcomes and how they will be mitigated

Participants should be encouraged to take a transformative approach to GEDSI—i.e. moving beyond awareness-raising to address root causes of exclusion through their project design or implementation.

The GEDSI Specialist should:

- Support participants to articulate GEDSI objectives within their projects
- Review WBP drafts and provide tailored feedback
- Encourage intersectional perspectives that reflect diverse experiences (e.g. age, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, geographic origin)

Where appropriate, Providers may engage rights-holder organisations, alumni, or local experts to strengthen GEDSI mainstreaming within the WBP design process.

3.5 Supervisor Engagement and Organisational Endorsement

Supervisor engagement is essential to ensuring the relevance and uptake of WBPs within participants' institutions. Providers must encourage participants to seek their supervisor's endorsement during the pre-course or early core component. Endorsement should reflect that:

- The WBP is aligned with organisational priorities
- The participant has the authority or support to implement the project
- Resources or institutional backing may be available (where feasible)

Supervisor engagement may be formal (e.g. written endorsement) or informal (e.g. discussion and agreement), depending on local context. Providers are encouraged to provide participants with a supervisor briefing note or template to facilitate this conversation.

MAP SU may also require Providers to collect supervisor feedback or testimonials as part of course evaluation or alumni follow-up.

3.6 Review, Mentoring, and Presentation at Post-course Component

Throughout the course, WBPs must be reviewed and refined with the support of mentors, course leaders, or GEDSI specialists. At a minimum, Providers must:

- Include dedicated mentoring or coaching sessions in the course schedule

- Review WBP drafts mid-way through the course and provide feedback
- Encourage peer learning through WBP-related group work or presentations

Participants are expected to present the outcomes of their WBPs during the post-course workshop. This may take the form of:

- A short presentation or pitch (individual or group)
- A panel discussion or facilitated feedback session
- Submission of a final report or reflection on implementation progress

The post-course component is an opportunity for participants to:

- Share early results or changes made based on their WBP
- Reflect on enablers and barriers to implementation
- Identify next steps or institutional opportunities for scaling or replication

Where possible, Providers should invite DFAT representatives, partner agency officials, or supervisors to attend these presentations to strengthen accountability and visibility.

4. COURSE STAFFING

4.1 Mandatory Roles and Responsibilities

All MAP Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues must be delivered by a qualified and diverse course team that includes core personnel with clearly defined roles. These roles ensure both the academic integrity of the course and the wellbeing of participants throughout their engagement with the program. The staffing structure must reflect the complexity and modality of the course and be appropriate for the size, profile, and language needs of the cohort.

The following roles are considered mandatory for in-Australia or hybrid delivery courses. In online or in-country only courses, staffing may be adjusted in consultation with MAP SU.

Course Leader
The Course Leader holds primary responsibility for the academic delivery and coherence of the course. They serve as the lead facilitator and central point of accountability for ensuring learning outcomes are met and that sessions are responsive to participant needs.

Key responsibilities include:

- Leading course delivery and ensuring alignment with the Scope of Services
- Facilitating sessions and moderating expert input, case studies, and site visits
- Linking course content with participant backgrounds and work-based projects
- Supporting GEDSI integration across content and activities
- Coordinating inputs from guest speakers, mentors, and site visit hosts
- Overseeing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) during course delivery
- Preparing sections of the course reports, especially on learning outcomes

Expected qualifications and experience:

- Relevant subject-matter expertise
- Experience in adult learning, facilitation, and international development
- Understanding of the Mekong regional context or comparable environments
- Familiarity with DFAT development principles is highly desirable

GEDSI Specialist
The GEDSI Specialist is responsible for the integration of gender equality, disability inclusion, and social inclusion throughout the course design and delivery. This includes both standalone GEDSI content and the mainstreaming of GEDSI across all components.

Key responsibilities include:

- Designing and delivering course content on GEDSI concepts and practice
- Advising the course team on inclusive learning strategies
- Reviewing work-based projects for GEDSI integration
- Supporting reasonable accommodations for participants with disability
- Partnering with rights-holder organisations (where applicable)

Expected qualifications and experience:

- Technical qualifications in gender, disability, or inclusive development
- Experience working in the Mekong subregion or with similar regional contexts
- Familiarity with intersectionality and transformative inclusion approaches
- Ability to collaborate with facilitators to embed GEDSI across sectors

Course Coordinator

The Course Coordinator is responsible for all logistical, administrative, and communication aspects of course delivery. They are the main liaison for participants on day-to-day matters and ensure that operational arrangements meet DFAT and MAP standards.

Key responsibilities include:

- Managing pre-departure materials, participant travel, and accommodation
- Liaising with service providers for venues, site visits, catering, and transport
- Coordinating the orientation program
- Administering participant per diems, reimbursements, and insurance
- Managing the course calendar and Learning Management System (LMS)
- Assisting with participant communications and information dissemination
- Contributing to course reporting and documentation

Expected qualifications and experience:

- Strong administrative and coordination skills
- Excellent communication and cross-cultural sensitivity
- Experience supporting international or DFAT-funded training programs is desirable
- Familiarity with online delivery platforms (e.g. Zoom, MS Teams, Moodle)

Welfare Officer (required for in-Australia delivery)

The Welfare Officer is responsible for the wellbeing of participants throughout their stay in Australia. They provide personal and health-related support, facilitate recreational activities, and act as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns.

Key responsibilities include:

- Conducting individual and group welfare check-ins
- Supporting access to health services and interpreting medical advice
- Coordinating social and recreational events
- Advising participants on cultural norms and daily living in Australia
- Providing safeguarding support and reporting welfare incidents
- Supporting women and participants with disability to ensure full inclusion

Expected qualifications and experience:

- Background in social work, education, human resources, or similar
- Experience in participant support or welfare services
- Strong knowledge of Australian healthcare and insurance systems
- Excellent interpersonal and intercultural communication skills

- Ability to maintain confidentiality and manage sensitive situations

Interpreters

Where participants have limited English proficiency, qualified interpreters must be engaged to ensure equitable access to learning. Interpretation services may include simultaneous or consecutive interpretation during formal sessions, as well as support during site visits, mentoring, and health appointments.

Key responsibilities include:

- Providing accurate and professional interpretation throughout the course
- Supporting participants during formal and informal course activities
- Assisting with translation of key course materials and documents
- Meeting regularly with the Course Leader to prepare for technical sessions

Interpreters must:

- Be certified (e.g. NAATI-accredited or equivalent) or demonstrate professional experience
- Be provided with preparation time and access to course materials
- Work in shifts for intensive sessions to avoid fatigue

Note: The Welfare Officer is not a substitute for a professional interpreter during learning sessions. They may provide informal interpreting in social or emergency contexts, but not for technical content delivery.

4.2 Inclusion of Local Experts and Alumni

MAP strongly encourages the inclusion of local and regional expertise in course delivery. This supports locally led development, ensures contextual relevance, and recognises the value of alumni experience.

Course Providers are encouraged to:

- Engage MAP alumni as facilitators, mentors, or guest speakers
- Partner with Mekong-based academic or training institutions
- Involve rights-holder organisations in GEDSI content delivery
- Include diverse voices and examples in case studies and course materials

Where alumni are engaged, Course Providers should ensure their contributions are appropriately recognised and remunerated in line with DFAT contracting standards.

5.DFAT ENGAGEMENT IN COURSE DELIVERY

5.1 Role of the Mekong Hub, DFAT Posts, and Thematic Working Groups

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) plays a central role in the strategic direction, quality assurance, and visibility of the MAP Leadership and Skills Program. Active engagement with DFAT stakeholders enhances course relevance, strengthens regional cooperation, and reinforces Australia's public diplomacy objectives.

DFAT's involvement spans multiple levels, including:

- The **Mekong Hub** (Bangkok-based), which provides regional oversight and coordinates with DFAT Canberra.
- **DFAT Posts** in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam, which lead in-country engagement, participant nominations, and stakeholder liaison.
- Relevant **Thematic Working Groups**, which may be consulted during course design to ensure alignment with MAP thematic priorities.

Each course should identify specific entry points for DFAT engagement that are purposeful, well-timed, and add value for both participants and DFAT.

5.2 Engaging DFAT in Program Elements

DFAT may be invited to participate in or contribute to the following elements of course delivery:

- **Pre-course workshops**: DFAT Posts may open the workshop, present on local policy or development priorities, or attend as observers.
- **Core learning activities in Australia**: DFAT Canberra or Mekong Hub representatives may attend site visits, present as guest speakers, or participate in high-level networking events.
- **Post-course components**: DFAT Posts are often involved in closing activities, participant presentations, or follow-up briefings.

In all cases, DFAT engagement must be meaningful and aligned with the learning objectives and policy priorities of the MAP program. Providers should seek to highlight areas where DFAT can contribute unique insights, such as:

- Regional governance or climate diplomacy
- Subregional trade and investment initiatives
- Inclusion policies or gender strategies in Australian aid
- Emerging geopolitical or institutional trends in the Mekong

DFAT is not expected to participate in every aspect of course delivery. Instead, engagement should be targeted, strategic, and designed in consultation with MAP SU.

5.3 Protocols for Requests and Approvals

Engagement with DFAT must follow clear protocols to ensure effective coordination and to respect DFAT representatives' availability and role. The following procedures apply:

- **All DFAT engagement must be coordinated through MAP SU**, including DFAT Posts and the Mekong Hub. Course Providers must not directly contact DFAT Canberra or ministerial offices under any circumstance.
- **Written requests for engagement must be submitted well in advance**, preferably four weeks before the planned event. Requests should include:
  - The proposed date and time
  - A draft agenda or event outline
  - Names of participants and expected attendees
  - Specific roles or contributions expected from DFAT
  - Any interpretation or accessibility requirements
- **Briefing materials must be submitted for DFAT review at least one week prior**, including:
  - Participant bios
  - Event objectives and expected outcomes
  - Key messages or talking points (drafted by the provider and cleared by MAP SU)

MAP SU will liaise with the appropriate DFAT counterparts and confirm attendance, recommend changes, or provide alternative suggestions where required.

Providers must be prepared to adjust their course schedule or event design to accommodate DFAT availability or feedback.

5.4 Good Practice for DFAT Engagement

To ensure successful and respectful engagement with DFAT stakeholders, Course Providers should:

- Ensure **clear purpose and added value**: DFAT time and participation must be justified. Engagements should demonstrate policy relevance, showcase participant learning, or enhance MAP visibility.
- Maintain **professionalism and diplomatic sensitivity**: Course Leaders and facilitators must refrain from expressing personal views on political matters and should present the course content in a manner that is consistent with Australia's development and foreign policy positions.
- Prepare participants for DFAT meetings: This includes cultural protocols, background on DFAT roles and priorities, and appropriate etiquette during high-level meetings.
- Offer **flexible formats** for engagement: In some cases, informal opportunities such as small group roundtables, working lunches, or networking sessions may be more appropriate than formal presentations or speeches.
- Coordinate interpretation and logistics: For engagements involving non-English speaking participants or high-level officials, ensure interpreters are briefed and technical support is in place.

All DFAT engagements—particularly those involving ministers or heads of mission—must be treated with utmost professionalism and discretion.

5.5 Engagement with Other Australian Government Stakeholders

In addition to DFAT, Course Providers may propose engagement with other Australian Government agencies, such as:

- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- Austrade
- Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)

Such engagement can offer participants valuable exposure to Australia's policy settings and sectoral expertise. However, these engagements:

- Must be cleared by MAP SU
- Require clear objectives and relevance to course themes
- Must respect agency protocols and availability

MAP SU will support the identification of appropriate agencies, but it is the Provider's responsibility to design the session format and ensure value for both the agency and the participants.

6. ORIENTATION AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

6.1 Orientation Objectives and Key Content

The orientation program plays a vital role in preparing participants for successful engagement in MAP Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues. It helps participants transition into the learning environment—whether in Australia, in-country, or online—by familiarising them with course objectives, delivery logistics, cultural norms, health and safety, and expectations for behaviour and participation.

Orientation should be tailored to the modality and location of delivery but must, at a minimum, achieve the following objectives:

- Ensure participants feel safe, welcomed, and well-supported
- Provide clarity on course structure, schedule, and expectations
- Explain logistical arrangements, such as accommodation, transport, and allowances
- Introduce participants to the course team and support personnel
- Clarify academic and behavioural expectations
- Provide guidance on cultural norms and cross-cultural communication
- Offer essential information on safeguarding, DFAT policies, and health and safety

Orientation must take place within the first 24 hours of participant arrival for in-Australia or in-country courses, or on the first day of delivery in the case of virtual or hybrid modalities.

Course Providers must develop a detailed Orientation Agenda, to be included in the course schedule and shared with MAP SU prior to delivery.

6.2 Delivery Options (In-country, In-Australia, Virtual, Hybrid)

Orientation should be conducted in a format appropriate to the course modality:

- **In-Australia**: Delivered in person, typically at the accommodation or training venue. This format may include walking tours, group meals, and face-to-face briefings.
- **In-country**: Delivered on-site in the participant's home country, often as part of the pre-course workshop.
- **Virtual**: Delivered via online platforms (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams), with materials accessible via a Learning Management System (LMS). Sessions must be kept concise and engaging to account for screen fatigue and connectivity limitations.
- **Hybrid**: A blend of in-person and online orientation activities. For example, an in-country pre-course orientation may be followed by an online course introduction hosted by the Australian delivery team.

Regardless of format, orientation must include opportunities for participant interaction, questions, and engagement with the support team.

6.3 Accessibility and Cultural Inclusion Considerations

Orientation programs must be inclusive, accessible, and culturally sensitive. Course Providers must ensure that:

- Information is presented in clear, jargon-free language and supported with visual materials where appropriate
- Interpreters are available for participants with limited English proficiency
- Materials are translated or made available in alternative formats (e.g., large print, accessible PDFs) as required
- Sessions respect and reflect participants' diverse cultural backgrounds, gender identities, and learning styles
- Reasonable accommodations are in place for participants with disability or health needs

Cultural inclusion may be promoted through:

- Acknowledgment of participants' countries and communities
- Clarification of Australian customs, laws, and workplace etiquette
- Guidance on respectful cross-cultural communication and conflict resolution
- Encouragement of open dialogue about cultural values and expectations

For in-Australia courses, the orientation should include a **Welcome to Country** delivered by a recognised Aboriginal Elder or local Traditional Owner, or an Acknowledgement of Country if an Elder is unavailable. Participants should be briefed in advance on the meaning and significance of this cultural protocol.

6.4 Integration of Course Tools (LMS, Communication Apps)

To support an effective and seamless learning experience, orientation must include training on all digital tools and platforms used in the course. These may include:

- **Learning Management Systems (LMS)** such as Moodle, Canvas, or Edmodo: Participants must know how to access course materials, submit assignments, and participate in forums or quizzes.
- **Communication platforms** such as WhatsApp, Microsoft Teams, or Slack: These tools facilitate day-to-day communication and peer support.
- **Video conferencing platforms** (Zoom, Teams): Participants should be comfortable using breakout rooms, chat functions, captions, and screen-sharing tools.
- **Assessment platforms** (if used): Pre- and post-tests, surveys, or reflection journals should be introduced and explained clearly.

Course Providers are responsible for:

- Creating user guides or recorded demonstrations for digital platforms
- Ensuring all tools are tested prior to orientation
- Providing one-on-one support as needed, especially for participants with limited digital literacy

Digital security and respectful online conduct (netiquette) should also be discussed during orientation, particularly for hybrid and online deliveries.

7.   PARTICIPANT WELFARE AND MEDICAL SUPPORT

7.1 Responsibilities of the Welfare Officer

Participant wellbeing is a central pillar of the MAP Leadership and Skills Program. The Welfare Officer plays a vital role in ensuring that all participants feel safe, supported, and able to engage fully in the learning experience. This role is required for all in-Australia courses and may also be adapted for in-country delivery depending on course length and complexity.

The Welfare Officer must be a designated, trained, and easily accessible member of the course team. Their responsibilities include:

- Serving as the primary point of contact for participant welfare matters
- Conducting regular welfare check-ins and responding to emerging concerns
- Providing advice and support on accommodation, transport, and daily living issues
- Supporting participants during illness, injury, or psychological distress
- Facilitating access to medical services, including attending appointments if needed
- Monitoring group dynamics, identifying signs of isolation or distress, and intervening appropriately
- Managing out-of-hours support and responding to emergencies
- Escalating any safeguarding or critical incidents to MAP SU as required

The Welfare Officer must maintain strict confidentiality, uphold participant privacy, and ensure records of welfare interactions are managed securely and in accordance with Australian privacy laws.

For cohorts with gender balance or participants from diverse backgrounds, Providers are encouraged to appoint a Welfare Officer who reflects the group's composition and can provide culturally safe support—this may include designating both male and female support contacts where needed.

7.2 Access to Health Services and Insurance Guidance

All participants attending in-Australia components will be covered by travel and medical insurance provided through MAP. The Welfare Officer must:

- Brief participants on their health insurance coverage and limitations during orientation
- Explain how to make a claim and when gap payments may apply
- Assist participants in navigating the healthcare system, including general practitioners (GPs), hospitals, pharmacies, and after-hours services
- Attend medical appointments as an interpreter or support person, when appropriate and agreed upon by the participant
- Help manage logistics such as transport, paperwork, and insurance claims

Participants must be advised to disclose any pre-existing conditions prior to travel, noting that most policies exclude coverage for such conditions, including pregnancy-related services unless disclosed in advance. Participants are responsible for carrying their personal medications and prescriptions and must be informed of the legal requirements for transporting medication into Australia.

In-country delivery of courses should follow the same principles, with health access arrangements clearly communicated and facilitated by the Course Coordinator or nominated welfare focal point.

7.3 Safeguarding and Psychosocial Support

Course Providers must create a safe and inclusive learning environment that prevents all forms of harassment, exploitation, and abuse. This includes compliance with DFAT's:

- Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct requirements for delivery partners

The Welfare Officer and broader course team must be trained to identify safeguarding risks, respond sensitively to disclosures, and follow the incident reporting protocol outlined by MAP SU. This includes:

- Immediate verbal or written notification to MAP SU of any safeguarding incident
- Completion of an Incident Report Template
- Coordinated response in consultation with MAP SU and DFAT

Participants must be made aware of their rights, responsibilities, and reporting pathways during orientation. Providers are encouraged to display contact information for the Welfare Officer and safeguarding focal points prominently at course venues and in participant materials.

In addition to safeguarding, Providers must also be attentive to participants' mental health and psychosocial wellbeing. Strategies may include:

- Providing quiet spaces for reflection or rest
- Offering mental health resources and counselling referrals
- Including sessions on stress management, work-life balance, or resilience
- Facilitating peer support networks or informal wellbeing check-ins

Participants who experience bereavement, personal loss, or other distressing events during the course should be supported with compassion and flexibility. Where needed, MAP SU may approve compassionate leave or early return home on a case-by-case basis.

7.4 Disability-Related and Gender-Specific Accommodations

Consistent with Australia's International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy and MAP's commitment to inclusion, all reasonable accommodations must be made to enable full and equitable participation of people with disability. This includes:

- Adjustments to physical environments (e.g. accessible accommodation, transport)
- Access to assistive devices, captioning, or sign language interpreters
- Flexibility in scheduling to manage fatigue or health conditions
- Provision of personal assistants or carers (as pre-approved by MAP SU)

The Course Provider must liaise with MAP SU in advance to assess participants' needs and plan for inclusive delivery. Reasonable accommodations should be documented and agreed upon prior to mobilisation and revisited as necessary during the course.

In addition, the welfare system must be gender-sensitive. Considerations include:

- Access to female staff for support on gender-specific matters
- Culturally respectful grouping of accommodation and activities
- Sensitivity to family responsibilities, pregnancy, or caregiving needs

Participants who are pregnant must be encouraged to disclose early so that travel, insurance, and medical arrangements can be made safely. Pregnancy alone does not disqualify participation, but course activities and travel plans must be adjusted accordingly and in consultation with MAP SU.

8. TRAVEL, ACCOMMODATION, INSURANCE AND ALLOWANCES

This section outlines the policies and responsibilities related to participant logistics for all MAP Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues that include an in-person component, either in Australia or in the Mekong region. These logistical arrangements are essential to participant safety, program integrity, and compliance with DFAT funding and duty-of-care requirements.

8.1 Travel Policies (Best Fare of the Day, Escort for Accessibility)

Course Providers are responsible for arranging all domestic and international travel related to the course, including flights, local transfers, and any required in-country movement.

Travel arrangements must:

- Be based on the **"best fare of the day"** principle, using economy class fares unless otherwise approved by MAP SU.
- Be booked from the **regional or international airport closest to the participant's home city** to the training destination.
- Avoid unnecessary stopovers unless required for accessibility or safety.
- Ensure accessible options for participants with disability, including escorts or assistance if needed.

For participants with disability, travel arrangements must be made in consultation with the participant and MAP SU, ensuring:

- Suitable airline or airport assistance is arranged
- Flights and vehicles accommodate mobility aids
- Extended layovers or connections are avoided where possible

Travel itineraries must be communicated to participants in advance, with all booking details, baggage allowances, and local transport arrangements clearly documented.

8.2 Visa Processing (Subclass 500)

Participants travelling to Australia will typically be issued a **Student Visa (Subclass 500)**, which permits study and structured learning activities under DFAT-funded programs. The Course Provider, in coordination with MAP SU, is responsible for supporting participants through this process.

To ensure a smooth and compliant visa process, Course Providers must engage **experienced and registered migration or visa agents** who are familiar with DFAT programs and the Subclass 500 visa requirements. Engaging professional agents helps mitigate delays, ensures compliance with Australian Government regulations, and provides participants with clear and consistent support.

Providers are expected to:

- Initiate visa processes early to account for varying processing times
- Issue all required supporting documents, such as enrolment confirmations, accommodation details, and travel itineraries
- Work directly with registered visa agents to manage document collection, form completion, and submission on behalf of participants
- Provide participants with clear guidance on what to expect and how to prepare for their application

Participants must be informed that:

- Visa assessments are conducted solely by the Department of Home Affairs; neither DFAT nor the Provider can guarantee approval
- Providing false, misleading, or incomplete information is considered fraud and may lead to refusal
- Visas are issued for the exclusive purpose of attending the MAP course and are not valid for personal or recreational travel extensions

Participants must hold a passport valid for at least six months beyond the course end date. Providers should assist in checking this and other eligibility requirements early in the planning process.

For regional or in-country course delivery involving cross-border travel, Providers are expected to identify visa requirements for each participant and liaise with MAP SU and relevant embassies to ensure timely processing and compliance.

8.3 Per Diem Rates (In Australia and In Region)

Participants receive a **per diem allowance** for each day they are away from their home base to attend the course. This allowance covers personal costs not directly provided by the Course Provider, such as meals, incidentals, local transport, and minor expenses.

In-Australia rate: AUD 94.53/day
Calculated using the formula: **"number of nights in Australia + 1"**, to allow for return travel.

In-region rate (e.g. Mekong country to Mekong country):

- AUD 70.89/day, or
- AUD 49.62/day if all meals are provided

Payment of per diems must be:

- Made in advance (preferably on arrival or during orientation)
- Issued via secure and accessible methods (e.g. prepaid cards or cash)
- Accompanied by a clear explanation of intended use and spending responsibilities

If a participant departs the course early, per diem adjustments must be made and the balance may be recovered.

Meals provided by the Provider must be factored into the daily rate as follows:

- Breakfast: deduct 21%
- Lunch: deduct 24%

- Dinner: deduct 40%

8.4 Accommodation Standards: Privacy, Accessibility, Location

All accommodation must meet high standards of privacy, safety, and accessibility to ensure the wellbeing and comfort of all participants. The following requirements apply:

- **Private bedrooms:** Each participant must be provided with a private bedroom. Under no circumstances are shared sleeping arrangements permitted.
- **Bathroom access:** Participants must have access to clean and functional bathroom facilities. While private bathrooms are strongly preferred, shared apartments are acceptable only if each participant has their own bedroom and unimpeded access to bathroom facilities.
- **Accessibility:** Accommodation must be suitable for participants with disabilities, including accessible bathrooms and entryways where required.
- **Kitchen or meal access:** Accommodation should include kitchen facilities to support self-catering. If kitchen facilities are not available (e.g. in hotel settings), alternative arrangements must ensure participants have reliable access to suitable meals, including options that accommodate dietary, religious, or health-related requirements.
- **Proximity:** Lodging should be located near training venues and within convenient distance of public amenities such as shops, transport, and healthcare.
- **Environment:** The accommodation must be in a safe, quiet, and culturally appropriate setting, taking into account gender, religious, and personal security considerations.

Participants with medical conditions or disabilities may require fully private accommodation or may need to stay with a support person. These requirements must be identified in advance and accommodated appropriately.

For regional courses, similar principles apply. The Course Provider must confirm standards with MAP SU before finalising bookings.

8.5 Travel and Medical Insurance Coverage and Limitations

All participants travelling outside their home country for a MAP course must be covered by:

- **Travel insurance** (for flights, luggage, and transit risks)
- **Medical insurance** (for illness or injury during the course period)

For Australia-based courses, MAP will provide **Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)** for the entire duration of the participant's stay. The Provider must:

- Ensure each participant receives a certificate of insurance before departure
- Brief participants on the policy coverage, exclusions (e.g. pre-existing conditions, dental, optical), and claims process
- Assist participants with accessing health services and making claims

The Provider must also issue a **health and insurance orientation** briefing that includes:

- How to access medical care
- What to do in a medical emergency

- What costs are covered and what require gap payments
- Claim documentation requirements

Participants must be advised to:

- Carry prescriptions and personal medications with them
- Disclose medical conditions or accessibility needs in advance
- Understand that pregnancy-related care is not covered unless disclosed early

In-region courses must offer equivalent insurance arrangements, and Providers should confirm policies cover cross-border emergencies, hospitalisation, and disability support.

9.   GENDER EQUALITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

9.1 Intersectional GEDSI Integration Across Design and Delivery

The Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP) is committed to inclusive development and recognises that achieving sustainable outcomes depends on the full and equitable participation of all people—regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background. All MAP Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues must integrate GEDSI at every stage of program design, delivery, monitoring, and reporting.

An intersectional approach must be applied, meaning that multiple and overlapping forms of disadvantage (e.g. gender and disability, ethnicity and geography) are considered in both course content and participant support. GEDSI integration is not a standalone activity but a guiding principle underpinning all aspects of the learning experience.

At a minimum, Course Providers must:

- Integrate GEDSI concepts and practical tools into course sessions, site visits, and mentoring
- Ensure representation of diverse voices in examples, case studies, and presenters
- Design learning activities that are inclusive and accessible to all participants
- Monitor and report on GEDSI outcomes, with disaggregated data
- Address potential barriers to participation through reasonable accommodations

9.2 Supporting the Meaningful Participation of Diverse Participants

Diversity within participant cohorts is a core objective of the MAP Leadership and Skills Program. As such, providers are required to create learning environments that are inclusive, respectful, and safe for all participants, including but not limited to:

- Women and girls
- People with disability
- People from ethnic minority groups or Indigenous communities
- LGBTQI+ individuals
- People from rural or disadvantaged areas

To support meaningful participation, Course Providers must:

- Proactively address accessibility, language, and cultural needs in course planning
- Design teaching strategies that allow all participants to contribute equitably
- Build awareness among facilitators of unconscious bias and cultural sensitivity
- Encourage mutual respect and peer support among participants
- Ensure female participants are supported in contexts where hierarchical or gendered norms may otherwise limit participation

Courses should also build participants' capacity to identify and challenge inequality within their own professional contexts and sectors. This may include:

- Sessions on inclusive leadership, universal design, or rights-based approaches
- Peer reflection on institutional barriers to participation and decision-making
- Assignments or work-based projects that promote systemic change

Where feasible, Providers are encouraged to include participants from DFAT-funded GEDSI partner organisations or to incorporate field experiences that expose participants to community-driven or rights-based initiatives.

9.3 "Nothing Without Us": Engaging Rights-holder Organisations in Design and Delivery

MAP supports the principle of "Nothing About Us Without Us"—recognising that individuals and communities with lived experience of exclusion must be actively involved in decisions that affect them. This principle should guide the engagement of rights-holder organisations and experts from marginalised communities in course design and delivery.

Course Providers are encouraged to:

- Partner with organisations led by or representing women, people with disability, ethnic minorities, or other marginalised groups
- Engage guest speakers or facilitators who bring lived experience of exclusion or leadership in inclusive development
- Involve alumni from underrepresented backgrounds as mentors, co-facilitators, or contributors to case studies
- Conduct consultation sessions with GEDSI organisations or MAP SU GEDSI Advisers during course preparation

These partnerships should be genuine and reciprocal—not tokenistic—and reflected in the course budget and scheduling.

Where appropriate, Providers may also draw on MAP SU's GEDSI resources and tools, including the Annex 1: Mainstreaming GEDSI in Design and Delivery. Providers must allocate sufficient resources for GEDSI implementation, including time for the GEDSI Specialist to work across course components and mentor participants on inclusive project design.

10. CLIMATE ACTION INTEGRATION

10.1 Mainstreaming Climate Literacy into All Courses

Climate resilience is a core thematic priority under MAP Phase 2. All MAP-funded Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues—regardless of their primary focus—must incorporate elements of climate awareness and action. The aim is to equip leaders from across the Mekong subregion with the knowledge and tools to identify climate-related risks and contribute to solutions that build environmental and institutional resilience.

Climate action is not to be confined to standalone courses. Instead, it must be **mainstreamed across the portfolio**, including into governance, economic development, infrastructure, public health, agriculture, education, and other sectors.

At a minimum, Course Providers must:

- Introduce foundational concepts such as climate science, climate justice, and adaptation/mitigation strategies
- Connect climate impacts to the course's primary theme (e.g. how climate change affects trade, infrastructure, migration, health, or water governance)
- Encourage participants to reflect on climate risks within their work context and consider how climate resilience can be enhanced
- Integrate climate considerations into work-based projects, case studies, and group discussions

Participants should leave the course with an increased understanding of climate change drivers, sectoral impacts, and practical approaches to adaptation and mitigation.

10.2 Course-Specific Integration (e.g., Governance, Economic Resilience)

Climate-related content must be tailored to the course's thematic focus. Course Providers are expected to design sector-specific sessions or activities that show how climate change intersects with policy, service delivery, or institutional reform.

Examples include:

- A **governance course** examining regulatory responses to climate risks, disaster preparedness, and climate budgeting
- A **transport or infrastructure course** exploring the impact of extreme weather events on critical assets and the case for climate-resilient design
- An **economic integration course** addressing supply chain vulnerability, low-emissions technologies, or the green economy
- A **leadership course** focusing on climate diplomacy, community mobilisation, and ethical decision-making in the context of climate change

In each case, participants should be prompted to consider:

- Local and regional vulnerabilities (e.g. flood-prone areas, agricultural disruption, energy insecurity)
- Opportunities for mitigation (e.g. emissions reduction, clean energy, low-carbon technologies)
- Adaptation pathways (e.g. early warning systems, climate-resilient livelihoods, institutional reforms)

Course Providers are encouraged to incorporate relevant Australian examples, site visits (where possible), and comparative case studies from across Southeast Asia or the Indo-Pacific region.

10.3 Encouraging Participant Reflection on Local Climate Impacts

Courses must provide opportunities for participants to reflect on how climate change is affecting their local context and professional roles. Providers should include structured activities that invite participants to:

- Map climate-related risks or trends in their work or community
- Analyse the resilience of local policies, services, or infrastructure
- Share lived experiences of coping with climate shocks or variability
- Identify gaps in their institutional response or technical capacity

Facilitators should support discussions on:

- Power and inequality in climate vulnerability and response
- The role of leadership in enabling or impeding climate action
- Tensions between short-term development goals and long-term climate risk

Where possible, courses should include peer-to-peer exchange on climate responses from different sectors or countries within the Mekong region, highlighting locally led innovations.

10.4 Climate Component Required in All Thematic Courses

Every MAP-funded course must include a **dedicated climate action component**, either as a standalone session, module, or integrated thread across sessions. This component must:

- Be clearly described in the course outline
- Include measurable learning objectives
- Be facilitated by individuals with expertise in climate policy, science, or programmatic response
- Encourage practical application to participants' roles and institutions

Providers must demonstrate in their proposals how climate action will be embedded throughout the course and how participants will be supported to apply climate-informed thinking in their work-based projects.

MAP SU may conduct quality assurance checks or request supporting materials to ensure compliance with this requirement. Providers are also encouraged to consult with DFAT thematic leads or regional experts on emerging climate risks and opportunities relevant to their course topic.

11. INTEGRATION OF FIRST NATIONS PARTICIPATION

11.1 Welcome to Country Ceremony and Acknowledgment of First Nations

In recognition of Australia's Indigenous peoples—the world's oldest continuing cultures—all MAP-funded Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues delivered in Australia must formally acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the course is delivered.

As a standard requirement:

- A **Welcome to Country ceremony** must be arranged for in-Australia courses at the opening event or earliest appropriate opportunity.
- Where a Traditional Custodian is not available, the Course Leader or a nominated representative must deliver an **Acknowledgment of Country**.

A Welcome to Country is a cultural protocol delivered by a recognised Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Elder or representative, and it signifies the participants' acceptance as visitors to that Country. This is distinct from an Acknowledgment of Country, which can be delivered by non-Indigenous persons and is a sign of respect and recognition.

Course Providers are responsible for:

- Arranging and compensating an appropriate First Nations representative in line with local protocols and remuneration standards
- Briefing participants in advance on the significance of the ceremony and the cultural context
- Including a written Acknowledgment of Country in participant materials and presentations, such as the course handbook and orientation slides

DFAT and MAP SU strongly encourage Providers to ensure that these acknowledgments are meaningful, accurate, and not treated as administrative or ceremonial obligations.

11.2 Finding Opportunities to Enhance Cultural Awareness

Beyond the formal Welcome or Acknowledgment of Country, MAP encourages Course Providers to integrate opportunities throughout the course for participants to learn about Australia's First Nations peoples, cultures, histories, and contributions to contemporary society. This aligns with DFAT's commitment to reconciliation and to presenting a respectful and inclusive view of Australia.

These learning opportunities may include:

- **Cultural site visits**: e.g. visits to Aboriginal cultural centres, museums, heritage sites, or art exhibitions
- **Guest presentations** by First Nations academics, entrepreneurs, artists, or community leaders, offering perspectives on land management, governance, social justice, education, or cultural continuity

- **Interactive learning activities**, such as yarning circles, Indigenous-led workshops, or storytelling sessions
- **Resources and readings** related to First Nations experiences and knowledge systems, such as connection to Country, kinship structures, and sustainable land practices

Where possible, these elements should be connected to the course theme. For example:

- A governance course could examine Indigenous self-determination and treaty processes
- An environmental course could explore Indigenous land management and climate adaptation strategies
- An education course could address intergenerational learning and culturally responsive pedagogy

Providers must ensure that First Nations content is:

- Delivered with respect, accuracy, and cultural safety
- Designed in partnership with Indigenous contributors, not merely about them
- Acknowledging diversity among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and avoiding pan-Indigenous generalisations

Participants must be supported to engage respectfully, ask questions, and reflect on the relevance of Indigenous perspectives in their own contexts.

Course reports should include a brief overview of how First Nations perspectives were incorporated into the program and any participant feedback received on these components.

12. INTEPRETING AND COMMUNICATION SUPPORT

12.1 Use of Qualified Interpreters (Simultaneous/Consecutive)

Language accessibility is essential to ensuring equitable participation in MAP Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues. When participant cohorts include individuals with limited English proficiency, Course Providers must arrange qualified interpretation services to support full engagement in all learning activities.

Interpretation may be required in two modes:

- **Simultaneous interpretation**, typically for larger groups or formal sessions, delivered using headsets and interpretation booths or virtual platforms.
- **Consecutive interpretation**, used in smaller settings, where the speaker pauses to allow the interpreter to translate.

The need for interpreters and the language requirements will be specified in the Scope of Services provided by MAP SU. Course Providers must:

- Engage professionally qualified and experienced interpreters, preferably accredited (e.g. NAATI-certified or equivalent) in both English and the relevant Mekong language(s)
- Ensure interpreters are familiar with the course content, technical terminology, and sector-specific language
- Allow time for interpreter preparation, including advance access to presentations, readings, and speaker bios
- Arrange for multiple interpreters to avoid fatigue and maintain quality during extended sessions
- Avoid reliance on untrained bilingual staff, alumni, or participants for official interpretation duties

The Welfare Officer may assist with informal interpretation (e.g. during site visits or medical appointments), but they must not be used as substitutes for trained interpreters during formal course sessions.

12.2 Translation of Key Documents

In addition to live interpretation, Course Providers must ensure that essential course materials are translated into participants' preferred languages where needed. This includes:

- Orientation materials (e.g. arrival guides, welfare policies)
- Course schedules and session outlines
- Work-based project templates or instructions
- Safeguarding and health-related information
- Pre- and post-course tests, if required
- Evaluation forms

Translated documents must be:

- Professionally proofread and culturally appropriate

- Delivered in accessible file formats (e.g. Word, accessible PDF)
- Distributed in advance wherever possible to ensure participants are adequately prepared

Providers should consult with MAP SU on which documents are essential for translation based on the cohort's profile and course modality.

Translation should be prioritised for materials critical to participant safety, course comprehension, and assessment. If full translation is not feasible due to time or budget constraints, Providers may request approval from MAP SU for a streamlined approach (e.g. translated summaries or interpreter-assisted walkthroughs).

12.3 Digital Accessibility: Captions, Transcripts, Assistive Technologies

To promote inclusive participation in online or hybrid courses, Providers must implement appropriate digital accessibility measures. These support not only participants with disability but also those accessing content in second languages or under connectivity constraints.

Key strategies include:

- **Live captioning** for virtual sessions (using Zoom or MS Teams automatic captioning, or third-party services)
- **Transcripts of pre-recorded lectures** and online modules
- **Screen reader-compatible documents**, using accessible formatting standards
- **Alternative text for images and visual content**
- **Recorded sessions** for asynchronous access

Where participants are known to require additional support—such as those who are Deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or have low vision—Providers must liaise with MAP SU to ensure reasonable accommodations are identified and delivered. This may include:

- Provision of **sign language interpreters**
- Use of **text-to-speech software**
- Allocation of additional data or equipment to access online content
- Extended deadlines or alternate formats for assignments

All online platforms used (e.g. LMS, assessment portals) must adhere to accessibility standards (e.g. WCAG 2.1 or equivalent). Providers are responsible for testing tools before rollout and offering technical orientation to participants during the course.

Course Providers should also maintain clear and responsive channels of communication (e.g. WhatsApp, Teams, email), with multilingual support where feasible.

13. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

13.1 Use of MAP MEL Framework and Tools

All MAP Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues must be monitored and evaluated in accordance with the MAP Leadership and Skills Program Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework. This framework ensures consistent and evidence-based tracking of learning outcomes, program effectiveness, and broader development impact.

Course Providers are required to:

- Align their MEL activities with the MAP MEL Framework
- Apply MAP-provided MEL tools, including pre- and post-tests, participant satisfaction surveys, and outcome templates
- Submit MEL data and analysis through required reporting formats
- Capture both quantitative and qualitative data to inform continuous improvement and learning

MAP SU may periodically update MEL tools or requirements. Course Providers must remain responsive to guidance from the MAP MEL team and incorporate changes into course delivery and reporting processes.

13.2 Pre- and Post-tests Assessing Learning and GEDSI Awareness

To measure knowledge acquisition and shifts in understanding, Providers must administer:

- A **pre-course test** during the pre-course or orientation phase
- A **post-course test** at the conclusion of the core component

These assessments should:

- Be tailored to the course content and expected learning outcomes
- Include questions that reflect participants' baseline and post-training capacity in both technical areas and cross-cutting priorities (such as GEDSI and climate action)
- Use a format that is culturally appropriate and accessible, with translations or interpreter support as needed

Test results must be disaggregated and analysed by gender, disability, country, and other key demographics, and included in the Core Learning Elements report. Providers should comment on the level of knowledge gain, variations across subgroups, and any identified barriers to learning.

13.3 Data Disaggregation by Gender, Disability, Ethnicity, Geography

All MEL data collected by Course Providers must be disaggregated and analysed across key dimensions, including:

- Gender identity (male, female, non-binary/other)
- Disability status (self-reported)
- Ethnicity or minority status (where applicable and with consent)
- Geographic origin (urban/rural, country)
- Sector or professional affiliation

This disaggregation allows MAP SU to assess the program's reach and effectiveness across diverse populations, identify equity gaps, and ensure inclusion targets are being met.

Course Providers are expected to:

- Collect disaggregated demographic data as part of the Participant Needs Assessment
- Protect participants' privacy and secure consent for data use
- Analyse MEL results with reference to diversity and inclusion performance

Where disparities in outcomes are noted, Providers must reflect on possible causes (e.g. accessibility gaps, language barriers) and offer recommendations for future improvement.

13.4 Collection of Participant Stories and Testimonials

Participant stories and testimonials are a vital source of qualitative insight into the relevance and impact of MAP learning experiences. These narratives complement formal data collection and help illustrate how course content is being applied in practice.

Course Providers must:

- Collect participant reflections through interviews, group discussions, or written submissions
- Encourage participants to describe the personal, organisational, or community-level changes inspired by the course
- Showcase work-based project results, leadership development, or institutional reforms
- Seek consent for use in reporting, communications, or DFAT public diplomacy

MAP SU encourages Providers to include 2–3 strong case studies in the Completion Report. These should be accompanied by photos (with consent), quotes, or audio/video where appropriate.

13.5 Documenting Lessons Learned Including Participant and Provider Feedback

Continuous learning is a priority across the MAP program. Course Providers must actively document lessons learned throughout delivery, drawing on both participant and delivery team feedback.

Mechanisms include:

- **Mid-course check-ins** or reflection sessions
- **Post-session evaluation forms**
- **End-of-course satisfaction surveys**
- **Internal debriefs among course staff**

Findings should be used to:

- Adjust course delivery in real time (if relevant)
- Identify strengths and improvement areas in design, logistics, and pedagogy
- Inform recommendations in the Completion Report
- Contribute to broader program learning and improvement over time

Providers are encouraged to:

- Identify innovations that enhanced engagement or accessibility
- Highlight strategies that improved GEDSI integration or climate action awareness
- Flag operational or contextual challenges (e.g. travel restrictions, digital access)

MAP SU may also conduct observation visits or virtual spot checks during delivery to assess participant experience and monitor implementation fidelity.

14. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

14.1 Required Reports

Course Providers are required to submit a structured series of reports that document progress, participant outcomes, and operational insights at each stage of delivery. These reports are essential for accountability, learning, and quality assurance, and must align with MAP SU contractual deliverables and timelines.

The three primary reports required are:

1. **End of Component Progress Reports**
   Submitted at the conclusion of each delivery phase (Pre-course, Core, and Post-course) to summarise activities, outcomes, and emerging issues.
2. **Completion Report**
   Submitted within four weeks of the conclusion of the post-course component. This is a comprehensive reflection on course delivery, learning outcomes, and participant experiences, including all MEL and GEDSI data.
3. **Additional Reporting Requirements**
   Where requested by MAP SU, Providers may be asked to submit:
   o   Risk management updates
   o   Incident reports
   o   Media and communications summaries
   o   Reflections on innovations or adaptations

Templates for each report are provided by MAP SU. Providers must adhere strictly to the structure, format, and submission schedule outlined in the contract.

14.2 Expectations for WBP Summaries, MEL Data, and Lessons Learned

Work-based Project (WBP) Reporting
Course Providers must include summaries of all participant WBPs in the Completion Report, including:

- WBP titles, themes, and alignment with course content
- GEDSI integration
- Implementation status or planned next steps
- Reflections on institutional relevance and participant leadership

Where feasible, Providers should include quotes, testimonials, or images that illustrate WBP outcomes or challenges. MAP SU may request standalone WBP summaries or presentations for program visibility and alumni engagement.

MEL Data
Each report must include analysis and interpretation of MEL findings, such as:

- Pre- and post-test results
- Participant satisfaction survey results
- Disaggregated demographic data (gender, disability, location, sector)
- Reflections on knowledge gains, engagement levels, and inclusion outcomes

All data must be securely collected, anonymised where necessary, and stored in compliance with DFAT privacy and ethical standards.

Lessons Learned

Reports must include a dedicated section on lessons learned. This should reflect on:

- What worked well, and why
- Delivery challenges and how they were addressed
- Innovations in content, delivery, or engagement
- Recommendations for future courses

Course teams should draw on internal debriefs, participant feedback, and staff observations to ensure lessons are accurate, honest, and constructive.

14.3 Submitting Deliverables to MAP SU

All reports and supporting documentation must be submitted to MAP SU via the designated platform or email address provided in the contract. Deadlines are fixed and non-compliance may impact Course Provider performance assessment (see Section 15).

Reports must be submitted as:

- Editable Word documents (for text-based reports)
- Excel files for MEL and financial data, as applicable
- PDF versions for signed declarations or finalised summaries
- Accompanied by high-resolution images, captions, and permissions for any photos to be used in public communications

Late or incomplete reporting must be approved by MAP SU in advance and will be noted in the final CPPA score (see Section 15.2). Providers may be asked to revise or resubmit reports if they do not meet expected standards.

MAP SU reserves the right to extract data and content from reports for DFAT briefs, program reviews, or public diplomacy purposes, with appropriate attribution.

15. COURSE PROVIDER PERFORMANCE

15.1 Performance Indicators (Learning Outcomes, GEDSI, WBPs, Documentation)

Course Provider performance is assessed by MAP SU using a structured framework to ensure high-quality, inclusive, and effective delivery of Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues under the Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP). The assessment reflects DFAT's expectations of professional, consistent, and value-for-money services that support the achievement of MAP Phase 2 outcomes.

The **Course Provider Performance Assessment (CPPA)** evaluates providers across key domains:

1. **Learning Outcomes**
   - Demonstrated increase in participant knowledge and skills based on pre- and post-test results
   - Achievement of course learning objectives
   - Participant engagement and academic satisfaction
2. **GEDSI Integration**
   - Effective mainstreaming of gender equality, disability and social inclusion across all course components
   - Delivery of at least two contextualised, stand-alone GEDSI sessions
   - GEDSI considerations reflected in participant work-based projects and course activities
   - Active efforts to support equitable participation
3. **Work-based Projects (WBPs)**
   - WBPs are clearly aligned to course themes and participant roles
   - WBPs include practical, achievable outcomes and GEDSI integration
   - WBPs are presented, discussed, and evaluated during the post-course phase
4. **Documentation and Reporting**
   - Reports are submitted on time and in accordance with contract milestones
   - Reports require no more than one revision
   - Reports include complete and accurate MEL and GEDSI data, WBP summaries, and lessons learned
5. **Participant Satisfaction**
   - At least 85% of participants rate their overall satisfaction as 'satisfactory' or higher
   - Positive feedback on course relevance, quality of delivery, and learning environment
6. **Operational Management**
   - Effective coordination of logistics, welfare, travel, and accommodation
   - Clear, timely communication with MAP SU and DFAT
   - Risk and incident management handled appropriately and in line with guidelines

MAP SU staff, including the Short Course Manager and MEL team, contribute to the performance review using data gathered from participant feedback, observation, and deliverables.

15.2 CPPA Scoring and Implications for Future Tenders

The CPPA is scored against a 5-point scale for each criterion:

- 5 = Exceptional

- 4 = Strong
- 3 = Satisfactory
- 2 = Marginal
- 1 = Weak

Any criterion scoring **3 or below** may trigger:

- A request for further explanation or remedial action
- Closer monitoring in future deliveries
- A reduction in final milestone payment (typically by 10% per affected criterion)

The CPPA is shared with the Course Provider following a post-course debrief meeting, which takes place approximately four weeks after submission of the Completion Report. The process allows for reflection and joint identification of strengths and areas for improvement.

The CPPA is used by MAP SU to:

- Inform DFAT and Thematic Working Groups of provider capabilities
- Support future contract decisions and due diligence checks
- Advise Technical Assessment Panels (TAPs) during competitive tender processes

Course Providers that consistently meet or exceed expectations are more likely to be considered for re-engagement or invitation to participate in targeted procurements.

To maintain transparency and accountability, Course Providers are encouraged to:

- Use internal debriefs and self-assessment tools after each delivery
- Document feedback and lessons learned across their delivery teams
- Invest in staff training, particularly in GEDSI and safeguarding
- Stay informed of updates to MAP policies and expectations

MAP SU may also initiate performance improvement plans or require corrective actions in the case of recurring issues or contract non-compliance.

16. MANAGING ONLINE AND IN-PERSON NON-ATTENDANCE

16.1 Notification Protocols

Consistent attendance is a core requirement of all MAP Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues. Participant non-attendance—whether during in-person or online components—must be actively monitored and managed by the Course Provider.

Course Providers must implement a system to:

- Record attendance at each session (including online)
- Follow up promptly with any participant who misses a scheduled session without prior notification
- Notify MAP SU immediately if there is an unexplained absence of one full day (for in-person delivery) or repeated non-attendance online

For in-Australia or in-country delivery, any participant who fails to appear for scheduled group activities—such as site visits, workshops, or DFAT engagements—without valid reason must be followed up on directly by the Welfare Officer and reported to MAP SU.

Online non-attendance includes:

- Missing live webinars, breakout rooms, or mentoring sessions
- Failing to complete assigned asynchronous learning modules within expected timeframes
- Consistently late log-ins or early departures that affect learning continuity

The Course Coordinator must maintain a central attendance record, which will be used to assess participant engagement and inform MAP SU decisions in the event of serious non-compliance.

16.2 Adaptive Support Strategies (Catch-up Sessions, Mentoring)

Where absence is justified (e.g. illness, family emergency, disability-related accommodation), Course Providers are expected to implement reasonable adjustments to enable participants to continue and complete the course.

Adaptive support strategies may include:

- Providing recorded sessions or summary materials for missed activities
- Offering additional one-on-one mentoring or check-in calls
- Extending deadlines for assessments or work-based project milestones
- Assigning peers or facilitators to provide informal updates

All adjustments must be:

- Clearly documented and shared with MAP SU
- Equitable and sustainable (without compromising course integrity)

- Aligned with the participant's remaining capacity to meet course requirements

For participants who experience technical or connectivity issues in online courses, the Provider must:

- Assist with access to data, troubleshooting, or alternative access points (e.g. downloadable materials)
- Notify MAP SU if systemic barriers are affecting multiple participants

MAP SU recognises that online delivery in the Mekong region may be impacted by infrastructure gaps and encourages Providers to build flexibility into course timelines while maintaining accountability.

16.3 Recommendation Procedure for Withdrawal (if Needed)

In rare cases, participant non-attendance may be prolonged or incompatible with course completion. When this occurs, the Course Provider must:

1. Document all engagement efforts, support measures, and correspondence
2. Provide MAP SU with a written summary of the participant's attendance and reasons for absence
3. Make a formal recommendation regarding withdrawal or continuation

Only MAP SU or the relevant DFAT Post may approve a participant's official withdrawal from the program.

Withdrawal may be considered if:

- The participant has missed a significant portion of the course (typically more than 30%)
- Support strategies have been exhausted without success
- Continued engagement is deemed infeasible due to health, professional, or personal reasons

In the event of withdrawal, Providers must:

- Cease all per diem or financial disbursements
- Remove access to course platforms or mentoring activities
- Reflect the change in the Completion Report and CPPA assessment

The participant's employer or nominating agency may also be informed of the withdrawal by MAP SU or the DFAT Post, in line with program protocol.

17. CRITICAL INCIDENTS

17.1 Definitions and Classifications

A critical incident is any event or situation that seriously affects, or has the potential to affect, a participant's safety, wellbeing, or ability to complete their MAP Short Course, Masterclass, or Dialogue. These incidents are distinct from routine welfare issues due to their urgency, severity, or reputational risk to DFAT or MAP.

Critical incidents may include but are not limited to:

- Hospitalisation due to illness, injury, or emergency medical condition
- Death of a participant
- A participant being reported missing or unaccounted for
- Victim or perpetrator involvement in a crime (e.g. theft, assault, sexual harassment)
- Gender-based violence or safeguarding breaches
- Natural disasters affecting course delivery or participant safety
- Mental health emergencies (e.g. risk of self-harm)
- Accidents occurring during course activities, excursions, or travel
- Any event with potential media, legal, or diplomatic implications

All critical incidents must be reported to MAP SU immediately, regardless of the time of day or location of the course.

17.2 Incident Reporting and Escalation to MAP SU and DFAT

If a critical incident occurs, the Course Provider must:

1. **Ensure immediate participant safety and access to medical or legal assistance.**
   - The Welfare Officer or Course Coordinator should accompany the participant where necessary and ensure urgent needs are met.
   - Emergency services should be contacted in Australia via 000, or through local services in-country.
2. **Notify MAP SU as soon as practicable, ideally within 1 hour of becoming aware of the incident.**
   - Use both phone and email to ensure receipt.
   - Provide preliminary details including:
     - Participant's name and country
     - Description of the incident and time/location
     - Action taken so far
     - Current status of the participant(s)
     - Next steps or immediate needs
3. **Submit a formal Incident Report** within 24 hours using the MAP Incident Report Template.
   - Include chronology, witness details (if applicable), communications with emergency services, and any media contact.
   - Continue to update MAP SU as new developments occur.

MAP SU will escalate the incident to DFAT Canberra and the relevant Post and will guide further action. Providers must not contact DFAT Posts or the media directly without MAP SU instruction.

All parties involved must maintain confidentiality and handle information sensitively and respectfully, with consideration for the participant and their family.

17.3 Participant Care and Confidentiality Procedures

Course Providers must take a trauma-informed approach when managing critical incidents. This includes:

- Assigning a trusted staff member (usually the Welfare Officer) to provide ongoing support to the affected participant(s)
- Ensuring privacy and dignity are upheld at all times
- Avoiding speculation or unnecessary sharing of personal details within the participant group or external audiences
- Offering access to counselling or psychological support where needed
- Maintaining accurate and secure records of all communications and actions taken

Where an incident involves multiple participants, the Provider should organise a group debrief or facilitated discussion (if appropriate) and monitor broader impacts on the cohort.

For serious incidents, MAP SU may initiate a joint case review or debrief with the Provider after the situation is resolved.

17.4 Use of Incident Report Template

The Incident Report Template provided by MAP SU must be used to document:

- The type and classification of the incident
- A full chronology of events
- Immediate response actions and decisions made
- Agencies contacted (e.g. police, hospital, embassy)
- Names and contact details of key personnel involved
- Estimated or confirmed costs incurred (e.g. medical bills, logistics)
- Media interest or public exposure
- Recommended follow-up actions

The completed report must be submitted securely and in confidence to MAP SU.

MAP SU may request further documentation or evidence, such as medical discharge summaries or legal notifications, depending on the nature of the incident.

18. MANAGING PARTICIPANTS IN AUSTRALIA

18.1 Risk of Overstay or Unplanned Departure

Participants travelling to Australia under the MAP Leadership and Skills Program do so on a temporary student visa (Subclass 500) for the exclusive purpose of attending their Short Course or Masterclass. Any deviation from this purpose—such as overstaying a visa, failing to return home, or leaving the group without explanation—presents a serious risk to individual safety and program integrity.

While such occurrences are rare, Course Providers must be prepared to act quickly, discreetly, and in accordance with DFAT guidelines if a participant:

- Is unaccounted for during scheduled course activities
- Fails to board transport or return to accommodation
- Makes known or suspected plans not to return to their home country
- Disappears without reasonable explanation

Early identification and reporting of risk indicators can help prevent incidents of overstaying or absconding.

18.2 Discreet Response Protocol

If a participant is believed to be missing, Course Providers must act immediately and follow these steps:

1. **Verify the situation**
   - Contact the participant directly by phone, email, or messaging platforms.
   - Check their accommodation and confirm with roommates or other participants if they have been seen.
   - Determine if the participant's belongings remain in their room or if they left behind signs of planned departure.
2. **Consider the possibility of emergency or delay**
   - Do not assume that a participant has absconded without checking for illness, accident, or other valid reasons.
   - Contact nearby hospitals or medical centres if needed.
3. **Notify MAP SU immediately**
   - Use both email and phone to report the issue.
   - Provide known details: participant's name, last confirmed sighting, contact history, and any concerns raised by others.
4. **Maintain confidentiality**
   - Do not disclose the situation to other participants, course guests, or external parties.
   - Limit internal communication to essential course staff and MAP SU.
5. **Document actions taken**
   - Keep detailed notes on all steps undertaken, including attempts to contact the participant and conversations with relevant parties.

MAP SU will escalate the matter to DFAT Canberra and the appropriate Australian authorities. If the participant cannot be located or re-engaged in the course, DFAT may report them to the Department of Home Affairs and initiate visa compliance processes.

18.3 Confidentiality, Documentation, and DFAT Notification

All suspected absences or missing person cases must be handled with utmost discretion to avoid stigmatisation, reputational damage, or breach of privacy. The participant's identity and circumstances must not be disclosed beyond the course team and MAP SU.

Documentation should include:

- The time and date of the last confirmed activity or attendance
- Communication attempts made and responses received (if any)
- Witness reports or participant statements (if applicable)
- Summary of items left behind, travel bookings, or digital traces

The Course Provider must be ready to share this information with MAP SU and DFAT upon request and must complete an Incident Report if the participant is officially declared missing.

DFAT will:

- Liaise with the Department of Home Affairs regarding visa status
- Contact the participant's DFAT Post or Embassy as needed
- Coordinate any public communications or media responses if required

MAP SU will notify the nominating government or employer only under DFAT guidance and based on the severity of the incident.

18.4 Prohibited Actions (e.g., Withholding Passport)

Course Providers must not:

- Withhold a participant's passport, travel documents, or visa information at any time
- Attempt to physically prevent a participant from leaving the course
- Conduct surveillance or coercive questioning
- Share private participant information with any unauthorised individuals or agencies

Providers must respect the legal rights and dignity of all participants while upholding MAP's duty-of-care obligations. Any action taken must prioritise participant safety, program integrity, and adherence to Australian laws and DFAT policy.

19. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY, BRANDING AND MEDIA

19.1 MAP Branding Standards and Templates

As a DFAT-funded initiative, all MAP Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues must adhere to the branding and public diplomacy requirements set by the Australian Government. Course Providers play an important role in representing the MAP program and, by extension, Australia's partnership with the Mekong subregion.

Branding is not only about visual identity; it is also about consistency in how the program is described, the values it promotes, and the stories it shares.

Course Providers must:

- Use the **Mekong-Australia Partnership logo** (wordmark and graphic) on all course materials, reports, and presentations
- Apply MAP SU-approved templates for:
  - o PowerPoint presentations
  - o Participant certificates
  - o Reports and deliverables
  - o Event invitations
  - o Participant name tags and promotional materials
- Ensure co-branding is clearly and appropriately applied when using Provider logos (e.g. MAP logo positioned to the right or below the Provider's logo)

All branding must be consistent with the **Mekong-Australia Partnership Style Guide**, which is issued by MAP SU and updated as needed. Providers are responsible for requesting the most current version and ensuring all course staff are briefed on correct usage.

Participants are not permitted to use the MAP logo on personal items (e.g. clothing, private presentations) without written permission. However, they may refer to the program by name (e.g. "Mekong-Australia Partnership Short Course participant") in their own materials.

Exceptions for participant use of the MAP logo—such as during a WBP presentation involving DFAT or MAP collaboration—must be approved by the MAP SU Communications team and relevant DFAT Post.

19.2 Logo Usage Guidelines

When applying the MAP logo:

- Do not stretch, recolour, or alter the proportions of the logo
- Use only high-resolution files supplied by MAP SU
- Maintain adequate clear space around the logo
- Place on a white or neutral background unless a reverse (light text on dark background) version is provided

For formal events and media-facing materials, the Australian Coat of Arms or DFAT logo may be used—but only with prior approval from MAP SU or DFAT.

MAP branding must be visible at course events, including banners, screens, or podium signage during opening or closing ceremonies and site visits. Pull-up banners will be provided or approved by MAP SU for this purpose.

19.3 Social Media Tips and Hashtag Protocol

Social media is a valuable tool to promote course achievements, highlight DFAT's investment in regional partnerships, and raise the profile of MAP participants and alumni.

Course Providers are encouraged to:

- Post updates from the course using inclusive and respectful language
- Share participant quotes, images (with consent), or short videos that reflect course highlights
- Promote GEDSI, climate action, and regional cooperation through participant stories

Providers must ensure that all social media content:

- Is reviewed internally for accuracy, tone, and branding compliance
- Has appropriate image permissions (signed consent forms)
- Does not disclose sensitive participant information without approval

When posting on social media (including on Provider or institutional accounts), the following hashtags must be used:

- #MekongAustraliaPartnership
- #Masterclass or #ShortCourse
- #MakeADifference
- Thematic hashtags as relevant (e.g. #ClimateAction, #GEDSI, #InclusiveLeadership)
- #OzAlum (after the post-course workshop, when participants are officially MAP alumni)

Providers are encouraged to tag DFAT and relevant DFAT Posts when appropriate and to notify MAP SU in advance of high-profile posts or media engagement.

19.4 Communication Approvals Process

All external-facing content must be approved by MAP SU and, where required, by DFAT prior to publication. This includes:

- Media releases
- Website articles
- External newsletters or bulletins
- Quotes attributed to DFAT or MAP staff
- Participant features highlighting government links or institutional policy

The approvals process is as follows:

1. Draft content and identify platforms for release

2. Submit to MAP SU Communications team at least five business days in advance
3. MAP SU will review and liaise with DFAT Posts or Canberra for clearance
4. Once approved, Providers may proceed with publishing or posting

Urgent or time-sensitive opportunities (e.g. spontaneous media interviews or press coverage during a course) must still be discussed with MAP SU immediately to ensure appropriate messaging and coordination with DFAT stakeholders.

Course Providers are strongly encouraged to contribute to MAP's overall communications objectives by collecting compelling photos, quotes, and human-interest stories during course delivery. Templates for participant profiles and testimonials are provided by MAP SU.

20. ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

20.1 Automatic Inclusion in MAP Alumni Network

Upon successful completion of a MAP Short Course, Masterclass, or Dialogue, participants automatically become members of the **Mekong-Australia Partnership Alumni Network**. This network forms part of the broader Australia Global Alumni community and supports continued engagement between alumni, DFAT, and the Australian Government.

As alumni, participants are positioned to contribute to sustained regional cooperation, knowledge exchange, and development leadership in the Mekong subregion. Alumni are also eligible for future MAP or DFAT-funded opportunities, such as:

- Alumni grants
- Regional knowledge exchanges
- Leadership events
- Alumni spotlights and recognition awards

Course Providers are expected to clearly communicate this transition during the post-course component and facilitate handover of relevant participant details to MAP SU for alumni tracking.

Participant data provided must include:

- Full name and contact details
- Country and organisation
- Work-based project topic
- Sector or thematic focus
- Consent for ongoing alumni communication and engagement

MAP SU will manage integration into the alumni database and coordinate with DFAT Posts for country-level follow-up.

20.2 Collection of Testimonials, Updates on WBP Progress

To support DFAT's public diplomacy and evidence of program impact, Course Providers must collect participant reflections and testimonials as part of their Completion Report. These should highlight:

- Application of learning in the workplace or community
- Implementation or scaling of work-based projects
- Reflections on personal or leadership growth
- Connections built through the course (e.g. with DFAT, peers, Australian institutions)

Course Providers must include:

- At least two alumni profiles or impact stories
- Participant quotes, with signed consent
- High-quality images or video snippets, where feasible

- Updates or follow-up on WBPs (where implementation has begun)

These assets may be used by MAP SU and DFAT for reports, alumni newsletters, social media, or event materials. Providers are encouraged to gather these stories during the post-course workshop or via follow-up emails shortly after course completion.

20.3 Promotion of Alumni-led Initiatives and Networks

Where alumni continue to collaborate after the course or initiate new projects related to their MAP learning, Course Providers are encouraged to share this information with MAP SU. Examples may include:

- Multi-country or cross-sectoral initiatives
- Joint publications or policy recommendations
- Localised training or replication of course content
- Organisational reforms or innovations linked to the WBP

These initiatives may be recognised by DFAT or MAP through alumni features, invitations to events, or access to seed funding and technical support.

MAP SU may also request that Providers nominate alumni to participate in:

- Public events (e.g. DFAT-hosted forums, bilateral delegations)
- Alumni peer mentoring programs
- Case studies and impact evaluations

20.4 Integration into DFAT-hosted or MAP Events

DFAT Posts and the MAP SU regularly organise alumni events, policy dialogues, thematic roundtables, and grant-funded activities. Course Providers are expected to:

- Encourage newly graduated participants to remain active and responsive to alumni communications
- Highlight upcoming DFAT opportunities during the post-course workshop
- Provide MAP SU with any follow-up information from alumni that could enhance their visibility or eligibility for future events

For high-profile cohorts (e.g. women leaders, GEDSI champions, climate adaptation professionals), MAP SU may request ongoing updates from Course Providers regarding alumni engagement and the status of WBPs up to 6–12 months post-course.

Providers are not expected to provide long-term alumni management but should ensure a smooth and well-supported transition into the MAP Alumni Network, and maintain respectful, open communication with MAP SU for any alumni-related follow-up.

21. LIST OF TEMPLATES AND RESOURCES

To support consistency, quality, and compliance across all MAP Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues, MAP SU provides a suite of official templates and resources. Course Providers are expected to use these documents unless otherwise advised and ensure that all course staff are familiar with their use.

Templates will be made available upon contract signing or request via the MAP SU team. Providers may adapt certain documents to suit the course context with prior approval, but core structure and reporting requirements must be retained.

21.1 Core Templates Provided by MAP SU

- **Work-based Project Template**
  Used by participants to develop, refine, and document their WBPs throughout the course lifecycle. Includes GEDSI integration prompts and implementation planning sections.
- **Orientation Checklist**
  Ensures all required elements are covered during the course orientation, including logistics, safeguarding, digital access, cultural briefings, and participant responsibilities.
- **DFAT Branding Guide / Mekong-Australia Partnership Style Guide**
  Provides standards for logo usage, co-branding, fonts, colours, and communications tone. Must be followed in all course materials, reports, and public content.
- **Communications Plan Template**
  Used to plan social media, participant testimonials, alumni engagement content, and media releases. Aligns with MAP SU approvals process and public diplomacy objectives.
- **Incident Report Template**
  Required for all welfare, safety, or critical incidents. Documents chronology, actions taken, outcomes, and escalation. Submitted within 24 hours to MAP SU.
- **Certificate Template**
  Standardised design for participant completion certificates, co-branded with the MAP logo and Provider details. Issued upon successful course completion.
- **End of Training Evaluation Survey**
  Used to collect structured participant feedback on course content, delivery, logistics, accessibility, and learning impact. Can be adapted for in-country or online formats.
- **Completion Report Template**
  Final report format capturing course overview, MEL data, GEDSI outcomes, WBP summaries, alumni insights, and lessons learned. Includes standard structure and annex requirements.

21.2 Additional Supporting

- GEDSI Mainstreaming Checklist
- Disability Support Needs Assessment
- Accessible Content and Digital Delivery Guidelines
- Presentation templates (PowerPoint) for opening and closing sessions
- Banner Templates
- Media consent form

Course Providers should ensure that all relevant templates are embedded into internal workflows and that delivery teams are trained in their application prior to course commencement.

If Providers develop supplementary tools (e.g. sector-specific WBP planning tools or visual guides), these may be shared with MAP SU for quality assurance and possible inclusion in future template packages.

22. LIST OF RELEVANT POLICIES

All Course Providers engaged in the delivery of MAP Short Courses, Masterclasses, and Dialogues are required to comply with a suite of Australian Government and DFAT policies, as well as standards specific to the Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP). These policies underpin the integrity, inclusivity, accountability, and quality of MAP-funded programs and must be understood and applied by all staff involved in course design, delivery, and reporting.

MAP SU will provide links or access to the most current versions of these documents upon contract commencement.

22.1 Mandatory DFAT and Government of Australia Policies

- **Child Protection Policy**
  Sets out mandatory child protection standards for DFAT-funded activities. All course staff must sign and adhere to the Child Protection Code of Conduct.
  https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/child-protection
- **Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy**
  Requires all DFAT partners to prevent, report, and respond to sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.
  https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/preventing-sexual-exploitation-abuse-and-harassment
- **International Gender Equality Strategy (2023–2030)**
  Outlines Australia's strategic commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment in development, foreign policy, and trade.
  https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/gender-equality
- **Australia's International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy**
  Promotes disability-inclusive development and sets out DFAT's expectations for equity, access, and meaningful participation.
  https://www.dfat.gov.au/development/topics/development-issues/disability-inclusive-development
- **Australia's Climate Change Action Strategy**
  Details Australia's approach to integrating climate resilience, emissions reduction, and climate-smart development.
  https://www.dfat.gov.au/development/topics/development-issues/climate-change
- **Family Planning and the Aid Program: Guiding Principles**
  Provides principles for supporting reproductive health and rights within DFAT-funded programs.
  https://www.dfat.gov.au/development/topics/development-issues/health
- **Fraud Control and Anti-Corruption Policy**
  Outlines DFAT's expectations regarding fraud prevention and response in aid programs.
  https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/corporate/fraud-control
- **Counter-Terrorism Guidelines**
  Ensure DFAT funding is not used, directly or indirectly, to support terrorist activities.
  https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/security/counter-terrorism
- **Commonwealth Procurement Rules and Guidelines**
  Apply to procurement and subcontracting under DFAT contracts.
  https://www.finance.gov.au/government/procurement/commonwealth-procurement-rules

- **Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines**
  Guide the administration of any grants disbursed through MAP.
  https://www.finance.gov.au/government/commonwealth-grants

22.2 Program-Specific Guidelines and Standards

- **Mekong-Australia Partnership Style Guide**
  Provides branding and communications protocols specific to MAP-funded activities.
- **MAP GEDSI Expectations**
  Describes the intersectional approach to GEDSI across all MAP components and outlines performance benchmarks for course providers.
- **MAP MEL Framework**
  Defines MEL tools, indicators, data standards, and reporting requirements for MAP Short Courses.
- **MAP Risk and Incident Management Procedures**
  Includes protocols for welfare issues, critical incidents, and missing persons reporting.
- **Tetra Tech Code of Conduct and Client Service Standards**
  Applies to all MAP delivery partners and subcontractors.

Providers must familiarise themselves with these policies and ensure all staff and subcontracted personnel receive appropriate induction. Non-compliance may result in contract termination or exclusion from future MAP opportunities.

ANNEX 1. MAINSTREAMING GEDSI IN DESIGN AND DELIVERY

The Leadership and Skills program applies a twin-track approach to GEDSI, combining GEDSI-targeted activities with mainstreaming across all aspects of program operations and delivery, consistent with the MAP Phase 2 Portfolio Design Framework. The Leadership and Skills program aims to improve the leadership capabilities and skills of women, people with disability and other marginalised groups. This is represented in Intermediate Outcome 2 in the program logic. Under Intermediate Outcome 1, the program also aims to increase the knowledge and skills of current and emerging leaders (i.e. course participants) in MAP thematic areas. This includes increasing participants knowledge and skills in GEDSI.

Table 1 provides an overview of the GEDSI expectations at each stage of short course and masterclass design and delivery.

Table 1 GEDSI integration within short courses and masterclasses

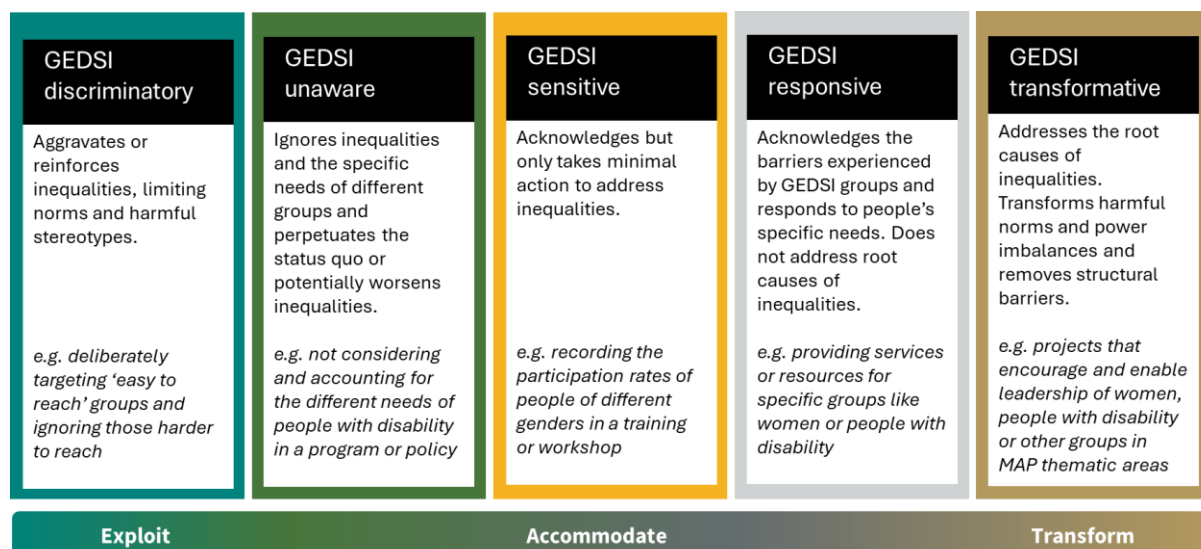| Stage	GEDSI integration
Procurement	• A MAP SU GEDSI staff member will provide information on the GEDSI expectations for the course/masterclass during the Inception Briefing • Tenderers will be required to detail their approach to GEDSI within course/masterclass design and delivery • Tenderers will be required to nominate a GEDSI specialist within their proposal. MAP SU may specify a minimum number of days to be allocated to the GEDSI specialist.

Inception and design	• The providers' GEDSI specialist will provide oversight of GEDSI mainstreaming within course design. They will:
	  – Integrate information on foundational GEDSI concepts into the course content (this may include but is not limited to gender, disability, SOGIE, gender equality, equity, models of disability, barriers, transformative change, 'nothing about us without us', and universal design).
	  – Ensure GEDSI content reflects the social, cultural, economic and political context of the Mekong subregion/relevant countries.
	  – Translate GEDSI theories and principles into practical approaches relevant to the course topic(s)
	  – Support other course leaders/Facilitators to integrate a GEDSI lens across course content.
	• The provider will ensure venues, activities and materials are accessible and inclusive for participants. This requires understanding and responding to the specific needs of identified participants.
	• Providers will identify opportunities to partner with local organisations, together with drawing on alumni and local presenters and facilitators where possible.

Delivery	• GEDSI specialist and local organisations/facilitators, where relevant, lead on the facilitation of GEDSI-focussed content • Training processes are inclusive and participatory, and provide opportunities for diverse participant voices to be heard • Reasonable accommodations are provided to participants to support full and equitable participation, as required

Stage	GEDSI integration
	• Facilitators encourage participants to apply GEDSI lens in exercises
Coaching/work-based projects	• The GEDSI specialist is part of the coaching team • Coaches support participants to mainstream GEDSI within their work-based projects • Coaches encourage participants to apply transformative approaches in the delivery of their projects (see 'Transformative Approaches' below) • Adaptive coaching addresses intersectional needs of the participants
Completion and reporting	• The provider includes questions relating to GEDSI knowledge and awareness in the pre- and post-competency test • MEL data is disaggregated by gender, age, disability and, where relevant, indigeneity, ethnicity and location • GEDSI mainstreaming within work-based projects is celebrated e.g. at a final symposium to share results

TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES

Applicants will be encouraged to apply transformative approaches in the delivery of their work-based projects. Transformative approaches focus on addressing the root causes of exclusion and inequality. This means going beyond treating the 'symptoms' and addressing the 'root causes' such as discriminatory social norms, power dynamics, policies, legislation, and other political, economic and legal structures.[1]

Short course and masterclass participants are emerging leaders within the Mekong subregion and are well placed to drive transformative change within their sectors and institutions, either now or in the future. The provider will support participants to identify opportunities for integrating transformative approaches into their work-based projects. This means identifying approaches or activities that seek to build equitable and inclusive social norms, reinforce enablers and address structural barriers (see Figure 1)

Figure 1 The GEDSI continuum

GEDSI discriminatory	GEDSI unaware	GEDSI sensitive	GEDSI responsive	GEDSI transformative
Aggravates or reinforces inequalities, limiting norms and harmful stereotypes. *e.g. deliberately targeting 'easy to reach' groups and ignoring those harder to reach*	Ignores inequalities and the specific needs of different groups and perpetuates the status quo or potentially worsens inequalities. *e.g. not considering and accounting for the different needs of people with disability in a program or policy*	Acknowledges but only takes minimal action to address inequalities. *e.g. recording the participation rates of people of different genders in a training or workshop*	Acknowledges the barriers experienced by GEDSI groups and responds to people's specific needs. Does not address root causes of inequalities. *e.g. providing services or resources for specific groups like women or people with disability*	Addresses the root causes of inequalities. Transforms harmful norms and power imbalances and removes structural barriers. *e.g. projects that encourage and enable leadership of women, people with disability or other groups in MAP thematic areas*
Exploit		**Accommodate**		**Transform**

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[1] For more information on transformative approaches, see: https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/library/gender-transformative-approaches-concept-note_en