



## Evaluation of the UNU Programmes in Iceland

Final Report

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

AUI	Agricultural University of Iceland
BoARD	Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ethiopia
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CCU	Climate Change Unit (of the Government of Uganda)
CoP	Conference of Parties
CRFM	Caribbean Region Fisheries Mechanism
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DfID	Department for International Development, (United Kingdom)
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EEA	European Economic Area
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FTP	(United Nations University) Fisheries Training Programme
GDC	Geothermal Development Company (Kenya)
GEST	(United Nations University) Gender Equality and Studies Training Programme
GIS	Geographic Information System
GTP	(United Nations University) Geothermal Training Programme
ICEIDA	Icelandic International Development Agency
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGA	International Geothermal Association
IIFET	International Institute of Fisheries Economics & Trade
IOI	International Ocean Institute
IPMA	International Project Management Association
ISK	Islandic Krona
ITP	International Training Programme
KenGen	Kenya Electricity Generating Company Limited
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean (Region)
LaGeo	LaGeo Sociedad Anónima de Capital Variable
LRT	(United Nations University) Land Restoration Training Programme
LUANAR	Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs (of Iceland)
MFA-ICEIDA	Division of MFA for bilateral development assistance
MFRI	Marine and Fisheries Research Institute
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
MSc	Master of Science
NDF	Nordic Development Fund
NEMA	National Environmental Management Agency in Uganda
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development

NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development / Development Assistance Committee
OS	Orkustofnun (National Energy Authority of Iceland)
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations environmental Program
UNFCCC	United National Framework Convention for Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNU	United Nations University
UNU-EHS	United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security
UNU-MERIT	United Nations University – Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology
UNU-WIDER	UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research
WGC	World Geothermal Congress

## Executive Summary

### I. Introduction

As part of its Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget, the Government of Iceland funds four thematic United Nations University (UNU) programmes in Iceland. These are:

- The Geothermal Training Programme (GTP), launched in 1979 and hosted by the National Energy Authority of Iceland (Orkustofnun, OS);
- The Fisheries Training Programme (FTP), launched in 1997 and hosted by the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute (MFRI);
- The Land Restoration Training Programme (LRT), piloted in 2007; launched in 2010; and hosted by the Agricultural University of Iceland (AUI) and the Soil Conservation Service of Iceland; and,
- The Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme (GEST), piloted in 2009, launched in 2013 and hosted by the University of Iceland.

The programmes draw on Iceland's expertise within these four areas to build capacity in developing countries or conflict/post-conflict countries. As high quality *capacity development* programmes, they differ considerably from the other UNU entities, which mostly have a research and/or policy advice profile. The core activity of the Iceland programmes is providing five or six-month training programmes in Iceland. From 1979 until 2016, 1,149 fellows from 101 countries, of which 30 percent were women, attended the UNU programmes in Iceland. GTP and FTP – which are mature programmes and better resourced – also provide regular short courses in the partner countries and have for many years supported post graduate academic studies in Iceland for fellows who have excelled in the six-month programme. LRT and GEST offer or aim to offer short courses and post-graduate degree studies too, but so far have had few resources to do so.

### II. Objectives of the evaluation

The Evaluation of the UNU Training Programmes in Iceland was commissioned by Iceland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs to enhance accountability and learning based on an assessment of the processes and achievements of the four programmes.

The objectives of the evaluation comprise: i) providing evidence, analysis and an assessment of how the programmes have performed, with a focus on results and identifying the factors that contributed to and/or hampered the achievement of results; ii) extracting the lessons that can be learnt from the way the programmes have operated and the results that they have achieved; and, iii) determining the implications of these lessons for the possible establishment and good functioning of a UNU Institute in Iceland. The evaluation should furthermore apply the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, and efficiency.

### III. Methodological approach

The evaluation team employed a mixed method approach, including conducting an in-depth review of programme documentation; administering a survey to over 70 percent of the former fellows; undertaking participatory SWOT workshops with each programme; and holding an RBM workshop with the programmes and MFA. The team also undertook semi-structured interviews and/or focus group discussions with current and former fellows/course participants, programme staff, lecturers, partner institutions, board members, study committee members, host institutions, UNU, UN agencies, and other stakeholders. The team visited the premises where the programmes are run in Iceland. Members of the evaluation team attended sessions during the training in Iceland and interacted with current lectures and fellows.

The team applied an outcome harvesting-inspired approach to the extent possible to determine the degree to which change agents (fellows and partner institutions) brought about changes in behaviours, relationships, actions, activities, policies and/or practices. To assess these types of results at the country level, the team conducted field work in El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Vietnam – countries that had been specified in the terms of reference (ToR) of the evaluation. The team also undertook telephone, email and Skype interviews with fellows in Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Niger, Dominica, Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Saint Lucia, Mozambique and Palestine.

The constructive engagement of the programmes and the high level of participation of former fellows resulted in a comprehensive sets of both qualitative and quantitative data.

### IV. Effectiveness

There are many important macro-, meso-, and micro-level results in the partner developing countries that the UNU Iceland programmes have contributed to.

Outcomes of the UNU Iceland programmes at the level of contributions to changes in national policy and governance systems are substantially more difficult to quantify. In spite of this, the evaluation has been able to collect a number of examples indicating that the programmes are having an impact at the **macro level**. An average of one in every five fellows has engaged with policy processes upon returning home, and approximately one in eight has seen her or his research used in policymaking. Several research projects conducted during the training in Iceland have formed the basis for macro-level changes introduced in the fellows' countries. A number of fellows have been very influential within their sectors in their countries and led important policy process. While acknowledging that their contribution is but one among many, all those interviewed recognised that their ability to fulfil their role owed much to the training in Iceland. Other fellows working on a more technical level have developed processes and technologies that have since been scaled up and had an impact on practices country-wide.

Outcomes at the macro level seem to depend in part on who is recruited to the programme. The evidence from this evaluation suggests that recruiting mid- to senior-level fellows from public entities at the central government level is more likely to lead to policy changes at the

national level. Early career professionals frequently do not have the position to initiate or lead complex change process, and decentralised government organs rarely have the mandate, the power or the resources to influence country-wide policy processes.

Macro (and meso) level results may also be affected by the depth and comprehensiveness of the capacity development activity. The data gathered suggests that GTP and FTP fellows who have continued with Masters and PhD studies in Iceland have been particularly prodigious in contributing to outcomes at those levels.

Results at the **meso level**, in terms of changes in the systems, practices, methods, and more broadly the ‘behaviour’ of organisations are also significant in number and diversity. Novel or improved practices have been introduced by a majority of fellows in their organisations, ranging from administrative and managerial procedures, to technical processes and tools. Fellows are also playing key roles in developing or leading new projects and programmes in their organisations and beyond, often based on the project work undertaken in Iceland.

Some of these initiatives have the potential of contributing to broader changes in policy and societal practices in their countries. In those cases where several fellows from the same agency or institute attended a UNU programme, they often collectively raised the standards of practices in the organisation. This was particularly true of organisations that over many years have sent fellows to the FTP and GTP programmes.

Likewise, academic institutions have benefitted in terms of revised or expanded curricula; new training approaches and materials; and expanded research and teaching exchanges, in many instances accompanied by new research funding. While the results of changes introduced to academic curricula have not been possible to quantify, fellows were of the view that such improvements benefitted their students and through them the sector as a whole.

Almost all fellows have also disseminated the learning from Iceland either within their organisation or externally, in several cases in innovative ways and with important effects on other individuals or organisations.

As expected, the greatest contribution of the UNU Iceland programmes has been at the **micro level**, in terms of the change experienced by the individual fellows attending the training in Iceland. The types and intensity of contributions at this level are impressive. A majority of fellows report that they have been promoted upon returning to their workplace as a result of the training. The vast majority of fellows also reported gaining confidence and motivation, applying new knowledge, approaches, and skills, and being handed greater responsibility. Several are embarking on new academic pursuits and some have gained recognition at the national, regional or international levels. Some have been awarded new professional development opportunities, including at the international level.

Finally, **networking** among fellows is occurring primarily within each cohort and often supported by social media platforms. Contacts between fellows combine personal and professional matters, and in a few cases fellows are collaborating or interacting on technical issues.



Only in very few instances have fellows organised themselves at the country or regional levels to meet and exchange information and ideas.

### ***Contributing factors***

Different factors contribute to the results achieved by the programmes at the country level.

First, the UNU programmes in Iceland provide training that is of high quality. Theory, professional skills training, and project work are combined, which gives fellows a unique edge.

Overall, the four programmes have managed to achieve a relevant balance between theory and practice that maximises the usefulness of the programmes for the fellows. Moreover, the programmes take advantage from the Icelandic context and have catered to the practical and social needs of the fellows in a way that fellows have described as welcoming, caring and generally very efficient.

Second, the programmes are appropriately intense, making the most of the fellows' time in Iceland. The training is long enough for fellows to immerse themselves over many weeks, but short enough so that many employers feel they can cope with the staff shortage that ensues.

In addition to the content, design, and overall quality of the programmes, other important factors contributing to their success include:

- Building on nearly 40 years of experience of running training programmes in Iceland and learning lessons along the way;
- A robust recruitment process of fellows to which much care, attention, time, and resources are devoted;
- A competent and committed team that makes up the core staff;
- Experienced and knowledgeable lecturers;
- Responsive and adaptable management approach that involves monitoring, assessment, and reflection processes;
- Smooth administration of the training programmes;
- Supportive additional activities (short courses, post-graduate scholarships, travel grants for conferences, etc.);
- Supportive host agencies that provide a conducive environment and access to a range of resources; and,
- Core funding from MFA.

Of these, the recruitment process is particularly critical for the programmes to select candidates who can draw maximum benefit from the training in Iceland and contribute to change upon returning home. In this regard, establishing institutional partnerships with organisations in developing countries has been advantageous for LRT, FTP, and GTP by providing a useful entry point into the respective sector. Institutional partnerships, moreover, enhance the sustainability of the capacity gained by the fellows within their respective workplaces. Meanwhile, GEST has been served well by looser agreements with partners from civil society, the public sector, and academic institutions, which the programme recruits from.

For capacity development efforts of this kind to have some effect at the country level beyond the individual fellows being trained, it is important to build a critical mass of people in a country with the capacity and motivation to promote change. All programmes have recognised this since they were established, but only LRT has adhered strictly to this principle in its recruitment strategy. The country selection of GTP and FTP (and very recently GEST) has sometimes been dictated by the availability of additional funding sources and/or Iceland government interests, leading to a relative dispersion of partner countries. This has sometimes worked against the programmes' aim of building critical masses in the partner organisations and countries.

## **V. Sustainability**

The sustainability of the programmes is high in terms of the benefits of the training continuing after the fellows have completed their studies in Iceland, as demonstrated by the many results at the country level. Participants are applying and sharing their skills and knowledge, and serving as change agents. Sustainability could potentially be further enhanced through alumni networks through which fellows could seek synergies to further improve their capacity and that of their organisations. The extent to which short courses at country level have produced sustainable results is less clear since there is insufficient systematic follow up on what participants have learnt and applied in their workplaces.

In terms of financial sustainability, the programmes are strongly, if not fully, dependent on funding from MFA. The size of the annual grants from MFA has sometimes been unpredictable and decisions on fund allocations sometimes tardy, resulting in uncertainty that has hampered long-term planning. Programmes have made efforts to diversify their funding sources, but with mixed results, GTP having been the most successful in complementing MFA funding with other income-generating activities.

## **VI. Relevance**

The UNU programmes in Iceland are deemed by fellows as highly useful for themselves and their organisations, and respond well to the challenges at the country level identified by the fellows. Moreover, they are generally very relevant to Iceland's strategy for development cooperation, particularly in relation to natural resources management, gender equality and environmental sustainability. The activities of the programmes are likewise relevant to a majority of the SDGs, both directly and indirectly. Nevertheless, gender analysis, gender mainstreaming approaches and conflict sensitivity perspectives could be more consistently integrated into the natural resource-related programmes, while poverty perspectives could be further strengthened in all programmes.

The programmes' alignment with and contribution to the UNU Strategic Plan 2015-2019 are less clear. While there are a number of elements in which the programmes support UNU's mission and current objectives, there is a misalignment between the strong focus on research

and policy advice in the Strategic Plan, and the capacity development activities that are the core of the UNU Iceland programmes. Forcing the programmes to fully align with the Strategic Plan might jeopardise the programmes' core features and deliverables. Any future adjustments of the structure, scope or content of the programmes would need to be undertaken in a way that will not diminish their ability to continue to offer high-quality capacity development activities to professionals from developing countries.

## **VII. Cost efficiency**

The comparison of the costs of the four UNU Iceland programmes reveals that on average FTP has the lowest cost per fellow, followed by GTP, GEST and LRT. There are some important differences in cost areas common to all programmes, which suggests that savings could be made by aligning the practices of programme with the least expensive approach.

The marginal costs per fellow indicates that GEST and LRT could gain from increasing the annual intake of fellows from the current level of 12 to 14 to a level of 20 or slightly above.

Doubts are often raised about whether flying participants across the world to study in expensive developed countries is justified, when training can be undertaken with lower costs in developing countries themselves. However, when a capacity development initiative, such as the ones in Iceland, achieves important results at country level by drawing on all the advantages of bringing participants to a developed country to study, the higher costs seem to be a justified and constitute a sound investment in the capacity of developing country participants. Moreover, the cost comparison with other capacity development efforts in developed countries shows that the cost per fellow and day of the UNU Iceland programmes is at a reasonable and generally competitive level.

## **VIII. Opportunities and areas for improvement**

The evaluation concludes that the programmes could be improved in terms of more systematic results-based management, closer engagement with the UN system, and actions to enhance programme relevance. These aspects are discussed below.

Despite uncertainties about its establishment and organisation, the new institute that is under consideration could provide additional opportunities for the programmes in terms of strategic leadership, more interaction with the other UNU institutes, improved resource mobilisation efforts, the ability to streamline functions and capitalise on economies of scale in relation to certain activities and administration (e.g. certain types of procurement, accounting, IT management, etc.). In forming such an institute, it would be important to draw on the current best practices of each programme.

There are, however, fears among programme stakeholders that the potential institute could generate added bureaucracy and costs that would undermine efficiency and flexibility. Effective leadership from MFA and UNU headquarters during establishment would be paramount to ensure that the programmes maximise their gains from the new structure, and avoid dimin-

ishing the unique strengths and value that the programmes offer in building capacity and affecting change. The eventual transition would need to involve the programmes and the respective host institutions, and would benefit from being led by a small task force with clear terms of reference.

### ***Management for results***

There is scope to strengthen the governance of the programmes and to enhance the strategic guidance provided by the boards. Neither MFA nor UNU have so far taken a lead in promoting a results focus or demanding accountability against the goals and targets set in the programmes' strategies. Nor have the boards been equally proactive in reviewing achievements and providing strategic direction. The reporting requirements – both narrative and financial – from MFA and UNU have been minimal, and reporting quality has even declined since UNU introduced the Pelikan system.

**Recommendation 1: The advisory boards should play a more proactive role in providing strategic direction for each programme and assume guardianship of each programme's strategic plan. Furthermore, MFA should demand analytical annual narrative reports that venture beyond reporting on activities and outputs and address achievements at country level. In addition, MFA should demand uniform financial reports from each of the four programmes. Finally, the governance structures should include representation from developing countries, in line with UN practice.**

With their adaptive management practices already in place, the programmes have a head start in developing an effective results based management approach. So far, the strategic plans of the programmes have not been systematically used as the basis for monitoring, results reporting or annual planning. There is also scope for developing more robust theories of change, intervention logic, results framework, and M&E frameworks for all programmes, and for integrating these into their operations and management.

A key instrument for programmes to promote results at country level are the recruitment strategies. While the programmes have developed de facto recruitment strategies, these are not sufficiently formalised on paper or systematically monitored. Such strategies are so fundamental to the programmes' respective training components that they should constitute a core component of their strategic plans and be regularly monitored.

**Recommendation 2: The programmes should revisit their strategic plans and determine what key factors have undermined their usefulness for learning and managing, as well as for reporting and accountability. The programmes should begin the process of revising or redrafting their strategic plans, with the aim of producing a useful, robust, and realistic results based management framework that has buy-in from all staff and the board/studies committees. The strategic plans and recruitment strategies should be revisited regularly – typically on an annual basis – and revised as necessary.**

While the programmes have been apt at monitoring their training activities and outputs, the follow-up of potential results on the ground (outcomes) has been ad hoc and not systematical-

ly documented. Obtaining outcome data from the wide range of countries understandably presents challenges for all programmes. Monitoring should be regular and systematic, but not necessarily exhaustive, so as to fit within programme budgets.

**Recommendation 3:** The programmes should aim to systematically capture outcome level results at the country level. On an annual basis and in consultation with their governing structures, the programmes should devise a results monitoring plan, based on their respective prioritised needs for information, and determine what monitoring methods and approaches to apply.

### ***UN partnerships***

The programmes should explore forging closer ties with the UN system in the partner countries. The UN system could potentially serve as a partner after the training to ensure follow-up, support networking of alumni, promote and make use of the fellows' projects, and link them with ongoing development partner initiatives. Since the Icelandic programmes have more interaction with actors at the country level than most other UNU institutes, the programmes could pave the way for other UNU entities to connect more systematically to the UN Country Teams.

**Recommendation 4:** The programmes should forge close ties to the UN Country Teams with the aims of promoting synergies, information exchanges, strengthening follow-up mechanisms, and potentially linking with and leveraging ongoing country level processes. To explore such opportunities, the programmes should consider establishing contacts with the UN Resident Coordinator's office in Uganda, a country in which all the programmes have a critical mass of former fellows. Through the evaluation team, the RC's office has expressed interest in engaging with the programmes.

GEST has trained a number of UN employees, in spite of the UN system having its own gender training structures for its staff. Training UN employees with Icelandic ODA meant for building the capacity of organisations from developing countries is not appropriate and reflects weak guidance from UNU and MFA. An exception to this stance would be the training of UNRWA's Palestinian staff, given the special role UNRWA has as a de facto public service provider for Palestinian refugees. For UNRWA, the GEST programme has served as an important source for training.

**Recommendation 5:** The UN programmes in Iceland should not include UN employees in its five- or six-month training courses, with the exception of UNRWA employees.

While GEST has signed an MoU with the ILO Training Centre in Turin concerning gender training, it has so far not engaged with UN Women at the headquarters level and its gender training centre in Santo Domingo.

**Recommendation 6:** GEST should engage with UN Women at the headquarters level to establish synergies, define the respective roles, and avoid overlaps. The UNU Office in New York and Iceland's permanent representation in New York could assist in this process.

### ***Networks at the country level***

While there is only moderate interest from GTP and FTP fellows to establish alumni networks, the alumni from the younger programmes are generally very keen to and see a lot of potential in organising themselves into networks. Apart from exchanging ideas and news, fellows believe that networks can serve to advocate, organise training events, brief and later debrief new fellows, and foster synergies and opportunities for leveraging new initiatives and/or funding. This could contribute to enhancing the sustainability of programme results. Networks can also be drawn upon for the follow-up of programme results.

Lessons learnt from the alumni networks of other capacity development initiatives are that they are most effective if the initiative comes from the alumni themselves and the members feel strong ownership. If and when the alumni have mobilised themselves, the programmes' role should merely be to facilitate. The networks should develop and be sustained by the alumni themselves and not be maintained by external financial support.

**Recommendation 7: The UNU programmes in Iceland should encourage the formation of networks, but allow the initiatives to emerge from the demand of the alumni. The networks should not receive regular direct financial support from the programmes.**

### ***Enhancing the programmes***

The programmes are offering training of high quality that is leading to results at the country level. Going forward, it is important to ensure that the factors that contribute to quality capacity development and subsequent results are safeguarded.

**Recommendation 8: The five- and six-month training programmes should maintain the balance between theoretical and practical content, the project work, the professional skills training, the social components, and the current length.**

The diploma and ECTS that the University of Iceland offers GEST fellows have been highly valued by the fellows and their organisations. Meanwhile, many FTP and LRT fellows have experienced the limitations of the UNU certificate in terms of future academic pursuits and promotions, and strongly urge the programmes to upgrade the certificate to a university diploma. This may also encourage more women to apply for the programmes. Moreover, accreditation is in line with UNU strategic priorities. The Bologna process standards that need to be met for granting credits entails a demanding and lengthy procedure though. Therefore, it will be important to undertake an assessment of both the potential benefits and costs of introducing a credit system to the other three programmes.

**Recommendation 9: GTP, FTP, and LRT should further explore the possibilities of offering a university diploma and ECTS for fellows completing the six-month training programme. Drawing on the experience of GEST, this will involve assessing both the benefits and the costs of meeting the Bologna process standards.**

In spite of all programmes having an appropriate global perspective, including lecturers and board/studies committee members from developing countries with solid developing country experience would be a means for enhancing the poverty perspectives and approaches in the training content. This could further enhance the credibility of the programmes. In this regard, partner institutions and former fellows and graduates could be a potential source of expertise. In the case of GTP, which has seen a steady aging of its corps of lecturers, engaging younger lecturers from developing countries could also serve to renew its lecturer pool.

**Recommendation 10: The programmes should make more effort to diversify its corps of lecturers and advisers to include professionals from developing countries.**

Short courses implemented in partner countries constitute an important part of the activities of GTP and FTP, while both LRT and GEST would like to develop this component further. The provision of short courses is, however, a crowded scene, with a number of different actors in different countries providing training in subjects related to fisheries, gender equality, land restoration, renewable energy, and the environment more broadly. It is therefore critical for the programmes to assess the extent to which their short courses can add value, promote sustainability, and be competitive cost-wise. Demand-driven initiatives that cater to specific needs with strong ownership at country/sub-regional level should be prioritised. The programmes should aim for building the capacities of country-level institutions to conduct their own training.

**Recommendation 11: The programmes should undertake demand-driven short courses that are tailored to expressed needs and for which there is ownership at country level. The ultimate aim should be to contribute to sustainable capacity development structures in the partner countries.**

The findings indicate that fellows who have been granted scholarships for Master's or PhD programmes in Iceland have been particularly proficient in contributing to results at the country level. GTP and FTP should continue to offer this type of support, while LRT and GEST should start providing Master's scholarships. Tracer studies of former Master's and PhD graduates should be undertaken at regular intervals to monitor the effects of these programmes.

**Recommendation 12: All four programmes should offer post graduate studies in Iceland. Former graduates should be encompassed by the programmes' monitoring efforts. MFA should consider funding Master's and PhD components for all four programmes.**

While GTP, FTP, and LRT have made significant efforts to improve gender parity and introduce gender perspectives into the programmes, there is scope for further improvement, in particular in the cases of GTP and FTP. By drawing on the expertise of GEST, the other pro-

grammes could examine how gender equality considerations could be further integrated into their training programmes, without necessarily adding additional lectures.

**Recommendation 13:** The programmes should consider drawing on GEST as a resource to train staff and lecturers on gender equality analysis and integration of gender issues and perspectives into training components. GEST could furthermore offer similar services to other UNU institutes.

All four programmes can strengthen poverty perspectives and approaches within the training content. The poverty context and its implications, such as the pressure it has on land natural resources, social structures, and energy use need stronger attention. Given the mounting conflicts over environmental resources, in particular concerning access to and use of land it would be beneficial to strengthen conflict sensitive perspectives in the three natural resource-related programmes GTP, FTP, and LRT.

**Recommendation 14:** The programmes should explore how they can further strengthen the poverty perspectives in their courses. This includes introducing conflict sensitive perspectives. Having representation from developing countries in their governing structures and recruiting lecturers from developing countries would be essential steps to ensure this.

### ***UNU partnerships and aligning with UNU priorities***

In the event of a UNU Institute being established in Iceland, the programmes would be drawn more into the fold of the UNU family. This could lead to more and better synergies, mutual learning, and improved prospects of collaboration on ongoing and new initiatives.

While the programmes have contributed through their fellows to influencing a range of policies at country level, none of the programmes are geared towards providing policy inputs at the global UN level. None of the programmes have the critical mass of research activities, nor the track record to undertake the high impact policy-oriented research envisaged by the UNU Strategic Plan. Similarly, the programmes lack the communication and outreach capacity necessary for providing advice to a large and varied audience of international policy actors. Addressing these limitations would require additional staff and years to build up, and more importantly a different strategic orientation, away from the current core of capacity development provided in Iceland. On the other hand it would be feasible for the programmes to focus on building research and training capacities in partner countries in a more systematic manner. This is furthermore a priority mentioned in the UNU Strategic Plan. Short courses and the six-month geothermal diploma course in El Salvador have to some extent already contributed in this direction, although the sustainability of these efforts is uncertain.

### ***Funding and Resource Mobilisation***

While the many years of core funding provided by the government of Iceland have been critical to the success of the programmes, their long-term planning has been hampered by the fact



that the support has been mostly short-term and sometimes uncertain from year to year. Given the relevance and results of the programmes, the improved situation of the Icelandic economy, and the government's commitment to increase its ODA budget, the government should consider making good on its pledge to bring the funding of the younger programmes to the level of the older ones. Based on the calculations regarding the marginal cost of fellows, MFA will obtain the greatest value for its contribution if the annual cohort sizes consist of at least 20 fellows.

**Recommendation 15: MFA should provide multi-year funding to the UNU programmes in Iceland. It should fund the programmes at a level that will assure a minimum annual intake of 20 fellows.**

With regards to resource diversification and mobilisation, the programmes may have a better chance of attracting core funds from other bilateral donors and foundations if an institute were established. Moreover, fund raising activities could be streamlined through such an institute. With a broader range of donors, however, there is a danger that the priorities of the funder (such as choice of country and type of participant) take precedence over the strategic priorities of each of the programmes. Thus there is a risk that the support to stakeholders from poorer countries is diminished – or the opposite, that only stakeholders from the poorest countries can be recruited.

**Recommendation 16: The programmes should be strategic and discerning in its resource mobilisation, so that conditions for funding do not compromise objectives and relevance to poverty reduction or lead the programme in a different direction. The programmes should prioritise larger grants, so as to reduce the proportion of transaction costs.**

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

The United Nations University (UNU) is a global think tank and postgraduate teaching organisation with headquarters in Tokyo. The mission of UNU is “to contribute, through collaborative research and education, to efforts to resolve the pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare that are the concern of the United Nations (UN), its Peoples and Member States.”<sup>1</sup> UNU works with universities and research institutes in 12 different UN Member States. Through postgraduate teaching activities, UNU also contributes to capacity building in developing countries.

There are four thematic UNU programmes in Iceland. The Geothermal Training Programme (GTP) was launched in 1979, drawing on Iceland’s specific competence and experience in the field of geothermal energy development. It was UNU’s first environment-related programme. Eighteen years later, the Fisheries Training Programme (FTP) was established, originally modelled on GTP. With fisheries being Iceland’s largest sector at the time, the programme drew on Iceland’s comparative advantage. Building on experience of both GTP and FTP, the Land Restoration Training Programme (LRT) was launched in 2007 and became a UNU programme in 2010 after a three-year pilot phase. It draws on 100 years of Icelandic efforts to halt soil erosion and restore lost and degraded woodlands and its numerous successes in stabilising desertified land. The Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme (GEST), motivated by Iceland’s success in gender equality, began its pilot phase in 2009 and joined UNU in 2013.

Most of the funding for the four programmes is provided by the government of Iceland as part of the country’s Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget, managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The core of the activities are aimed at supporting capacity development in developing countries, or conflict/post-conflict countries.

Since the establishment of GTP in 1979, there has been a continuing evolution in the overall range of activities undertaken by the programmes, individually and collectively. The organisation of training courses accounts for much of the staff time and the overall budget of each programme. In addition, increasing attention is being given to such activities as: i) small-scale research projects and advisory services; ii) facilitating knowledge sharing and dialogue

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<sup>1</sup> UNU Strategic Plan 2015-2019, p 5.

through ICT platforms and by funding participation in conferences and establishing networks; and iii) resource mobilisation.

The four programmes share several characteristics. They:

- Provide five or six-month training programmes in Iceland for fellows from abroad - which comprises their core work;
- Provide (or are in the process of developing) short-term courses at the country and/or regional level;
- Provide (or are in the processes of developing) scholarships for post-graduate academic studies;
- Engage in knowledge-sharing and networking;
- Each have a board with Icelandic members and representatives from UNU;
- Have comparable programme staff structures;
- Are mainly funded by Iceland; and,
- All report to both Iceland's MFA and UNU.

However, there are also many differences. The age, size and budgets of the programmes vary significantly. GTP has been running for nearly 40 years. FTP is also a mature programme, with close to twenty years of experience. These two programmes are also larger, offer regular short courses at country level and have for many years supported post graduate studies in Iceland for fellows that have excelled in the training programme. The operating budgets of the programmes differ considerably, with the largest programmes (GTP) having a budget approximately 3.5 times larger than the smallest one (LRT) in 2016 (see Table 1). FTP and GTP are both hosted by government agencies. LRT has two hosts – a government agency, the Soil Conservation Service of Iceland and the Agricultural University of Iceland (AUI). Meanwhile, GEST is hosted by the University of Iceland (see Table 1).

GEST is the only programme that awards all its fellows a 30 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) post-graduate diploma from the University of Iceland and a UNU fellowship certificate upon completing the five-month training. Fellows from the other three programmes only receive a UNU fellowship certificate at the end of the training.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Former FTP and GTP fellows that enroll in Icelandic universities are granted 30 ECTS towards a Master's degree. LRT is expecting universities in Iceland to grant the same number of ECTS when its Master's programme is underway.

Over their years of existence, FTP and GTP have worked in a broad range of countries. Being in an earlier stage of development, LRT and GEST have concentrated on a smaller group of countries, although GEST has been expanding its scope in the last two years. Table 1 provides a general overview of the four programmes.

**Table 1: Overview of UNU Programmes in Iceland**

	UNU-GTP	UNU-FTP	UNU-LRT	UNU-GEST
<b>Implementation partners</b>	Orkustofnun (National Energy Authority of Iceland OS(Host) ISOR – Iceland Geo-Survey University of Iceland Reykjavik University	Marine and Freshwater Research Institute (Host) Matís Ltd University of Iceland University of Akureyri Holar University College	Agricultural University of Iceland and Soil Conservation Service of Iceland (Hosts)	University of Iceland (Host)
<b>Year started</b>	1979	1998	2010, pilot 2007-2010	2013, pilot-2009-13
<b>2016 budget MUSD<sup>3</sup></b>	3.19	2.02	0.83	1.00
<b>2016 MFA contribution</b>	59%	86%	80%	50%
<b>No. of fellows by 2016</b>	647	347	87	68
<b>Fellow intake 2016</b>	34	23 <sup>4</sup>	11	15
<b>Top 5 countries with most fellows</b>	Kenya = 116 China = 85 Philippines = 40 El Salvador = 39 Ethiopia = 38	Vietnam = 26 Uganda = 24 Tanzania = 23 Kenya = 20 Sri Lanka = 21	Mongolia = 18 Uganda = 17 Ghana = 13 Ethiopia = 8 Namibia = 8	Palestine = 21 Uganda = 18 Malawi = 17 Mozambique = 14 Afghanistan = 7

From 1979 until 2016, 1149 fellows attended the UNU programmes in Iceland. Of these, 354 or 30 percent were women. Fellows have come from 101 countries.

Most fellows have come from Kenya (138), China (106), and Uganda (74) – which in the case of Kenya and China is primarily a reflection of the dominance of these countries in GTP. Among the top 16 countries that attended the programmes, half are from sub-Saharan Africa. The remainder are from the Asia/Pacific region, the Middle East, and Latin and Central

<sup>3</sup> Exchange rate ISK-USD of 0.00775 as of 1 January 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Fellows starting in 2016 and finishing in 2017.

America. Four of the top 16 countries (Ethiopia, Uganda, Malawi and Mozambique) were classified as Least Developed Countries (LDCs) by the UN in 2016.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The Evaluation of the UNU Training programmes in Iceland has been commissioned by Iceland's MFA to enhance accountability and learning. In particular, the evaluation is expected to provide input to plans for a possible future UNU Institute in Iceland so that its systems promote results, efficiency, relevance, and accountability.<sup>5</sup> This institute would bring the four programmes under one umbrella that is run by a common director who is accountable to the UNU Headquarters.

The objectives of the evaluation comprise the following three areas:

1. **Performance:** i) Providing evidence, analysis and an assessment of how the programmes have performed according to the OECD/DAC criteria, with a focus on results. ii) Determining how the design, implementation, management, governance, and administration contributed to and/or hampered the achievement of results.
2. **Lessons:** i) Extracting the lessons that can be learnt from the way the programmes have operated and the results that they have achieved. ii) Determining the implications of these for the establishment and good functioning of a future UNU Institute in Iceland.
3. **Results based management:** Based on the comprehensive understanding of the programmes, identifying steps towards designing a results based management system that is useful, realistic and enhances accountability and effectiveness.

## 1.3 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The evaluation was conducted between December 2016 and June 2017. Based on the OECD/DAC evaluation standards the team devised a framework to guide the evaluation (see Annex 1).

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<sup>5</sup> The UNU Institute in Iceland would most likely be an umbrella organisation formally established under and accountable to the UNU, under which the four UNU Iceland programmes would be placed.

The constructive collaboration with the programmes and high level of participation and engagement from former fellows resulted in relatively comprehensive sets of both qualitative and quantitative data. The data was collected using the techniques outlined below. The principles of participation and utility underpinned the approach and thus the programmes and the team engaged regularly in dialogue with evaluation stakeholders throughout the entire process.

### 1.3.1 Documentation review and analysis

The team reviewed and analysed the following documentation (see Annex 3 for a list of documents reviewed):

- **Fellows lists:** the programmes had spreadsheets of all fellows since 1979.
- **Programme documentation:** strategy documents, board minutes, evaluations, surveys, travel reports, memoranda of understanding, syllabi, public-relations material, and financial data.
- **Project reports:** project reports prepared by the fellows.
- **Pelikan:** team members have searched and analysed Pelikan, UNU's project management system.

### 1.3.2 Survey of former fellows

The team prepared and administered a survey to 874 former fellows (those for which the programmes had active emails). The questionnaire contained mostly quantifiable multiple choice questions, but also provided the opportunity for respondents to provide additional comments. With responses from 639 of the 1,149 former participants, the response rate was very high. The margin of error in the responses is 3.4 percent, with a confidence level of 99 percent. The team cross-tabulated relevant questions by different characteristics of the respondents such as sex, type of programme, and year of attendance. The survey report is included in Annex 4.

### 1.3.3 SWOT exercises

The team sent SWOT-related questions (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) to the core and project staff of each programme through SurveyMonkey,<sup>6</sup> and asked respondents to list three to five answers for each category of questions in relation to programme imple-

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.surveymonkey.com>

mentation. The SWOT responses were collected anonymously and analysed. Members of the evaluation team presented and jointly discussed the results with each programme.

#### **1.3.4 RBM workshop**

The team collected electronic responses to RBM-related questions, analysed the strategies of each programme, and conducted some preliminary interviews. The team then organised a participatory workshop involving representatives from UNU, the four programmes, and MFA to identify and discuss challenges, good practices, needs and options.

#### **1.3.5 Study of country level effects**

With the aim of assessing the results of the programmes at the country level, the team visited El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Vietnam – countries that had been selected by MFA and specified in the terms of reference (ToR) of the evaluation.

- LRT: Uganda, Ghana, Ethiopia, and Malawi
- FTP: Vietnam, Uganda, Tanzania, and Ghana
- GTP: El Salvador, Kenya, Ethiopia, and a focus group discussion in Uganda
- GEST: Malawi, and Uganda

The team also undertook telephone, email and Skype interviews using interview guides with fellows in the following countries:

- LRT: Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, and Niger
- FTP: Member countries of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism. Responses were obtained from Dominica (2), Jamaica (3), Antigua and Barbuda (1), Barbados (1) and Saint Lucia (1). Narratives of organisational and country level achievements were provided by 28 other fellows, from 17 countries.<sup>7</sup>
- GTP: Philippines
- GEST: Mozambique and Palestine

To assess the extent to which change agents (fellows/partner institutions) brought about changes in behaviours, relationships, actions, activities, policies or practices, the team applied an outcome harvesting-inspired approach. This implied gathering evidence on what was

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<sup>7</sup> These countries were: Bangladesh, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, and Vietnam.

achieved, and working backward to determine whether or how the training contributed to the change. The team gleaned information from reports, personal interviews, and other sources to document how the programmes contributed to these types of outcomes.

### **1.3.6 Site visits and observation**

The team visited the premises where the programmes are run in Iceland. Members of the evaluation team attended classes during the training in Iceland and interacted with current lectures and fellows. Likewise, at the country level, the team visited the offices of the partners and other sites and locations that have been influenced by the UNU programmes.

### **1.3.7 Interviews with stakeholders**

A stakeholder analysis conducted with the support of the staff of the four programmes was undertaken in the inception phase. The team tried to interview as many as possible of the stakeholders that the programme staff identified as high priority. The team also interviewed a few stakeholders of medium and low priority. The team undertook semi-structured interviews and/or focus group discussions with current and former fellows and course participants, programme staff, lecturers, partner institutions, board members, study committee members, host institutions, UNU, UN agencies and other stakeholders. The list of informants is included in Annex 2.

### **1.3.8 Cost analysis**

The cost structures and level of the programmes have been analysed and compared to other capacity building efforts. The methodology and limitations are described in Annex 5.

## **1.4 METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS**

While the team has collected a significant amount of data, there are some methodological limitations:

- Not all results that were described to the team could be independently verified. Most of the results discussed in the report have, however, been possible to triangulate and are therefore deemed by the team to be credible.
- The management of all four programmes have been responsive to feedback over the years, which has meant that all of the training programmes have developed over time. This means that when fellows from different cohorts discuss certain aspects of the programme, their experience may be quite different. The team has therefore had to take into account course changes over the years during the interviews. Survey results have also been cross-tabulated by cohort to detect potential patterns resulting from changes in the course content.



- While the survey has provided substantial quantitative and qualitative data, it may have some limitations. As discussed in the survey report, it is likely that there is bias towards fellows who have not changed jobs frequently. Furthermore, the survey feedback on networking is likely to have a positive bias because those who have networked the most among the former fellows are more likely to be included among the respondents since the programmes would most probably have had updated email addresses for them. Furthermore, some comments to the survey questions provided by the fellows reveal that some informants have not interpreted certain questions correctly.
- The team has, in line with the terms of reference, focused on the programme's core work, namely the five/six month courses. The team has collected comparatively less data on the effectiveness of the other programme activities such as short courses, transnational dialogue initiatives, conference grants, post graduate scholarships and research projects. This is also a consequence of very little data being available or obtainable on the results of those activities.

## 1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The team has collected a considerable amount of data about the programmes and their effects on the ground. This report does not intend to comprehensively document all of these. Rather, it aims at providing an overview of salient findings, focusing on the strengths and areas for improvement.

The report consists of seven chapters. The next chapter provides an overview of the programmes' quality and assesses areas for further enhancement. This is followed by chapters that assess results achieved, organisational effectiveness, and relevance, respectively. The evaluation questions (Annex 1) have guided the content of each chapter. The final chapter provides overall conclusions and recommendations.

## 2. The Programmes

This chapter reviews the key features of the UNU training programmes in Iceland. The chapter discusses the recruitment process (section 2.1); lecturing and fellow supervision (2.2); programme design and curriculum (2.3); and activities undertaken by each programme other than the training in Iceland (2.4). The final section (2.5) summarises the chapter's main points.

### 2.1 IDENTIFYING AND SELECTING FELLOWS

Identifying and selecting fellows and partner organisations is recognised by all programmes as a critical step for achieving their objectives, in particular in terms of strengthening the capacity of partner organisations. Each programme dedicates significant time and resources to the selection process, but over time they have adopted slightly different strategies, as elaborated in the paragraphs below. The following sections provide an overview of the programmes' recruitment processes; the criteria used to select fellows; the criteria for country selection; the process of selection for MFA-funded fellows; and the selection process of externally funded fellows. Perspectives on each programme's recruitment effort is then provided.

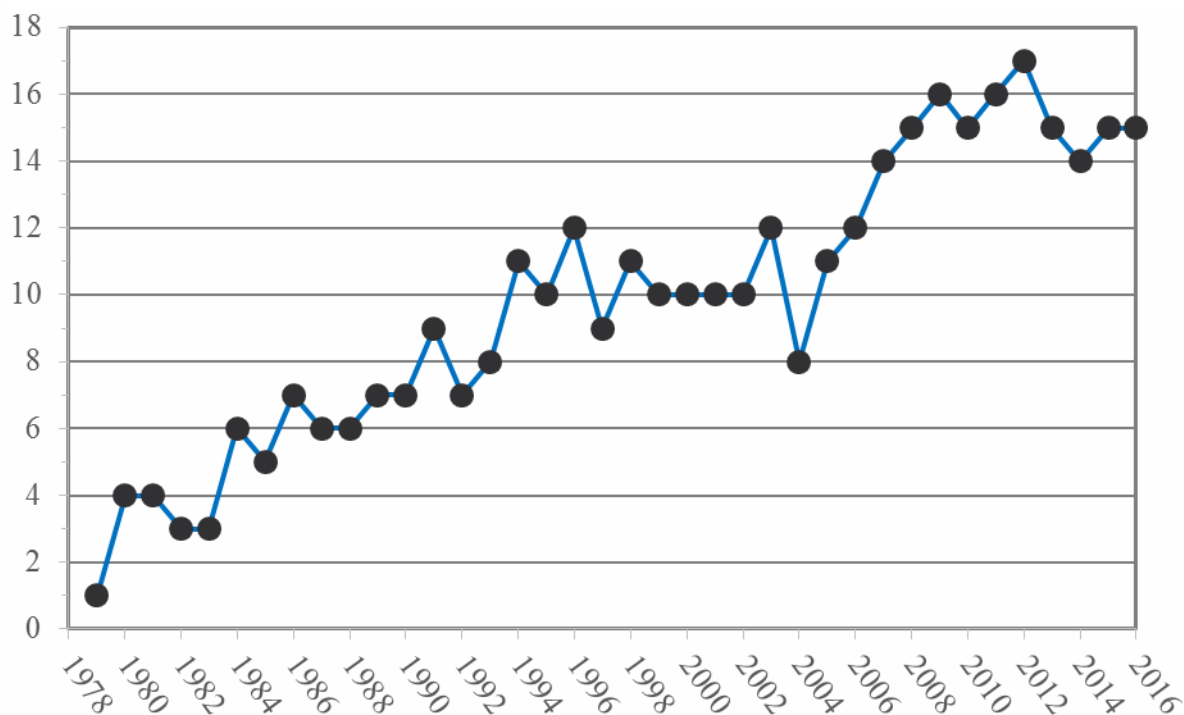
#### 2.1.1 Recruitment overview

The number of fellows per year for GTP's six-month training has increased from two in 1979 to a maximum of 34 in 2013 and 2016. As awareness of climate change grew after 1996, there was an increased interest in renewable energy in more countries. Since 2010 cohorts have been larger in size due to the programme accepting fellows supported by other sources of funding, including sponsorships from geothermal companies. In all 60 countries have been represented in the selection of fellows, including 41 in the last ten years. Twenty-four countries have had three fellows or less (see Figure 3).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> These were: Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Burundi, Comoros, Czechoslovakia, Dominica, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Georgia, Guatemala, Greece, Honduras, India, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Morocco, Nepal, Nevis, St. Vincent & The Grenadines, Sudan, Yugoslavia, Zambia. Among these, are some countries that have only recently shown interest in developing their geothermal resources, while others have changed their energy policies towards a reduced focus on geothermal resource development.

**Figure 1: Number of nationalities represented in the GTP six-month programme, 1979-2016**

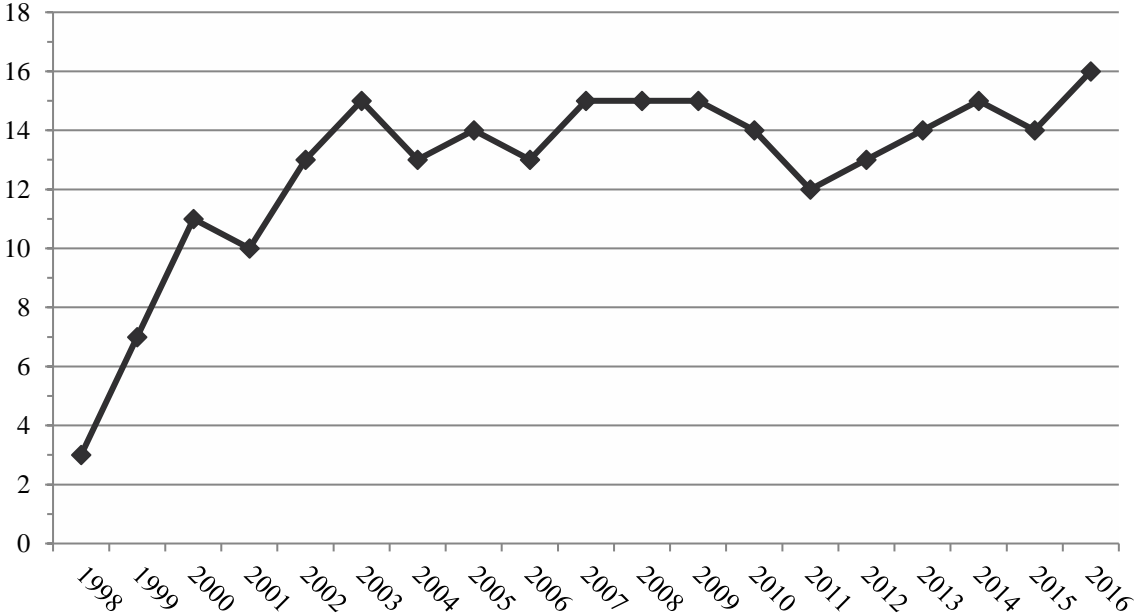


In its first year of operation, FTP invited two fellows each from three African countries: Gambia, Mozambique and Uganda. By the fifth year, the programme had increased the number of fellows three-fold and expanded into Asia, South America, and Europe. By the end of the 2002, FTP had trained 62 fellows from 18 countries.<sup>9</sup> Since then the programme has retained a relatively stable inflow of fellows in the order of 20 fellows per year, from around 14 different nationalities (see Figure 2). By the end of the 2016 programme FTP has had fellows from 53 countries, 26 of which have had three fellows or less.<sup>10</sup> According to the survey of fellows, around three-quarters of the FTP fellows have been recruited from government institutions and agencies.

<sup>9</sup> These countries were: Argentina, Cape Verde, China, Cuba, Estonia, Gambia, Iran, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Mozambique, Russia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda and Vietnam.

<sup>10</sup> 14 of these 26 countries participated in the programme under regional cooperation arrangements, namely the cooperation with the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM; Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Haiti, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago) and with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (Fiji, Nauru, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu).

**Figure 2: Number of nationalities represented in the FTP six-month programme, 1997-2016**



Being much younger programmes, LRT and GEST have had more modest sized cohorts to date and a focus on fewer countries (see Table 2 and Table 3). From an initial annual intake of five to six fellows during the pre- and early establishment phase, both programmes have grown to train around 11 to 15 fellows per year in the last four years. GEST reached 18 fellows in 2017 with the support of an Erasmus grant, but LRT has not yet met the target set in its 2011-2016 Strategic Plan (16 fellows for 2016) due to budget constraints. As of 2016 LRT had accepted 87 fellows from 12 countries (see Table 2). With the exception of two fellows, all of GEST’s fellows have come from Afghanistan, Palestine, Malawi, Mozambique, and Uganda. The Erasmus grant enabled GEST to expand its country base to include fellows from Tunisia, Ethiopia, Jamaica, Lebanon, Nigeria, and Kenya.

**Table 2: Number of LRT fellows per country and year, 2007-2016**

	2007 <sup>11</sup>	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Egypt	1										1
Ethiopia			1	1	1		1	2	2		8
Ghana			1		2	2	1	3	1	3	13
Kyrgyzstan				1			2		2	1	6
Lesotho										2	2
Malawi									2	1	3
Mongolia	1	1	1	2	2	3	1	2	3	2	18
Namibia		3		1		2	1		1		8
Niger				1	1		2	2		1	7
Tunisia	1										1
Uganda	2	2	2		2	2	2	2	2	1	17
Uzbekistan			1			1		1			3
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>87</b>

**Table 3: Number of GEST fellows per country and year, 2009-2017<sup>12</sup>**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Afghanistan	2	3		1					1	7
Ethiopia									2	2
Ghana								1		1
Iraq									1	1
Jamaica									1	1
Lebanon									1	1
Malawi					2	6	4	3	2	17
Mozambique			2	1	2	3	3	2	1	14
Nigeria									1	1
Palestine		3	2	3	2	2	2	2	4	20
Somalia/Kenya <sup>13</sup>									1	1
South Africa								1		1
Tunisia									1	1
Uganda			3	1	2	3	1	6	2	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>86</b>

<sup>11</sup> The first year of LRT consisted of a seven-week course, which was a precursor to the full programme offered from 2008 onwards.

<sup>12</sup> The figures for 2017 are included to show the significant expansion in the number of partner countries.

<sup>13</sup> This refers to a Somali fellow refugee who carries a Kenyan passport but works in Somalia.

### 2.1.2 Criteria for selecting fellows

All programmes have established strict criteria for the selection of fellows, regardless of the funding source. In the case of GTP, the criteria have been built and refined over the 38 years that the programme has been running. Fellows must have relevant undergraduate degrees and a reasonable standard of English (although there are no formal language criteria). The candidates must already be working in the relevant sectors (geothermal industry for GTP; fisheries sector for FTP; land restoration and sustainable land management for LRT; and civil society, the public sector or academia for GEST) and be deemed capable of strengthening the capacity of their organisation upon returning home from Iceland. The programmes target early- to mid-career professionals. GTP, LRT, and FTP have established an age limit of around 40 years, although older candidates can sometimes be considered in exceptional cases when considered particularly relevant for the partner organisation and the country. GEST have set the age limit at 35 years, and so far only made one exception to this rule. In the last year, GEST fellows on Erasmus grants have been slightly younger than fellows in earlier cohorts.

### 2.1.3 Criteria for selecting partner countries

With respect to recruitment, the GTP, FTP and LRT view is that they are supporting countries, not individuals. Recruitment is undertaken from countries with organisations that will support the individuals. Countries with institutions that do not support fellows upon return are avoided.<sup>14</sup> This approach is much less pronounced in GEST.

For all programmes, the Human Development Index and the OECD/DAC list of developing countries serve as an initial guide for the selection of countries to recruit from. For **GTP**, however, the potential for geothermal development in the country and its current status are the primary elements for country selection. For instance in Africa, a handful of East African countries have good resources for electricity generation, while some of the other countries along the Great African Rift Valley have moderate resources that are suitable for direct use, but are unlikely to play a key role in the countries' energy policies. Generally, GTP aims to establish a critical mass in countries. However, GTP may recruit only a few fellows from countries that are in the very early stages of geothermal development, since the capacities needed will have to do more with policy processes than with technical operations. GTP places

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<sup>14</sup> Another issue considered is the risk for defection. Some fellows from Eritrea have not returned home after geothermal training (in Iceland and Kenya). Presently, Eritreans are therefore only being accepted to short courses in Kenya. According to GTP, the trained Eritreans that have returned are contributing to developing the national geothermal sector. .

emphasis on understanding and staying up to date with institutional structures in countries and the quality of their staff and knowledge; for instance, making a special effort to monitor company presentations at conferences. Countries that are currently under scrutiny include the Pacific Island states, Papua New Guinea, and the Andean countries.

Meanwhile, **FTP** prioritises working with countries in which fisheries and aquaculture are socio-economically important, and which already possess some capacity in fisheries management. The programme is not designed to assist countries that are building their fisheries administration from scratch.

**LRT** focuses on developing countries with land degradation challenges that the programme believes it can help address. It is the only programme whose strategic plan specifies the countries that the programme is expected to work in. These are Ethiopia, Niger, Uganda, Ghana, Namibia, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. In larger countries like Ethiopia, LRT focuses on the northern regions within the country. Lesotho and Malawi were recently added to the list, in line with its own target of adding two more African or Asian countries by 2016. LRT has thus followed a stricter approach than the other programmes to consolidate its presence in a smaller number of countries to establish a critical mass instead of spreading its efforts too thinly.

Until 2016, **GEST** mainly recruited from Afghanistan, Malawi, Mozambique, Palestine, and Uganda – which are bilateral development cooperation partner countries of Iceland. This approach has been based on i) the idea that building a critical mass of former fellows is likely to allow for greater effects at country level; and, ii) the fact that GEST has had limited resources and thus not been able to engage with a broader range of countries in an effective way. This has meant that up to six fellows from the same country have attended the programme during a given year (see Table 3).<sup>15</sup> Several fellows interviewed mentioned that this was not always conducive to promoting positive group dynamics within the cohort.

#### **2.1.4 Selection process**

GTP, FTP, and LRT do not advertise the fellowships openly – recruitment is mostly undertaken through partner organisations that are or have been selected during country assessment missions. GEST issues an open call every year that is spread in the partner countries by MFA-

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<sup>15</sup> Six fellows from Malawi participated in the programme in 2014 and six from Uganda in 2016. The 2017 cohort includes five fellows from Palestine.

ICEIDA (Uganda, Malawi, Mozambique), UN Women country offices (Mozambique and Uganda), IFAD, universities, former fellows, the GEST website, Twitter and Facebook.

GTP has relationships with geothermal corporations such as KenGen and the Geothermal Development Company GDC (Kenya) and La Geo (El Salvador); ministries of energy; government agencies (Geological Survey); and some universities.

FTP works mostly through ministries responsible for fisheries, their agencies and institutes.<sup>16</sup> In some countries FTP has established preferential relationships with universities, such as Dalian Ocean University in China and Nha Trang University in Vietnam. There have been relatively few fellows from civil society and non-governmental organisations (CSOs/NGOs) and the private sector.

LRT aims for a mix of fellows from academia, research institutions, local governments, ministries and CSOs to obtain a diversity of views and perspectives that enhance the learning opportunities within each cohort. LRT's partner organisations include implementation organisations (such as the Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development, BoARD, in Ethiopia), ministries (in Niger, Lesotho, Namibia, and Malawi); environmental agencies (e.g. National Environment Management Authority, NEMA in Uganda and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Ghana); universities (e.g. Makerere University); and research institutions (e.g. the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research in Ghana). The programme has also partnered with a few NGOs, such as Green Gold in Mongolia and CAMP Alatoo in Kyrgyzstan. Because of LRT's relatively unique and comprehensive curriculum and the practice-oriented teaching approach, partner organisations have sometimes had trouble in fully grasping what the programme is about and thus in nominating relevant candidates.

The partner organisations of GTP, FTP, and LRT are invited to nominate candidates according to criteria set by the programme. This includes the promotion of female candidates. The nomination process is nevertheless in the hands of each organisation. However, the programmes reserve the right not to accept any of the nominated candidates and have ultimate control over who is taken in as fellow.

Staff from GTP, FTP, and LRT undertake visits to partner organisations in the countries to interview fellows face-to-face. The visits are also used to monitor developments in the sector

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<sup>16</sup> FTP has Memoranda of Understanding with four organisations: the Bangladesh Shrimp and Fish Foundation, the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism Secretariat, Nha Trang University and the Tanzania Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development. With slight differences, these Memoranda concern the training of fellows in Iceland, both through six-month and post-graduate programmes, the development of short-courses in the countries and regions, and other forms of exchange and mutual support.



at the country level. This process is comparatively expensive because of the travel time and costs involved. However, according to the programmes, the advantages in terms of i) the ability to handpick the most suitable candidates; ii) establish and strengthen the relationship with partner organisations; and iii) follow up on changes in the organisations and former fellows during the visits outweigh the costs.

To reduce costs with fellow selection, GTP, FTP, and LRT do not conduct interviews in every country every year. Instead they select a number of fellows larger than the annual intake and establish a pipeline of fellows to attend the programme in Iceland in the following years.

Some partner organisations observed that this system has its disadvantages. First, it sometimes creates uncertainty among the candidates in the pipeline as to whether and when they will attend the training in Iceland. Second, it has happened that fellows in the pipeline have been assigned to other tasks or changed posts, so that they are no longer relevant or available for the programme. At the same time, other more relevant staff might have joined the organisation, but will not be able to attend the programme until a new round of interviews is conducted, which might take a few years. The 2011 internal evaluation of FTP drew attention to the risk of long waiting lists leading to the exclusion of good candidates,<sup>17</sup> but the evaluation team did not find evidence of this having ever affected the programme in a significant way. In some cases, particularly with the well-established partners, alternative candidates will be nominated who are better suited for the training, if significant time has passed since an interview visit. Such candidates are then interviewed remotely by FTP staff.

Recently, the programmes have started interviewing candidates by telephone/Skype to save costs in selected cases where it was not possible to travel to the countries and where the programme has an established relationship with the partner organisation. In recent years, GTP has also made use of its short courses in East Africa (held in Kenya) and in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region (held in El Salvador) as a ‘filter’ for selection of GTP fellows. Those who have demonstrated their ability in the short courses and fulfil the other criteria have an increased chance of being selected for an interview for the six-month training in Iceland. Meanwhile, international meetings have been an occasion for LRT to scout for potential partner organisations, as well as be approached by institutions interested in sending fellows to Iceland.

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<sup>17</sup> Davidson and Wilson, 2011.

LRT and GTP involve their studies / teachers committee in the fellow recruitment processes. Strategies and options are discussed within the committee and its members are informed about the selection.

GEST's recruitment process differs somewhat from the other programmes. Like LRT, the programme has been conscious from the beginning to get a mix of fellows, in its case from CSOs, the public sector and academia. The programme does not prepare analyses of the women's movement and gender equality situation of the countries it works with. For its country visits it establishes a quick overview and identifies government institutions, civil society and academic stakeholders to meet with. Often it also meets with the UN Women country office.

GEST does not have close institutional partnerships with organisations at the country level. It does, however, interact informally with some organisations, for instance the CSO gender network in Malawi; ministries of gender in Malawi and Uganda; UNRWA in Palestine; and Makerere University in Uganda. GEST has undertaken fewer country visits than the other programmes due to lack of resources. Many of the interviews of potential candidates have taken place via Skype.

In some instances, GEST has also recruited national staff from UN agencies, in particular UNRWA. The recruitment of UN staff has been based on GEST's interpretation that the emphasis on interaction with UN agencies in UNU's Strategic Plan includes building capacity of UN staff.

### **2.1.5 Selection of non-MFA-funded fellows**

GTP, FTP and this year even GEST have accepted fellows who have been financed through other sources. This could be European Economic Area (EEA) grants, sponsorships from private companies or corporations, sponsorships from governments, ICEIDA or other project funds, Erasmus grants or even paid by the fellow him/herself. These fellows must still fulfil all the criteria mentioned above, but the programmes have been open to the fellow coming from countries other than those on their priority list.

### **2.1.6 Salient points in the recruitment strategies**

#### **GTP**

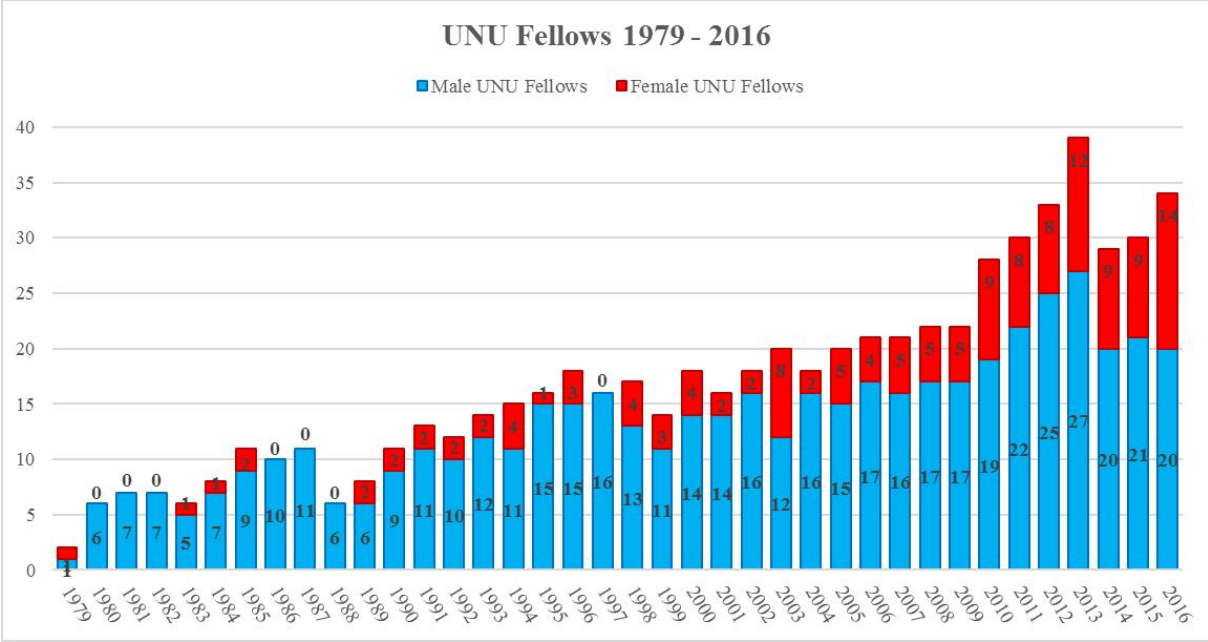
There has been an asserted effort to build a critical mass of human resources in countries which have the capacity to put geothermal to use, such as Kenya and El Salvador. Between them, these two countries have provided 24 percent of the total of 647 fellows.

Having strong in-country partners is a benefit to GTP, as it gives them a trusted resource at the country level, provides in-country and regional knowledge, contributes to a stable geothermal industry, provides assistance for in-country short courses, and can provide a reliable supply of fellows.

In recent years many fellows, particularly from Kenya, have been funded through other sources. The fact that companies are prepared to support staff for six months in Iceland indicates a strong endorsement of the programme’s quality by the geothermal industry. This also means that MFA funds can be used to support countries where there is a defined need but fewer resources, thus giving more fellows access to training. A potential problem lies with the perception that the MFA funds to GTP are supporting many fellows from a single country (with Kenya at the top of the list). In reality the MFA funds only pay for two fellows, the others are funded by their organisation(s).

GTP has requested that partner institutions nominate women, which has resulted in women making up 41 percent of the 2016 cohort. One drawback of non-UNU sponsorship is that GTP has less influence over who is nominated, and gender parity may be less of a consideration for those nominating. Furthermore, it has been challenging to find qualified women candidates in the geoscience and engineering sectors in predominantly Muslim countries.

**Figure 3: Number of male and female fellows enrolled in the GTP six-month training in Iceland, 1979-2016**



**FTP**

FTP’s partner countries can be categorised into four groups:

1. Countries from which FTP has recruited regularly throughout the life of the programme, such as China, Kenya, Mozambique, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda and Vietnam;
2. Countries from which FTP has recruited less regularly throughout the life of the programme – such as Cape Verde, the Gambia, Namibia, and South Africa, as well as countries that are members of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism;

3. Countries from which FTP recruited intensely over a limited period of time but then stopped – such as Iran, Liberia, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, North Korea, Sierra Leone, the Pacific Island Countries, Estonia and Russia. Some of these are countries from which FTP recruited under the duration of a given agreement or project. Estonia and Russia are in this cluster, because between 2002 and 2005 Eastern European countries were eligible for Icelandic ODA.
4. Countries from which FTP has recruited three fellows or less, including Argentina, Brazil, Cambodia, Djibouti, India, Madagascar, Nigeria, Oman, Timor Leste, and Ukraine.

The FTP feasibility study conducted in 1996 argued that “[r]ather than spreading the fellowships to cover as many countries as possible”, the programme should adopt a focused approach to build a critical mass of experts in a few countries.<sup>18</sup> The 2006 and 2012 strategic plans called for a focus on Africa and Small Island Developing States, at the same time as they recognised that the selection of countries should reflect the policies of the Icelandic government, contribute to geographic and cultural diversity, and respond to the requests of Iceland’s cooperation partners.

In practice this has meant that while retaining a consistent focus on Africa and Small Island Developing States, the programme has also been called upon by MFA, ICEIDA, and other funders to engage with countries that do not fit into any of these categories. FTP receives frequent requests from MFA and occasionally also from the Icelandic Ministry of Fisheries and the Office of the President to establish collaboration with certain countries. Such requests add to the expressions of interest by representatives of foreign governments wanting FTP to train professionals from their countries.

The risk of FTP spreading its efforts too thinly over a large number of countries is recurrently brought up at board meetings. This issue was highlighted in the 2011 internal evaluation and is a concern of the programme staff interviewed. On the other hand, the engagement with Asian countries – notably China, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka – has been consistent and helped consolidate the programme in Asia, even if this continent is not currently a priority in Iceland’s cooperation strategy or the UNU strategy.

As alluded to in section 2.1.1, FTP has since its early days also applied a regional approach to the recruitment to the six-month programme, in cooperation with regional fisheries organisations. Through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism, the programme has since 2007 accepted over 20 fellows from 10 member coun-

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<sup>18</sup> UNU, 1996, p.30.

tries.<sup>19</sup> It has also sought to cooperate with the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation, but despite the strong presence of fellows from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, an institutional partnership has not yet materialised. For the past decade the programme has also cooperated regularly with the Network of Aquaculture Centres in the Asia-Pacific, mainly in the development of short course in the field of aquaculture and in partnership with Nha Trang University. This cooperation has been useful for FTP to strengthen its presence in South and Southeast Asia. Currently FTP is exploring a similar cooperation with the Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Organisation. The usefulness of this regional approach in terms of programme results is discussed in Chapter 3.

## LRT

Partly as a result of budget constraints, which limits the intake of fellows, LRT has so far focused on a relatively small number of countries when compared to the two older programmes. The LRT recruitment reflects an intention to ensure a good mix of fellows from practical, academic, decentralised and central government backgrounds. Compared to the other programmes, the proportion of fellows from academic institutions is larger, making up close to one-third of all fellows. Building capacity of academic and research institutes has also been regarded as critical from a sustainability perspective, not least since these institutions play a role in forming future technical officers. Half of the fellows are recruited from a government or public sector organisation and around 12 percent work for an international or national CSO. LRT adapts its recruitment according to the characteristics of each partner country, taking into account the level of decentralisation, the state of the academic institutions and the role played by civil society in land restoration. In some countries, like Uganda, LRT has firmly focused on recruiting public servants from the decentralised level, based on the assumption that action at the decentralised level is the most effective way to contribute to results. For the same reasons, in the Central Asian countries LRT has recruited proportionately more from CSOs compared to its recruitment from the sub-Saharan countries. LRT has also made a substantial effort to ensure gender parity. This has been a considerable challenge in cases where eligible female candidates in partner institutions have been too few.

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<sup>19</sup> These are Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Haiti, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. The first fellow from Guyana partook in the programme in 2007-2008, and the first Memorandum of Understanding was signed in the fall of 2008.

Overall, the recruitment process has served the purposes of consolidating relationships with relevant organisations in a few selected countries, and of attracting fellows who have contributed to improving the work of their organisations (see Chapter 3).

## **GEST**

The aim to build a critical mass in a handful of countries has been a sound approach. It has allowed for a growing mass of former fellows in each country that can potentially work together to multiply effects (see Chapter 3 for a further discussion on this). The approach of mixing fellows from civil society, the public sector and academia has contributed to good discussions and diversified perspectives during the training programme, as well as helped establish synergies in some countries. GEST has generally been able to identify fellows that can play an effective role upon return, despite comparatively few country visits. In some cases, former fellows have been helpful in identifying candidates. There is scope, however, to expand partner networks at the country level to better understand country level needs, structures and opportunities. Furthermore, ensuring responsiveness to the needs of partner institutions, such as UNRWA, would make the support more relevant.

Avoiding formalised institutional partnerships has served GEST well and given it the ability to take a comprehensive approach to strengthening gender equality capacities at the country level. The partners that it does have closer relations with have little influence on GEST. For instance, UNRWA has signalled that its organisation would benefit from slightly older staff in managerial positions being trained so that the fellows can come back with the ability to implement change, but GEST has not accommodated this request. Indeed, in some countries greater flexibility regarding the age limit may be important to ensure that fellows can act as effective change agents. Moreover, GEST may benefit from considering to give women candidates an extra five years on the age limit to compensate for child bearing as is done by Sida-funded capacity development initiatives.

The recruitment of national UN staff as fellows to the GEST programme comes from its interpretation of the UNU Strategic Plan's aim to support the UN system. UN agencies, however have their own internal training programmes. In addition, there is the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), UN Women's Training Centre in Santo Domingo, and the UN Training Centre in Turin that provide gender training for UN employees. All of these run gender training courses. Moreover, it is questionable to use funds earmarked for building capacity within developing countries to support the internal capacity of the UN. UNRWA is of course an exceptional organisation within the UN in terms of i) its operational mandate as the principle service provider for Palestinian refugees; ii) it being staffed mainly by Palestinian refugees; and iii) its work within an extraordinary context. It therefore arguably deserves the support from GEST. This is, however, less clear regarding agencies such as UN

Women, FAO, and UNDP, which have sent fellows to GEST while having access to internal gender training programmes.

While expanding beyond the five countries that GEST has been working with is a welcome move to increase diversity, the current strategy risks spreading the programme too thinly geographically, potentially diluting effects in each of the countries. Having half the fellows come from academic institutions (as in 2017) undermines the three-part mix that GEST has strived for in the past. Moreover, young academics are less well positioned to implement change initiatives at sub-national and national level, at least in the medium term, if these are the types of changes sought.

## 2.2 LECTURERS AND SUPERVISORS

All four programmes have succeeded in engaging quality lecturers and supervisors to deliver the training in Iceland. In all programmes many of the lecturers and supervisors are internationally renowned academics and/or experts in their fields.

**Table 4: Recent examples of affiliation of lecturers and supervisors in Iceland UNU programmes<sup>20</sup>**

Programme	Iceland	External
<b>GTP</b>	ÍSOR - Iceland GeoSurvey University of Iceland Reykjavik University Reykjavik Energy Mannvit Consulting Engineers Verkis Consulting Engineers and many others	Varies with each annual guest lecturer
<b>FTP</b>	Marine and Freshwater Research Institute Matis Ltd University of Iceland University of Akureyri Holar University College Sæplast/Promens Marel Ministry of Industries and Innovation Reykjavik University Innovation Centre Iceland	Varies with each annual guest lecturer

<sup>20</sup> All four programmes also engage experts from other organisations as independent consultants. Except for GEST, most of them are based in Iceland.

Programme	Iceland	External
<b>LRT</b>	Agricultural University of Iceland Soil Conservation Service of Iceland University of Iceland Icelandic Meteorological Office Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources Iceland Forest Service Icelandic Forestry Association Reykjavik University Landvernd – Icelandic Environment Association	UNU-EHS (Germany) UNU-INWEH (Canada) US Department of Agriculture (USA) Oregon State University University of Leeds (UK) – in 2017 Makerere University (Uganda) – in 2017 Bless Bless productions (USA)
<b>GEST</b>	University of Iceland University of Reykjavík Bifröst University University of Akureyri Capacent Consulting Icelandic Human Rights Centre Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Glitnir bank – Íslandsbanki. Stígamót-Education and Counseling Center for Survivors of Sexual Abuse and Violence Landsspítalinn- (National hospital) Bless bless productions	University of Oslo London School of Economics University of Southampton (UK) London Metropolitan University (UK) Bentley University (USA) University of Huddersfield (UK) Hanken School of Economics (Finland) Clark University (USA) Purdue University (USA) University of Delhi (India) OECD Development Centre Wikigender University University of the Western Cape (South Africa) – in 2017 UNU-MERIT (Holland) – in 2017

The majority of lecturers and supervisors are recruited from the partner institutions in Iceland (see Table 4). This is particularly the case with GTP and FTP, where experts not based in Iceland are only involved as guest lecturers delivering a series of lectures towards the end of each annual programme. In these two cases, the two external lecturers are not involved in delivering the core curriculum and instead lecture on the specific topic of their expertise. The external lecturers are globally recognised experts in their fields.

The large majority of the lecturers and supervisors are not part of the permanent staff of the programmes. Iceland is a small country and it would be inefficient to duplicate expertise by separating teaching from ‘doing’. FTP and GTP thus regularly use teachers from the geothermal and fisheries industries for practical training. This allows fellows to obtain the very latest information on industry practices and standards, while the lecturers report getting satisfaction from teaching and sharing their knowledge.

LRT is the only of the Iceland programmes that has regularly involved lecturers from UNU institutes in delivering the programme, namely from the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) and UNU Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH). The bulk of the lecturing is undertaken by Icelandic experts in land degradation, land restoration and related fields, many of whom have been educated abroad.

With respect to the body of lecturers and supervisors, GEST stands out with regard to two aspects. Firstly, it employs non-Icelandic lecturers in delivering the core curriculum to a much



greater extent than any of the other three programmes. Secondly, part of GEST's academic staff changes every year, which does not occur to the same extent in the other programmes.

According to members of the programme management teams, there are both advantages and disadvantages to having a stable corps of lecturers and supervisors. Advantages include the consistency in the lecturing and supervision between different programme years, and the fact that academic staff develops greater familiarity with the programme, becomes part of its institutional memory, and is better prepared to contribute to improving the curriculum – not least because they have the possibility of improving their lecturing based on fellows' evaluations (see below).

An important disadvantage of a more static academic staff is that there is less renewal of teaching and supervision approaches and methods. As one management team member put it, a static body of instructors risks becoming overconfident and resistant to change, which is to be avoided in the context of a highly diverse fellow population that changes from year to year. Another disadvantage is that it discourages human resource planning and hinders renewal within the body of lecturers. For instance, some GTP stakeholders noted that the pool of contracted teachers is aging. Given that there is currently lower interest in geothermal energy among Icelandic students, keeping the high standard of Icelandic lecturers may be a challenge in the future. Similarly, LRT recognised that the small pool of experts in Iceland is a risk and has encouraged its host institutions to secure human resources to provide key specialists to the field of LRT.

The survey results, the interviews with fellows conducted by the evaluation team, as well as former evaluations indicate a high satisfaction among fellows from all programmes with the performance of the lecturers. The results from the survey indicate that 95 to 99 percent of fellows from the four programmes rated the elements of the programme that directly related to the quality of lecturers and supervisors as 'very useful' or 'useful'. The usefulness of the lectures was ranked particularly high by LRT, whereas GTP received the lowest grades across those elements (see survey report, Annex 4). Fellows from all four programmes interviewed for this evaluation frequently mentioned the high scientific and technical expertise of lecturers and supervisors as one of the most important elements for their learning experience in Iceland. Some of those fellows have kept in touch with programme instructors after returning to their countries, in some cases collaborating on initiatives.

One aspect particularly highlighted by many of the fellows interviewed was the commitment and dedication of lecturers and supervisors. The exceptionally high amount of lecturer and supervisor time devoted to each fellow compared to regular post-graduate university-based programmes is a defining feature of all the programmes, in particular GTP, FTP, and LRT. This set-up is a critical element to ensure that “the training [...] will be tailor made to meet the trainees’ individual specific requirements.”<sup>21</sup>

Fellows from the four programmes were generally of the view that lecturers had a decent understanding of the challenges in developing countries. A small fraction of the fellows mentioned that some lacked an adequate contextualisation of the programme to the realities of their countries or regions. This issue has been raised in management team discussions in all programmes, given that many of the Icelandic lecturers and supervisors did not have experience of working in developing countries, especially in the early years of the programmes.

None of the programmes has attempted to solve this limitation by employing instructors from developing countries to teach in Iceland in significant numbers. This in spite of all four programmes – in particular the two older ones, GTP and FTP – having very extensive global networks they could draw upon to recruit instructors, not least among its partner organisations and former fellows – several of whom have become prominent academics or practitioners in their countries. The drawback of such a strategy would be the cost of transport and accommodation for teachers, although this is arguably already being spent on lecturers from other developed countries. In a few cases, PhD fellows from GTP and FTP have supervised six-month and MSc fellows.

FTP has increased the exposure of many of its Icelandic lecturers to the reality of developing countries by engaging them in study visits at partner organisations and in the development of short courses in partner countries. According to the 2011 internal evaluation of FTP, and the lecturers interviewed for this evaluation, this has been very beneficial for the individuals involved. Some of the interviewees – including those from UNU headquarters – observed that despite marked improvements since the early years of the programme, developing country experience of the corps of instructors is an area in need of constant attention, given the constant changes occurring in the partner countries.

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<sup>21</sup> UNU, 1996, p.30.

LRT has recently started exposing some of the core LRT lecturers and supervisors to the reality of developing countries by engaging them in study visits to partner countries. For example, a few have visited Lesotho in connection with a IFAD funded project and Uganda as part of the development of a future short course there.

GTP has engaged many non-Icelandic lecturers for the in-country short courses, while also ensuring that Icelandic teachers participate, and get exposure to the local geothermal industry in the partner countries. For the 2015 "Short Course X on Exploration for Geothermal Resources" organised by GTP, GDC and KenGen in Kenya, there were 40 lecturers, of which 34 were African. Similarly, for the 2014 "Short Course VI on Utilisation of Low- and Medium-Enthalpy Geothermal Resources and Financial Aspects of Utilisation", organised by GTP and LaGeo, in El Salvador, there were 33 lecturers – of which 23 were from Latin America, two were from other continents (one from Africa and one from World Bank), and four were from Iceland. FTP has employed local lecturers in most of its short courses – including FTP fellows.

All four programmes have mechanisms for assessing the performance of their instructors. They include evaluations by fellows at different points of the training, and follow-up by programme staff. Evaluations by the fellows are conducted in approximately the same manner in all four programmes, with only slight differences in the length and timing of the evaluation questionnaires. All programmes evaluate lecturers and/or groups of lectures at short intervals during the introductory part of the programme. In addition, specific assessments are conducted. LRT, for example, carries out evaluations after the special courses at the Soil Conservation Service in Gunnarsholt and the summer excursions, whereas GTP and FTP have online evaluations at the end of the specialisation course. All programmes have an end-of-programme evaluation, consisting of a focus group discussion, an online questionnaire or both. Feedback from fellows is provided to the instructors based on the results of these evaluations and several of those interviewed confirmed that they have introduced changes to their lectures based on this feedback. In some cases, this has been done in consultation with the programme staff, whereas in others lecturers have introduced changes on their own. In some rare cases instructors have been replaced.

Some fellows mentioned that they have provided feedback to the instructors and programme staff outside the scheduled evaluations. All programmes strive to maintain an informal approach to the relationship with fellows and an 'open-door' policy, which some interviewees considered very beneficial for creating an environment in which instructors, programme staff, and fellows can learn from each other.

## 2.3 DESIGN AND CURRICULUM

Building on GTP's experience from its first 18 years, GTP and FTP have adopted a common design for the six-month programme, consisting of a five to six week introductory course that

respectively provide a holistic view of the geothermal energy and fisheries sectors; a five to six week specialisation course, during which fellows select a particular line of specialisation; and a 12 to 14 week research project related to the fellow's line of specialisation. As of 2017, GTP has eight lines of specialisation on offer, and FTP four.<sup>22</sup>

In both cases there have been slight changes to the programme structure and content over the years, which according to programme management team members interviewed demonstrates the capacity of the programmes to remain flexible and responsive to the demand by fellows and partner organisations, as well as to broader changes in the respective sectors. In addition to changes to the topics of individual lectures, FTP has, for example, reduced the length of the introductory course in response to requests by fellows to have more time for the individual project. Both programmes have also introduced changes to their lines of specialisation, based on the feedback of fellows and assessments by programme staff and management teams.

Neither of the curricula of GTP and FTP contain a strong focus on poverty or the sustainable development goals. The importance of fisheries and energy for poverty reduction and attainment of several of the SDGs is acknowledged by the programmes and is implicit in many of their activities, but both programmes are predominantly technical courses focused on improving technical and managerial skills, with a very modest focus on broader development issues. Themes such as socio-economic aspects, land rights, labour rights, and human rights of stakeholders, including how local communities affected by the geothermal and fisheries industries are barely touched upon in the programmes. While it is desirable to address the socio-economic aspects of geothermal or fisheries development in the course content, the syllabi of both programmes are already very full. Increasing the poverty and broader development content of the curricula would require significant changes to the current course content, although social and poverty perspective could be integrated into some of the existing components. However, it is possible for fellows to conduct their research projects on such topics, which has been the case with a few FTP and GTP fellows.

The LRT six-month programme was initially inspired by the two older ones, adopting its structure of lines of specialisation. However, after a few years, through monitoring and feedback information, it was found that having lines of specialisation were spreading LRT's resources too thin and many fellows expressed interest in both lines of specialisation. Monitor-

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<sup>22</sup> 'Resource (stock) Assessment' and 'Fishing Technology' existed as separate lines of specialisation up to programme year 2016. They were merged and offered as a single line of specialisation beginning in 2017, with the aim of offering fellows greater flexibility to work in either or both of those two fields according to their interests and those of their organisations.

ing also revealed that there was also some repetition between lectures, so streamlining and focusing of the content was required and the practical content needed to be increased. After a two-three day meeting of the Studies Committee (extended with some key lecturers), the programme was redesigned with the project cycle as a point of departure for the eight modules it teaches with the aim to provide fellows with a comprehensive understanding of the issues that must be addressed to successfully manage and restore land. With the project cycle as an overall framework, the modules take the fellows through matters related to research and assessment methodologies, biophysical aspects of land management, sustainable land management and restoration planning, project implementation, and evaluation and lessons learnt. LRT's curriculum now has improved flow and better meets the needs of the fellows, who in their course evaluation comment significantly less on repetitions and insufficient practical training. Similar to GTP and FTP, the last three months of the programme are devoted to the fellows' individual research projects.

GEST's five-month programme differs considerably from the other three UNU Iceland programmes. Being the only programme granting academic credits, in some respects it resembles a traditional university course, with a significantly greater portion of in-class lectures and much less time for project work. The curriculum is organised around six thematic modules, one of which consists of a final assignment. In contrast to the other three programmes, GEST's applied projects are not implemented during the training in Iceland. Instead fellows leave Iceland either with a research paper or a detailed project document and plan for implementation in their home countries.

**Table 5: Usefulness of programme elements, survey scores (from 0-not useful to 3-very useful)**

Programme element	GTP	FTP	LRT	GEST	Avg.
Project work	2.78	<b>2.86</b>	2.81	<b>2.86</b>	2.83
Field work/ field trips	2.72	2.73	<b>2.84</b>	2.80	2.77
Lectures	2.69	2.68	<b>2.82</b>	2.76	2.74
Technical training	2.62	<b>2.80</b>	2.70	2.69	2.70
Professional skills training	2.63	<b>2.77</b>	2.73	2.67	2.70
Discussions with peers & teachers	2.36	2.46	2.53	<b>2.69</b>	2.51
Learning from Icelandic experience and institutions	2.66	2.66	<b>2.70</b>	2.67	2.67
Group work	2.65	<b>2.66</b>	2.65	2.61	2.64
Networking	1.75	<b>2.52</b>	2.43	2.47	2.29
Average	2.54	2.68	2.69	2.69	

Table 5 shows the scores awarded by fellows to the different components of the four UNU Iceland training programmes. FTP, LRT and GEST have similar average scores in the order of 2.68 to 2.69, whereas GTP displays a comparatively lower average score at 2.54. The element of 'networking' in particular scores much lower among GTP respondents than respondents from any of the other programmes. This element was also mentioned specifically by sev-

eral fellows from all programmes in the written answers to the question as an element of the programme they thought had not matched their expectations. Overall, both the survey scores and the interviews with fellows from the four programmes indicate a generally high level of satisfaction with the overall content of the programmes.

Through interviews and the survey the evaluation asked fellows what elements they thought had not been adequately covered. Across the four programmes, the only major gap raised was among LRT fellows where approximately one in five mentioned that training in geographical information systems had been insufficient.<sup>23</sup> Other than this, several fellows of all four programmes mentioned that they would have liked to see specific topics covered in greater depth – for example organoleptic assessment methods or arbitration methods in fisheries law among FTP fellows, or gender budgeting in projects or economic empowerment of women among GEST fellows. However, since none of these other topics were consistently mentioned by more than one or two fellows, it is likely that they reflect the specific preferences and interests of individual fellows rather than a weakness of the programmes. Moreover, the possibility cannot be excluded that some of these topics have been included in the programmes in the following years without the fellows who responded to the survey or the interviews knowing about it.

An aspect of the programmes not captured in Table 5 but repeatedly mentioned by fellows is the duration of the programmes – which many considered too short for the extent and the density of the curricula. They felt they had not been able to fully absorb the knowledge and skills offered by the programme because of an overload of new tasks, assignments and knowledge.

The programme staff revealed that this has been a recurrent issue that has been duly considered over the years. However, they have found many reasons to keep the current length. First, not all partner organisations are able to release employees to Iceland for longer periods. Private sector and CSOs were particularly vulnerable to staff absences of long duration. Lengthening the programme would make it less attractive to such organisations.

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<sup>23</sup> Of the 78 UNU-LRT fellows who responded to the survey, 15 mentioned that they would have wished to acquire more skills related to the use of geographical information systems. This was also mentioned by several of the UNU-LRT fellows interviewed. LRT are well aware of this. However, since many of the fellows have weak skills in this area, getting them up to a functional level would take too much time away from the core focus of the programme. GIS training is furthermore often offered at country level. On the other hand, fellows that have some GIS knowledge can undertake a research project where they use and advance their GIS skills with support from GIS specialists.

Second, individual fellows might find it more difficult to spend time away from their families. This is of particular concern with respect to the enrolment of women in the programmes, since in most of the partner countries it is usually women who have the responsibility for the home and family.

Third, increasing the duration of the programmes implies increasing costs, which is not an option for any of the programmes.

Fourth, some fellows acknowledged the intensity of the training in Iceland and working under a tight schedule had forced them to better organise themselves, and provided them with first-hand experience of having to perform to a higher standard than what they were used to.<sup>24</sup> This was an important element of the ‘life changing’ experience that many fellows mentioned when referring to their time in Iceland (see section 2.3.1).

### 2.3.1 Professional skills training

The degree to which the survey respondents rated the improvement in different professional skills is given in Table 6:

**Table 6: Improvement in skills and knowledge areas (from 0 – no improvement to 3 – improved to a large extent)**

	<b>GTP</b>	<b>FTP</b>	<b>LRT</b>	<b>GEST</b>
Technical skills	2.57	2.64	2.64	2.50
Interpersonal skills	2.37	2.46	2.46	2.48
Project management skills	1.94	2.40	2.40	2.36
Writing/English language skills	2.30	2.40	2.48	2.46
Data management & analysis	2.35	2.35	2.35	1.88
IT skills	2.04	2.19	1.94	1.76
Leadership skills	1.99	2.18	2.18	2.20
Policy analysis skills	1.74	2.05	2.05	2.28

All four programmes address different professional skills in some way, either as separate subjects, as part of other thematic modules, or both. Examples of the former include LRT’s series of lectures on planning tools, bibliography management, and conflict management; GEST working with fellows on leadership, communication and professional development; or GTP’s

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<sup>24</sup> Several fellows observed that they had learnt the true meaning of ‘time management’ in Iceland.

lectures on group dynamics, and introduction to computers. Skills in policy analysis, research writing, presentation, and data management and analysis are integral components of a variety of the subject-specific modules in all programmes to a greater or lesser extent. Hence fellows are given the opportunity to apply and thereby further develop the skills learnt during the programme. This aspect was praised by most of the fellows interviewed.

The scores in Table 6 suggest that the programmes do not perform equally well with respect to all professional skills. Among GTP fellows there seems to be a relative dissatisfaction with the degree of support relative to project management (although this has been addressed by adding Project Management to the Study Lines), leadership and policy analysis skills.

Many of the fellows interviewed were keen to highlight the importance that the skills acquired in Iceland had had for their professional lives, as well as for their personal development. Recurrent aspects mentioned by the fellows include increased ability to analyse situations and problems, to explore solutions and develop measures to implement them, and to communicate orally and in writing.

GEST offers a five-day professional development seminar after the final assignments have been submitted, while LRT and FTP provide individual coaching to their fellows. The format has varied over the years, but the fellows receive a one-on-one session in the beginning and towards the end of the training period that involves frank discussions on a personal level, setting goals and visioning about the future. LRT also apply the “Mastermind” mentoring methodology, which consists of peer-to-peer mentoring. Among those interviewed, this experience was remarkable and important for their personal development. Indeed, in the survey the LRT fellows rated personal development as the area that they had improved the most – 80 percent maintained they had improved to a great extent at a personal level. A clear majority of FTP fellows interviewed made similar assessments (see also Annex 4).

Supervisors of some of those fellows in partner organisations often referred to fellows having acquired a more inquisitive approach, leading them to be more demanding in their work and that of their colleagues. Such developments, which are further explored in Chapter 3, are part of what many fellows qualified as the ‘life changing’ experience of the Icelandic programmes, and are to a large extent the result of the efforts by the programmes at strengthening the fellows’ professional skills.

### **2.3.2 Project work**

Discussions with a range of stakeholders from each programme emphasised the importance and appreciation of the project work undertaken by fellows during the training. Likewise, project work was ranked highest by survey respondents across the four programmes (see Table 5). The usefulness scores are highest for FTP and GEST, whereas LRT fellows ranked it as third most useful, after field work/visits and lectures (see also the Survey Report, Annex 4). The high appreciation for the project work by GEST fellows is interesting considering that,



contrary to the other three programmes, GEST fellows do not implement their projects during the training in Iceland.

In each programme, every fellow is assigned one or more supervisors who accompany fellows through project design, implementation and reporting. Programme staff also play an important role: they are responsible for the initial discussions with fellows on the objectives and content of the projects, and assist in the identification of suitable supervisors, typically in coordination with the partner organisations in Iceland where most supervisors originate from. Foreign supervisors have been used in a small number of cases. The supervisors are selected to match the fellow's project subject area and/or approach. In some cases, the complexity of the project and/or the limited availability of a supervisor has led programmes to appoint more than one supervisor to a given fellow.

The FTP fellows in the Quality Management line of specialisation are supervised by Matís and mostly conduct their projects at its facilities.<sup>25</sup> This cooperation with Matís is very beneficial not only for the fellows, who get to conduct practice-oriented work in a 'real-life' setting, but also for Matís, who receives input from fellows in the form of ideas and results that in some cases feed into other ongoing projects.

Programme staff typically retains close contact with the fellows during project implementation and reporting. Interviews with FTP fellows and supervisors showed that the additional input by programme staff is highly appreciated by most them. Two of the supervisors were critical of what they considered an excessive input of programme staff in assessments and decisions that are the supervisor's own. Their argument that such interference gives fellows mixed, and sometimes contradictory signals about the projects was not corroborated by any of the fellows interviewed. Project reports are reviewed both by the supervisors and one or more programme staff before being finalised and published.

How frequently fellows meet with their supervisors varies, but for GTP, FTP and LRT it tends to be at least once a week. GEST fellows meet their supervisors two to four times during the project implementation month. The programmes have devised guidelines or a handbook to guide supervisors in their role. Staff from the four programmes also meet with supervisors to advise and follow up on their work. FTP, for example, held a seminar on 'supervision in a multi-cultural environment' for its supervisors in 2015.

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<sup>25</sup> Matís Ltd is a government-owned, not for profit and independent research company. It was founded in 2007, after the merger of three Icelandic public research institutes. One of them was the Icelandic Seafood Laboratory, which was one of the initial partners of UNU-FTP.

Fellows have generally appreciated the interaction with the supervisors and have found their input useful. Some of the fellows interviewed mentioned that they kept contact with their supervisor, and a small number had an active professional collaboration or plans to initiate one. There have been some exceptions, though, and the programmes hold that if fellows report unsatisfactory support from supervisors, these tend to be replaced the following year.

The review of the project reports by the evaluation team reveal that considerable work has gone into their production. LRT, in particular, devotes considerable time to teaching research reading and writing skills, with practical exercises. On average the reports are of good quality, but there are variations depending on the English language skills and background of the different fellows. The reports are generally well-structured according to a standardised format.

With the exception of GEST,<sup>26</sup> the vast majority of the reports are made available on the programme websites at the end of each programme year. In the case of GTP, the fellows' reports are uploaded onto its open access database which is the third largest geothermal paper database in the world, after the International Geothermal Association Geothermal Conference Paper Database and the Geothermal Resources Council Database. Of the fellow reports, the highest number of downloads was of the 2011 six month training report by José Luis Miranda and Luis Alonso López entitled *Piping design: the fundamentals* with 427,176 downloads.

The statistics relative to visits and downloads from the FTP website reveal that 19 project reports had an average of more than 200 downloads per month during 2016, with the one topping the list reaching a monthly average of close to 1,000 downloads. Considering the very specific subject of most fellow reports, these figures are very high.

The survey asked fellows about the use they had made of the research conducted during their project work and the resulting report. The responses are presented in

Table 7, and indicate an overall high degree of use of the research and report. The percentages of use by GTP, FTP and LRT fellows are consistently higher than those of GEST fellows. This could be explained by the less structured partnerships that GEST has with the fellows' organisations and the fact that the project work is treated more as a learning process than as an end in itself. About one in every five fellows of the other three programmes has proceeded to publish scientific papers based on the final projects and the respective report. A percentage of fellows approximately twice as high has presented the research in conferences. Interviews with fellows have also shown that some of them have used their final projects as the basis for

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<sup>26</sup> GEST publishes abstracts of the report online, since some of the reports are proposals which the fellows aspire to mobilise funding for.

further research degrees. Nearly one-fifth of FTP survey respondents declared having used the results of their research project in policy processes in their home country.

**Table 7: Use made of the research undertaken during the project work by fellows of the four programmes**

	<b>GTP</b>	<b>FTP</b>	<b>LRT</b>	<b>GEST</b>
Presented to my colleagues	81%	74%	<b>82%</b>	71%
Presented to my superiors	<b>77%</b>	71%	71%	58%
Used in my organisation/country for e.g. decision-making	41%	<b>46%</b>	42%	33%
Formed the basis for further research in my organisation	<b>46%</b>	42%	42%	30%
Used to develop a new project in my country	34%	29%	<b>35%</b>	25%
Presented at a conference	<b>51%</b>	35%	39%	19%
Presented to policymakers	14%	22%	20%	15%
Used in policymaking	12%	<b>18%</b>	12%	8%
Published in a peer reviewed journal	21%	18%	<b>22%</b>	4%
Published in a book	<b>18%</b>	9%	8%	2%
Published in a governmental report	10%	11%	10%	0%

### 2.3.3 Cross-cutting issues

Environmental sustainability constitutes a key dimension of three of the programmes, namely GTP, FTP and LRT. The GEST curriculum includes a module on ‘gender, environment and climate change’, which was highly regarded by the fellows interviewed.

Gender equality is core to GEST’s mission while LRT has been comprehensive in its approach to gender equality, having adopted a Gender Equality Policy in 2013 and a gender action plan. The policy establishes measures to ensure gender equality in all elements of the programme, including fellow admission, curriculum, teaching and learning. The programme has indeed succeeded in enrolling an equal number of male and female fellows. While LRT has made efforts to mainstream gender issues throughout the curriculum, the survey results show that the LRT fellows rated the gender awareness skills that they had acquired relatively low and at a similar level to fellows from GTP and FTP.

GTP and FTP do not have a specific gender policy, but the former makes it very clear to those nominating potential fellows that they must put women forward. FTP's strategic plan contains several measures relative to gender equality, but it appears that the programme has not made much progress on several of them,<sup>27</sup> other than having continued to increase the intake of female fellows and introduced a lecture on gender in fisheries, delivered with the support from GEST. A similar lecture is included in the GTP curriculum. In the cases of FTP, the fact that management of the fisheries sector is strongly male dominated makes it a challenge to increase the proportion of female lecturers and supervisors significantly and rapidly, which FTP aspires to. Meanwhile, the geothermal industry is no longer as male dominated as before, and it is possible to find competent women to lecture on almost all subjects. GTP is aware of this and has recently made efforts to recruit women lecturers as visiting and short course lecturers.

### **2.3.4 Field visits**

Interviews with fellows from all programmes and the survey results revealed a generally high appreciation of the field visits undertaken in Iceland during the training programme. Interviewees mentioned that field visits were often useful to fully understand and contextualise what had been learnt in class. Visits were regarded by the programmes as an essential element of the practical dimension of the programmes. The 'seeing and experiencing' provided the fellows with direct knowledge that often left strong impressions among fellows interviewed, and sometimes served as inspiration for initiatives developed in their home organisations. For example, several FTP fellows revealed that they had changed the advice they give to fish processing plants in their countries after observing how hygiene conditions are kept in Icelandic plants. In the cases of FTP and GTP, a large number of the visits are made to private companies operating in the fisheries and geothermal energy sectors, respectively.

Field visits also strengthen the group as a whole, and bring the fellows closer together through the shared experience. Across the four programmes, the survey respondents found the field visits to be the second most useful element of the training programme.

### **2.3.5 Non-academic content**

An important dimension of the UNU programmes in Iceland is the actual experience of being in Iceland. To start with, for several fellows the stay in Iceland was the first experience of a

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<sup>27</sup> For example the FTP Strategic Plan calls for a requirement that "fellows [...] evaluate the implications their final projects may have on gender issues in the development of fisheries in their home countries" (p.9). This is a relatively simple measure to implement, but that has not happened.

prolonged stay abroad. To different degrees the programmes introduce the Icelandic context, with its flat hierarchies, open communication culture, liberal attitudes, empowered women, and generally high level of gender equality. In particular, seeing and experiencing a country where gender equality is widely practised is thought by Icelandic stakeholders interviewed to have a significant effect on fellows. When reflecting about the uniqueness of the Icelandic experience, FTP fellows frequently referred to the way industry, government and academia cooperate in the fisheries sector. The fact that it has been possible for Iceland to build its wealth on well-managed fisheries is particularly inspiring to many of those interviewed.

Each programme organises accommodation, transportation, work materials, and documentation separately. On the whole, the vast majority of fellows considers that the logistical aspects of the programmes run smoothly. GEST fellows reside in student housing on campus at the University of Iceland in Reykjavik, whereas the other programmes place fellows in rented apartments, hotels or guesthouses in or around Reykjavik. In recent years accommodation has become increasingly difficult and expensive, and in the past two years there have been complaints by some fellows about unsatisfactory accommodation.

The programmes produce guides with practical information that are given to fellows upon arrival. LRT and GEST each produce a comprehensive student handbook that is usually updated every year. All programmes have a series of orientation lectures during the first week.

The allowances offered differ slightly among the programmes, as do the additional benefits. For instance, LRT, FTP and GTP provide bus cards; LRT and FTP grant laptops; GTP provides access to a desktop computer and sets up internet access from home; and GTP and LRT arrange warm clothing, while GEST and LRT provide a grant for this. Most fellows interviewed stated that the allowance was sufficient – a very small proportion remarked that it was barely sufficient given the cost of living in Iceland, whereas others have been able to make considerable savings from their allowance.

It is an aim of all four programmes to create a positive environment within each cohort. For instance, LRT and GTP both have sessions during the introductory part of the programmes in which fellows jointly create a list of ‘ground rules’ of interaction and behaviour, which they must commit to upholding during the training. In most cases fellows have established a very good atmosphere among themselves. Interviews with fellows and programme teams revealed that the programmes do not generally have major problems with fellows misconducting. In the few cases where this has happened, programme staff have intervened, including when necessary sending fellows home before the end of the training.

All four programmes organise social activities for the fellows. These include museum visits, joint dinners or other social functions, excursions, swimming lessons, among other activities. These activities have generally been greatly appreciated by the fellows.

Interviews with fellows and the survey results reveal that a significant number of fellows from all four programmes found the networking component of the programmes to fall short of ex-

pectations. FTP fellows found the networking component more useful than the respondents from the other three programmes, but this aspect was on average rated as less useful by all programmes. GTP respondents gave networking the lowest score of all at 1.75. This may be because GTP fellows have other international geothermal energy networking opportunities such as conferences, which many of them have attended, such that in comparison the training in Iceland is not stand out as an important networking opportunity. The achievements of the programmes with respect to networking are discussed in Chapter 3.

### **2.3.6 Certificate and diploma**

As discussed in section 1.1, GEST is the only programme that offers a 30 ECTS credit post-graduate diploma upon completing the training. This required GEST to align with the standards set by the Bologna process for higher education in Europe, which took two years. The opportunity to attain an accredited diploma was highly valued by the fellows interviewed. Meanwhile, many participants from FTP and LRT interviewed by the evaluation team were dissatisfied with the UNU certificate that they had received. Accreditation was particularly important for fellows working in academic institutions, who could not use the certificate to further their academic careers. In addition, some stakeholders claimed that the lack of formal accreditation discouraged some – in particular women – from applying to the programme. It was felt that investing six months away from home without obtaining an accredited diploma, and thus an uncertain career advancement, was too risky. It is important to mention in this respect that the UNU Strategic Plan views accreditation favourably (see section 4.3.1).<sup>28</sup>

## **2.4 OTHER PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES**

### **2.4.1 Short courses**

GTP and FTP have offered short courses in partner countries for many years. GEST has held one country level short course to date. LRT has been working on its first short course over the past year, with a grant from the Government of Iceland, as a part of its Climate Change Action Plan. The course will focus on interfaces between climate change, sustainable land management and land restoration and will be conducted in Uganda in the second half of 2017, in partnership with NEMA and Makerere University.

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<sup>28</sup> *United Nations University Strategic Plan 2015–2019*, p 11.

## GTP

GTP runs annual Sustainable Development short courses.<sup>29</sup> There are two of these annual courses, one in Kenya and one in El Salvador. The Kenya course is a three-week long introductory course entitled ‘Exploration and Development of Geothermal Resources’ that teaches introductory geothermal topics to participants mainly from East Africa, but also to a smaller number of participants from other African countries. The participants are tested at the end of course. KenGen and GDC are GTP’s partners in organising the course.

The Sustainable Development short courses in Kenya are a very effective way to reach more people at the regional level. As of 2016, this course has been attended by 589 participants. The training is obviously more basic than the six-month programme since it is only a few weeks long, but it serves as an introduction to different geothermal topics. Another strength is that in-country lecturers are involved in teaching the course, a majority of which are GTP fellows. For example, of the 40 lecturers who taught the 2015 course, 34 were African. This is cost-effective compared to bringing those lecturers to teach in Iceland. The course fills the need to give geothermal workers from all over Africa an understanding of the entire geothermal exploration and development process. If African geothermal development is to live up to its huge potential, many hundreds of workers will need to be trained (Barnett, 2005).

The El Salvador course is usually one week long, and the topic varies every year. Since 2016, the course forms part of the five-month Geothermal Diploma Course for Latin America, which is taught within the academic framework of the University of El Salvador, but most of the lecturers come from LaGeo (see section 2.4.2). The total number of participants as of 2016 is 480. This short course also makes extensive use of GTP fellows as lecturers, with around 50 percent of teachers being GTP fellows from Latin American countries. Occasionally fellows from Africa or Philippines have also taught at the short courses in El Salvador.

In addition to the task of educating people to work in the geothermal industry, both short courses provide candidates to be interviewed for the six-month training in Iceland.

Since 2010 GTP has been delivering customer-demanded short courses, which may be anything from two-day workshops to six-months on-site training courses. The external funding may come from public or private in-country organisations or from other sources (e.g. multi-lateral or bilateral cooperation agencies). The paying customer defines the outline of the short course, while GTP is responsible for the content and delivery. These courses allow GTP to

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<sup>29</sup> These courses are named after the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Previously they were called the Millennium Short Courses.

collaborate with a wider range of countries and rapidly respond to a defined need in geothermal training. Currently GTP has the capacity to run five to ten such events per year, and as of 2016 has delivered 37 such short courses and training programmes in four continents.

Several of the fellows interviewed had contributed as lectures to the short courses. All were proud of being able to make a contribution, which they regarded as ‘giving back’ for all the support they had received.

From the perspective of the partner countries where these courses are held, the short courses fulfil many functions. These include re-connecting fellows with Icelandic supervisors; creating new networks for people who have just joined the industry; introducing new perspectives and ways of doing things; and maintaining a pool of part-time lecturers. All the short courses are assessed by GTP with extensive surveys at the end of the course. It is common for participants to be positive about a course which has given them time away from their day-to-day work and reconnected them with colleagues. In the absence of any other evidence, it is likely that at least the participants leave the courses with positive feelings about the geothermal industry and their work, which is a positive result. GTP does not have a formalised approach to measuring the subsequent results of the training at country level.

## **FTP**

The first FTP short course was offered in Vietnam in 2003, on the topic of fish processing and quality management. The programme has since delivered 40 short courses in 19 countries (including one in Iceland in 2016) with the total accumulated number of course participants exceeding 1,100. The short courses have been offered in all of FTP’s lines of specialisation except Environmental Studies, a specialisation that only existed between 2001 and 2005. All courses have been developed and delivered in partnership with an organisation in the country where the course is held, often one of FTP’s partner organisations. Former fellows are usually engaged in course preparation and delivery, and some have attended short courses as participants. FTP currently offers between two and five short courses every year.

FTP’s short courses are developed as small projects, involving a study and needs assessment mission by FTP staff and/or associated experts (for example lecturers), and the development of curricula and training materials, often in collaboration with the local partner. It is expected that the syllabi and material of the short courses be used by the partner organisation in other capacity development activities after the course. This has happened in some cases, as described by some of the fellows interviewed in Vietnam, Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda. However, FTP lacks data from all of its partner organisations on the extent to which this has happened.

Short course quality is assessed by means of an evaluation questionnaire. Quality has varied between short courses, but on the whole participants have shown satisfaction with the organisation and content of short courses. According to a FTP staff member interviewed, short



course quality often correlates with the degree of engagement of the partners. The lecturing staff is usually very knowledgeable in their fields. The fact that courses are preceded by an in-country needs assessment has generally enabled lecturers to employ local examples, data and systems in the curriculum, which is of great value for the relevance and applicability in the partner country or region.

FTP has been confronted over the years with the challenge of assessing the results of its short courses. The minutes of the FTP board meetings and interviews with staff involved in the short courses indicate that this issue has been discussed recurrently, but no robust mechanism for measuring results has yet been adopted. For this reason most of FTP staff and fellows interviewed argued that there is no solid evidence of the results of short courses. Whereas some claimed that short courses have provided a mechanism for the programme to reach out to a larger number of professionals in the partner countries, and contributed to capacity strengthening in specific subjects, others question the actual learning that takes place when mid-career professionals attend two weeks of lecturing. Some of the fellows interviewed did provide anecdotal accounts of extension officers adopting practices and skills from short courses in their extension work. But even in such cases the fellows could only refer to the small number of short course participants that they had happened to meet on a given occasion. The outcomes for the majority of FTP's short course participants remains largely unknown.

## **GEST**

In 2012 and 2013 GEST ran a short course on Gender and Climate Change in Uganda in partnership with the Ugandan government Climate Change Unit (CCU), ICEIDA and the Norwegian Embassy in Uganda. The course content, was developed together with the School of Women and Gender studies at Makerere University. The one-week course was piloted in three different districts and a total of 78 district-level stakeholders completed the training. The training course, which was specifically tailored for Uganda, was evaluated positively.

Since the content was relatively unique at the time, the CCU and GEST were invited to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (CoP)18 meeting in Doha in November 2012 as a concrete example of how to work with climate change and gender across sectors. It attracted a respectable level of attendance to the side event it was part of.

Unfortunately, the courses were never rolled out at the national level in Uganda as planned. Stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation maintained that the project was too donor-driven and that there was insufficient capacity within the central government to take it up. Likewise, Makerere University felt little ownership for the training project, despite having been involved in its design and the initial expectations that the University would include it in its portfolio of short courses. On the other hand, the evaluation team discovered that one of the for-

mer GEST fellows was using parts of the training material in her position as the gender focal point at FAO in Kampala.

GEST is planning to conduct a new climate change and gender course in Uganda, but it has not yet received sufficient financial support for it. GEST furthermore advertises five more short courses on its website, spanning the range from “Men as Allies”, “Gender Justice: Gender Based Violence” and “Teaching Gender to Youth”, to “Gender Responsive Budgeting” and “Institutional Capacity: Gender Training”. The topics represent areas in which GEST feels it has capacity to supply quality training. With the exception of Gender Responsive Budgeting, none of the other short courses have been developed or implemented yet due to lack of funding. The Gender Responsive Budgeting course is actually a regular module of the five-month training course in Iceland and to which Icelandic stakeholders (e.g. MFA, city of Reykjavik, and Icelandic CSOs) are invited to join. According to GEST, ten Ugandan officials also attended the course in 2011.

## 2.4.2 Post-graduate degrees

GTP and FTP have offered MSc and PhD degrees to its fellows since 1999 and 2004, respectively (see Table 8). Degrees are granted by the University of Iceland and Reykjavik University in the case of GTP, and by the University of Iceland, University of Akureyri and Holar University College in the case of FTP. To enrol in post-graduate degree programmes, UNU fellows first need to fulfil the entry requirements set by the host university, upon which they may apply for a UNU fellowship. FTP staff interviewed stated that they generally give scholarships to any fellow who passes the university screening process. Fellows can only apply for PhD if they already hold an MSc degree from a university in Iceland or elsewhere. Once fellows enrol in the post-graduate degree, the main responsibility for their progress rests with the host university. In most cases however, UNU programme staff keeps close contact with and assists with supervision of the fellows.

**Table 8: MSc and PhD fellows in GTP and FTP (end of 2016)**

	MSc		PhD	
	Completed	Ongoing	Completed	Ongoing
<b>GTP</b>	51	11	2	3
<b>FTP</b>	7	3	11	3

According to interviews with fellows and programme staff, in some cases MSc and PhD research projects are based on the project work done in the six-month training. All MSc and PhD graduates interviewed declared great appreciation for the degree and the value it had had for their work and their career. Some of the FTP post-graduate fellows have been invited to take up jobs in Iceland after completing their PhD degrees, but all have opted to return to their home country and their organisations.

An important change was introduced in 2012 in the FTP post-graduate scholarships. To strengthen the linkages between the fellow, her/his research, and the organisation and country of origin, scholarship recipients are now required to conduct part of their research in their home country. This has made it easier for fellows to do research on subjects in or using data from their home countries. That same year the programme introduced the requirement that post-graduate fellowship recipients contribute to the six-month programme through lecturing, giving seminars or mentoring of fellows. This has happened regularly since.

LRT has recently granted its first MSc scholarship to a fellow that will start in June 2017 at AUI. GEST has yet to introduce a Master's programme.

### **GTP Post-graduate diploma (in Spanish)**

Since 2010, a five-month post-graduate diploma course taught in Spanish for geothermal experts has been run almost annually at the University of El Salvador. Support has come from a variety of donors: it was initially from Italy (2010, 2012), then jointly supported by the Nordic Development Fund (NDF) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) (2013-2015). From 2015 until 2017 the course is funded by NDF and indirectly supported by MFA through its funding of GTP. GTP undertook a monitoring role during the NDF-IADB period, since it could not engage as an active partner with Iceland not being a member of IADB. The main part of teaching for this course has been undertaken by staff from LaGeo, the Salvadorian national geothermal company.

In January 2016, GTP signed a Memorandum of Understanding and in April 2016 a formal co-operation agreement with LaGeo for the development and running of the Diploma Course. According to this agreement, the new SDG Short Course Series will be an integral part of the Diploma Course and Icelandic lecturers are now able to participate in the teaching of the Diploma course along with many GTP alumni from the region that serve also serve as lecturers. This is a positive step, since the course's quality is enhanced by Icelandic expertise. However, the short-term nature of the funding introduces uncertainty into the future involvement of Iceland and risks reducing the long-term effectiveness of the course.

### **2.4.3 Projects, research, advisory services, seminars, and other activities**

The UNU Iceland programmes engage in different project activities, research and advisory services. Some of these have involved collaboration across the programmes. These are discussed by programme below.

The programmes also provide competitive grants for fellows to present their work at international conferences. Several of the fellows interviewed mentioned that they had used such opportunities to present the research work done during the training in Iceland. These conferences are useful for fellows to network internationally within their sectors, as well as for the programmes to keep in touch with fellows. As discussed further in Section 3.3.2, GTP offers

partial support to fellows attending the prestigious World Geothermal Congress (held every five years) if they are first authors of a paper accepted for presentation. Hence there is always a strong GTP presence at every WGC.

## **GTP**

GTP staff undertook an academic evaluation of the Diploma Course in El Salvador in 2012 which led to structural changes to the programme, and then conducted reviews of the same course in 2013 and 2014. GTP currently has a co-operation agreement with LaGeo on the course for the current funding period of 2016-2017 (see section 2.4.2).

## **FTP**

FTP and Matís are undertaking a NDF-funded project in Tanzania budgeted at EUR 660,000 to reduce greenhouse gases and deforestation associated with fish processing methods in Lake Tanganyika. FTP is currently also initiating another Matís-led project financed by the EU Horizon 2020 mechanism on EU fisheries agreements with developing countries (FarFish). FTP's main role concerns capacity needs assessments and provision of training to fisheries professionals from the study countries.

In 2014 and 2015 FTP organised two study tours of the Icelandic fisheries sector for “high ranking officials from partner countries” with the aim of strengthening relationships with the programme and discussing development in fisheries.<sup>30</sup> The 2014 visit was attended by representatives from the Namibian branch of the Icelandic fishing company Samherji, the Ministries of Fisheries of Grenada, Guyana, Kenya and Namibia, the Lake Victoria Fisheries Commission and Nha Trang University.

## **LRT**

Together with the ENABLE consortium (Rotterdam School of Management, Commonland, Estoril Conferences, and Spanish National Research Council) LRT won a three-year grant from the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union in 2016 to establish an education platform concerned with the functioning of ecosystems and the benefits of sustainable landscape

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<sup>30</sup> UNU-FTP, 2014.

management. The education material will be in the form of two massive open online courses (MOOCs), of which one is already up and running with over 1,000 participants.

LRT has also been in dialogue with IFAD and the Government of Lesotho about supporting an ongoing project.

## **GEST**

GEST has actively sought to develop its non-training activities. GEST's strategic plan outlines ambitions in relation to both research and the promotion of transnational dialogue.

It has set itself a vast research scope: *Sustainability*, encompassing Climate Change, Energy, Natural Resources, Resilience, and Land Restoration; *Human Security* encompassing Peace and Conflict, Transitional Justice and Legal Frameworks, Migration, Violence, Health and Bodily Integrity; and *Societal Transitions* covering Transformative Education for Change, Governance, Social Inclusion, Social and Economic Inequalities, Citizenship and Democracy, and Gender Responsive Budgeting. GEST has, however, not been granted much funding for this area of work. Most progress has been in relation to research on gendered value chains in small-scale fisheries conducted between 2015 to 2016 as part of the above-mentioned NDF-funded project led by Matis. In 2017, MFA has granted GEST the equivalent of around USD 35,000 for gendered value chain analysis in aquaculture.

In relation to transnational dialogue, the main activities have consisted of co-hosting different events: the launching of the Human Development Report in Iceland in conjunction with MFA and UNDP; the upcoming Nordic Women Mediators Network with MFA; an annual public lecture series with RIKK Institute for Gender, Equality and Difference held since 2015; and three international conferences on Women, Peace and Security since 2009.<sup>31</sup> In 2015, almost all of the 15 speakers and panellists at the last such conference were from abroad, but only one represented a developing country institution.

GEST has developed several projects for which it has sought external funding. For instance, GEST is supporting the production of a documentary on gender disparities and discrimination in the geothermal sector that is financed by grant from the Icelandic Gender Equality Fund (10 million ISK) and is seeking grants to support. Last year it undertook an evaluation for MFA concerning Iceland's national action plan in relation to UN resolution 1325. It is enter-

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<sup>31</sup> For the most part, the lecture series featured academics who were in Iceland teaching at the five-month training programme.

ing a relationship with the World Food Programme to support it in building its gender equality capacity through a smart phone application. GEST has also recently been included as a partner in the Icelandic-funded UN Women project “Promotion of Women and Girls’ Effective Participation in Peace, Security and Recovery in Mozambique 2017-2020”. However, it has yet to secure funding for a project concerning capacity building of civil society in Afghanistan with regards to women, peace and security.

## 2.5 SUMMARY

Recruitment is a critical component of the four UNU Iceland programmes. Each dedicates significant time and resources to recruiting fellows that can make the most of the training programme and contribute to change back home. The assessment of candidates is generally very comprehensive and robust, and has largely ensured that fellows meet standards that are critical for the success of the programme. Each programme has had a very small share of less successful recruitments that have served to remind them of how important careful selection is.

Establishing partnerships with organisations in developing countries to support the recruitment process is an advantage for LRT, FTP and GTP. It provides the programmes with a useful entry point into the respective sector in the country. While partner organisations usually handle the identification of candidates, the programmes retain the final say about who is selected, which has allowed them to uphold the desired quality standards.

GEST, on the other hand, has been served well by not having established partnerships. However, this makes it all the more pertinent to have a comprehensive overview of the women’s movement, structures, the key actors and ongoing initiatives at country level. Forging ties with the UN system, the development partners (not least the gender equality committee) and in particular UN Women is important in this regard. This can promote synergies and also opportunities to leverage ongoing initiatives in gender equality. The other three programmes could also potentially benefit from networking with the UN system and other development partners at the country level. This is discussed more extensively in Chapter 4.

The robust processes that all four programmes have for selecting fellows do not always extend to the selection of partner countries. For capacity development efforts of this kind to have some effect at the country level beyond the individual that has been trained, it is important to build a critical mass of people with capacity and motivation to promote change. All programmes have recognised this since they were established. LRT and until recently GEST,

have worked on building a critical mass in a reduced number of countries. Meanwhile, over their long time span of operation, GTP and FTP have each recruited from 60 and 56 countries, respectively.<sup>32</sup> While a critical mass has been built in many countries, only two or three people have been trained in several others, and in a number of countries the programmes no longer have an active presence. Such a situation raises questions about the actual contributions to sustainable institutional strengthening in some of those countries.

At the same time, it is important to bear in mind that geographical and cultural diversity among fellows is an important aspect for enriching their learning experience during the stay in Iceland, as well as for the programmes and fellows to expand their professional networks.

To some extent recruitment involves trial and error and taking risks. Sometimes it requires testing a few people from a country to know whether the programme can contribute to developing the country's capacity in an effective way and/or whether the collaboration with a partner organisation will function as desired. When examining the large number of countries that GTP and FTP have engaged with, it is possible to see how certain countries have only featured a few people over a period of only a few years. This can be a consequence of such realisations.

Conditions or demands set by donors and sponsors also to some extent steer GTP, FTP, and GEST to recruit from certain countries. In the case of FTP, requests based on different interests within the Icelandic government have also contributed to the large diversity of countries from which these programmes recruit.

All four programmes have engaged high quality lecturers that have applied appropriate teaching methodologies. The level of satisfaction has generally been very high and the dedication of many of them highly appreciated by the fellows. The programmes have been effective in identifying appropriate lecturers, bringing lecturers on board to ensure a common understanding of the programme and its intentions, and in continuously monitoring the lecturers' performance. A main weakness of all four programmes is the dearth of lecturers from developing countries, a shortcoming that needs to be addressed. Partner institutions and former fellows/graduates could be a potential source of developing country expertise.

The training programmes are of high quality and their curricula highly relevant for the partner organisations and countries. The mix of theory, professional skills training and project work give the programmes a unique edge and is generally highly appreciated. The significant em-

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<sup>32</sup> Including the 2017 cohorts.

phasis on project work with active support from supervisors, is another distinctive aspect of the programmes. Overall, the four programmes have managed to achieve a relevant balance between theory and practice that heightens the usefulness of the programmes for the fellows. An important factor contributing to the success of all programmes is the responsive and adaptable approach of the programme management, that involves a continuous process of monitoring, assessment, reflection and adjustment. While all programmes address environmental concerns, there is scope to strengthen the gender equality, poverty and broader development perspectives.

The programmes are intense, but appropriately so, making the most of the fellows' time in Iceland. The length of programme is unusual. Most training programmes that focus on building capacity at lower to middle management level tend to be between one and five weeks long. Alternatively there are Masters programmes that are one year long or more. The length allows fellows to immerse themselves over many weeks, but short enough that many employers feel they can cope with the reduced capacity that ensues. Changing the length of the programme would not be an advantage. On the other hand, there is a strong demand from past LRT and FTP fellows for the programmes to offer a university diploma and ECTS credits in line with GEST.

The programmes draw advantage from the Icelandic example, organising field visits that provide context and tangibility which contributes additional texture to the overall experience. All programmes have catered to the practical and social needs of the fellows in a way that fellows have described as welcoming, caring and generally very efficient.

Short courses implemented in partner countries constitute an important part of GTP's and FTP's work and the type of activity that both LRT and GEST would like to develop further. These courses tend to be well-designed in a way that caters to local needs and taught by competent lecturers. At least in the case of FTP however, short course quality and perceived usefulness has not been constant and there are questions about the results of many of them. Moreover, the provision of short courses is a crowded scene, with a number of different actors in different countries providing training in subjects related to fisheries, gender equality, land restoration, and environment. The specific advantage of the UNU Iceland programmes in this context is therefore not immediately apparent, especially if employing more costly experts from developed countries. Therefore it becomes critical to assess the extent to which the UNU Iceland programmes can both add value and promote sustainability. In the specific case of training in geothermal energy, while there are others offering short courses, GTP has the most experience in the world in terms of both time and volume of fellows. Its courses are acknowledged in the industry for their content and knowledgeable teachers, and the extensive use of local lecturers has rendered them relatively cost-effective.



### 3. Results achieved

This chapter analyses the extent to which the programmes are contributing to changes at the country level. It summarises and analyses effects achieved at the national and policy levels (macro); organisational, programme or decentralised levels (meso); and individual or community levels (micro). Data on these effects were obtained from the survey, country visits and interviews with fellows and in some cases their colleagues and superiors.

#### 3.1 MACRO LEVEL RESULTS<sup>33</sup>

This section examines the evidence of UNU Iceland fellows contributing to changes in policy or related process at the national level. The focus is on processes that are directly related to the work fellows initiated or carried out during the training in Iceland and/or changes brought about by fellows as a result of specific knowledge or skills developed through the programmes. The analysis of results at the macro level has had to consider the fact that fellows' input is generally but one among many different contributions to processes that are typically complex and lengthy.

While none of the four UNU Iceland programmes explicitly focuses on recruiting policymakers or senior level officials, fellows recruited have nonetheless engaged in policy related matters in some cases. To gauge this, the survey of the former fellows asked the question whether they strongly agreed that they had been involved in policy processes after returning to their countries. As illustrated in Table 9, an average of 26 percent of the respondents from the four programmes have advised policymakers, and 20 percent have contributed to drafting and evaluating policies. FTP fellows were the most active in advising policymakers, with over one third responding that they had provided advice. Compared to the other programmes, half as many of the LRT fellows engaged in advising policy makers. This is probably explained by the fact that many of the LRT fellows work at the decentralised level or in academia where opportunities for policy influence are much fewer.

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<sup>33</sup> The evaluation team decided to include in this chapter organisational changes within state institutions. Some of those changes could be considered meso level changes, but since the organisations are national institutions, the results have been included here.

### Box 1: Policy influence of GTP's first PhD graduate

A GTP fellow from Kenya was not only the first GTP PhD graduate, but also the first African to be granted a PhD from the University of Iceland in 'Environment and Natural Resources'. Her PhD study in Iceland assessed the social, economic and environmental impacts of harnessing geothermal energy through the UNFCCC climate change management strategies (mitigation and adaptation) and the Millennium Development Goals in two areas in the Great Rift Valley in Kenya.

Following her PhD, the fellow applied her environmental and geothermal knowledge to earning Kenya's first carbon credits via the Clean Development Mechanism, an Emissions Trading Scheme under the Kyoto Protocol. Since then, she has become the Director of Climate Change at the Kenyan Ministry of Environment. As such she is responsible for the national implementation of climate change activities for Kenya. This has involved engagement in national policy and regulation processes, such as developing an air quality strategy, reviewing the National Solid Waste Management Policy and chairing the Ministerial Health and Safety Committee.

Her technical knowledge, strong analytic and personal skills were built through PhD level study in geothermal energy, and resulted in her having considerable national responsibility and influence.

**Table 9: Involvement of fellows in policy related activities**

	GTP	FTP	LRT	GEST	Average
Advised policymakers	28%	35%	13%	29%	26%
Drafted policy(ies)	17%	24%	14%	23%	20%
Evaluated policy(ies)	20%	19%	19%	23%	20%

The survey respondents were also asked how the project work undertaken during the UNU programme had been used. On average, 18 percent had presented their project work to policymakers and 13 percent responded that their work had been used to support policy-making. Again, FTP fellows were the most active in engaging with policymakers, which can in part be explained by the fact that many FTP fellows are employed in national level government institutions, which the programme targets explicitly.

**Table 10: How the research undertaken by fellows during the programmes were used**

	GTP	FTP	LRT	GEST	Average
Presented to policymakers	14%	22%	20%	15%	18%
Used in policymaking	12%	18%	12%	8%	13%

The sections that follow discuss macro-level results achieved by each of the four programmes.

#### 3.1.1 GTP

The knowledge and skills acquired in Iceland have enabled fellows to be effective in influencing and proposing policy at national level. Some fellows have moved beyond the purely geothermal sphere, into energy and environmental policy, but all attribute their appointment, advancement, or influence to their participation in the GTP training in Iceland.

A core team of Kenyan GTP alumni were instrumental in ensuring that geothermal energy now has a key role in the energy mix of Kenya. In 2003, five fellows from five cohorts between 1982 and 1996 authored the report ‘Least Cost Power Plan Incorporating Geothermal Power Plants’. This was presented to the government as a means to incorporate geothermal energy into the national power plan. As a result, geothermal was given a substantial role in the Kenya National Power Development Plan, which in turn has resulted in the establishment of targets in the Kenya Vision 2030, by which time Kenya aims to produce 5,000 MW of base-load geothermal power.<sup>34</sup> The growth rate in the last few years has been massive, with a three-fold increase between 2013 and 2016. As such, these GTP fellows have made an impact at government level and influenced national energy policy. Kenya in turn has assumed a leadership position in the development of geothermal energy in Africa.

GTP has also made a large contribution to the development of geothermal specialists in China by training 85 fellows, the second largest nationality group (after Kenya). Many of these are the leaders of the Chinese geothermal industry. While China has always had skilled geologists, hydrogeologists, and petroleum engineers, they have lacked training in heat transport and thermal effects in fluid-rock interaction, making GTP’s six-month course highly attractive and relevant. GTP alumni have played key roles in the green energy development in the Beijing and Tianjin area. This has involved the use of geothermal resources for extensive development of district heating, which increased by 52 percent between 2010 and 2015. GTP alumni in China have also developed the direct use of geothermal resources for fish farming.

### **3.1.2 FTP**

In countries where FTP has been present for a long time, some of its fellows currently occupy influential positions in the national fisheries administration (e.g. Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi). Knowledge and skills acquired by these individuals in Iceland are believed to have influenced fisheries policy in those countries, according to several fellows and their superiors interviewed. For example, a 2001 fellow from Malawi has contributed to the revision of the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy, which was approved in 2016. The project he conducted within the Policy and Planning specialisation involved reviewing of the management regime for Lake Malawi and was one of the inputs that led to the

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<sup>34</sup> Geothermal power is generated 24 hrs/day, 365 days/year. It is a steady (baseload) power supply, unlike the other common renewables like wind and solar which by their nature generate electricity intermittently. 5000 MW is a very ambitious target; for comparison the United States currently has the most geothermal generating capacity of any nation at 3567 MW. Kenya’s current installed capacity is 676 MW. (<http://www.thinkgeoenergy.com/overview-on-installed-geothermal-power-generation-capacity-worldwide/> ).

revision of the regime. Similarly, one Tanzanian fellow at the Ministry of Fisheries in Tanzania was responsible for integrating the concept of community ownership rights in the National Fisheries Act, informed by research on community-based cooperative fisheries management conducted in Iceland.

Another area of significant macro level results in the fisheries sector relates to national certification processes and international accreditation.<sup>35</sup> Several FTP fellows from different countries - Bangladesh, Dominica, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Uganda – have, during the training programme, developed procedures for ensuring and certifying fish product quality. They subsequently returned with improved practices that played a role in their organisations becoming internationally accredited, which is one of the factors behind increasing exports of fish products to European and American markets.

The project of a Mexican fellow who specialised in Fishing Technology designed a new cage culture method during his training in Iceland that has been subsequently implemented along the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of Mexico by supporting national efforts in Mexico to disseminate cage culture as an alternative to capture fisheries. In addition to the Government of Mexico, he has advised governments and universities in Honduras, Colombia and Nicaragua on cage development.

Meanwhile, a fellow from Jamaica used her project on spiny lobster settlement to advise on the regime for monitoring and managing industrial lobster fisheries. The work she has been conducting on compliance monitoring feeds into the Jamaican spiny lobster licensing regime, thereby influencing the management of that fishery at the national level. Because the spiny lobster stock is shared with neighbouring countries, improved management in Jamaica is also relevant for the region.

### **3.1.1 GEST**

Despite being the youngest of all four programmes, the fact that GEST recruits ministry officials and civil society activists to its five-month programme has resulted in its fellows contributing to some national level outcomes.

One Malawian fellow from 2014 employed at the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare has undertaken a number of significant initiatives upon returning from the GEST programme, based on his UNU project related to gender responsive budgeting. By lev-

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<sup>35</sup> Fish product quality certification is essential for countries to be able to export to foreign markets, notably the USA and EU.

eraging a multi-year EU grant of EUR 12 million for gender equality and women's empowerment, he has played an active role in rolling out a comprehensive gender responsive budgeting effort, with a fairly systematic bottom-up approach in relation to the agriculture, health, transport and education sectors, combined with a top-down approach in other sectors. This has involved sensitising and training public servants, ministerial directors and permanent secretaries in gender responsive budgeting principles, in particular staff at the Ministry of Finance. Moreover, he has ensured that the Malawian budget statement now integrates gender perspectives and has influenced the National Gender Policy in 2015 by bringing in the environmental perspective. Last year he managed to institute 52 new positions as District Gender Officers across the country. Recruitment and training for these positions is ongoing.

Another impressive legislative result in Malawi that the GEST programme has indirectly contributed to is the 2017 constitutional amendment that sets the legal age for marriage at 18, which effectively outlaws child marriage. This process was led by a GEST fellow, as explained in Box 2.

In Uganda there are fewer macro-level results. A fellow working at the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has been able to influence national policy related to gender-based violence, so that it took into consideration boys and men. The fellow said that before attending the programme in Iceland she would not have known how to bring this perspective into the policy making process.

Responding to a demand by members of parliament, fellows in Malawi and Uganda have trained parliamentarians in gender and climate change within a year of returning home. In Malawi the training of 70 members of parliament was part of the Capacity Building for Managing Climate Change in Malawi, a national five-year programme (June 2013- May 2018) that was funded by Norway and coordinated by Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) in collaboration with the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. The training was demanded by the women's caucus in parliament, but male parliamentarians asked to join. In Uganda, a fellow undertook a capacity gap analysis and with the help of consultants devised a three-day training programme for members of parliament on climate change and gender.

### **3.1.2 LRT**

Concrete examples of macro level changes, which LRT might have contributed to were not uncovered by the evaluation team. Some of the team's findings suggest that higher level results may occur in the future, but the support for those findings is insufficient to enable any conclusions to be drawn. Reasons for the lack of macro level results are speculative, but may be related to LRT's recruitment strategy, which in part targets academics and decentralised technical professionals, who have little opportunity to enact macro-level change upon returning home.

Nevertheless, some fellows had interacted with members of parliament. For example, a fellow in Uganda advised a member of parliament to discourage the production of food crops in drylands that demand large quantities of water, and instead promote agroforestry and crop diversification. Another Ugandan fellow met with parliamentarians at a conference in Tanzania to make them aware of climate change adaptation measures. The outcomes at policy level of such exchanges were not known.

### **Box 2: Legislative success in Malawi**

MM was a state advocate who in 2013 started working for a Malawian women's rights CSO, Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA- Malawi) that conducts action research, training and advocacy for legal and policy reform. His area of work was women's property and inheritance, but he had limited experience of working with gender equality and women's rights in general. He therefore applied to UNU-GEST and was accepted to the programme in 2014.

MM's final assignment at UNU-GEST was a project on the retention of girls in primary school. This work alerted his attention to the high rate of child marriage in Malawi. Indeed, according to UNICEF (2016), nearly 10 per cent of girls under 15 are married and approximately one in every two girls are married by the age of 18. In northern Malawi, *kupimbira*, or giving a young daughter in marriage as repayment for a debt, is practiced. The practice of child marriage sentences girls to a cycle of poverty. They miss out on education, bear children before they are physically and mentally prepared and are rendered more vulnerable to violence.

Not long after returning back to Malawi from Iceland, MM was made the National Coordinator of WLSA. He played a central role in the *Joint CEDAW Malawi Civil Society Organisations Shadow Report 2015*, which raised the issue of child marriage and the need for legislative action to address a legal loophole which allowed children between 15 and 18 to marry with parental consent. With the support of various partners – such as Plan International, UN women and Ministry of Justice – WLSA under MM's leadership set out to raise awareness, educate, and advocate. Around the country, child protection officers, social welfare officers and school authorities were trained in child rights, child protection, and safety measures. WLSA actively engaged in focus group discussions with affected communities. MM ran consultative conferences in different parts of Malawi to seek the opinions and experiences of broad cross-sections of society regarding child marriages. Female members of parliament were supported to bring constituents together and raise and discuss child marriage. These interactions helped develop and defend the case for a technical review of the constitution.

The awareness-raising and advocacy work of MM played a critical role in building a solid constituency in Malawi against child marriage and a strong momentum for legislative change. The work also raised WLSA's profile further. MM claims that attending UNU-GEST was instrumental for his ability to play the role he did in these processes. In particular, it imparted analytical skills, strategic thinking, effective communication techniques and the ability to lead. Above all, he says it gave him a new level of confidence and sense of mission. He adamantly maintains that UNU-GEST set him on the path that he is now on, one he is unlikely to have discovered without the training in Iceland. Peers and stakeholders in partner organisations interviewed by the evaluation agree.

On Valentine's Day 2017 - 32 months after MM returned to Malawi - Malawi's parliament took a landmark decision towards advancing gender equality by banning child marriage in the country. Almost unanimously, it voted to adopt a constitutional amendment that raises the minimum age of marriage from 15 to 18 years, for both girls and boys. While MM acknowledges that there were many partners involved in the efforts that led to this change; stakeholders in civil society, government, and the UN system all agree that MM's drive and activism was central to the successful outcome.

## 3.2 MESO LEVEL RESULTS

This section examines the extent to which fellows have influenced their organisations or other meso level structures. The team found three significant ways fellows have contributed to meso level results, namely i) disseminating knowledge, ii) introducing improved practices and processes; and, iii) engaging in new partnerships and launching new projects and initiatives. This section will start by looking at how and what knowledge has been shared. This is followed by a discussion on what practises have been changed within organisations as a result of

efforts by fellows. Section 3.2.3 specifically looks at examples of changes introduced in academic institutions. Lastly, initiatives and projects that have been initiated by fellows are discussed.

### 3.2.1 Programmes and initiatives

Through its fellows, the UNU Programmes in Iceland have contributed to a number of new or ongoing initiatives, projects and programmes. Some of these have sprung directly from the projects the fellows undertook in Iceland. Below are some examples from the four programmes.

**GTP** fellows have played key roles in the following initiatives:

- One fellow in Kenya designed a project as part of his GTP training that investigates **improving generating power plant efficiency through modern maintenance methods**. This fellow is now applying the method to all the generating capacity at Olkaria Geothermal Power Station in Kenya. By maximizing efficiency of the turbines, and also using binary plants to get more from the same fluid, plant performance is expected to improve from using 9 t/hr/MW to only using 7.2 t/hr/MW, in effect using 20 percent less steam to generate the same amount of power, which is a considerable achievement.
- Due to the efforts of a UNU fellow and PhD graduate, **KenGen became the first company in Kenya to earn carbon credits** (see Box 1). The fellow worked three years on the Clean Development Mechanism, under the Emissions Trading Scheme under the Kyoto Protocol, allowing KenGen to sell carbon credits to offset emissions for USD 3 million to developed countries.
- Two fellows are co-operating on a project to **certify Kenyan Project Managers** in cooperation with the International Project Management Association (IPMA).<sup>36</sup> They are registering the Kenyan Chapter of the IPMA and in conjunction with this, they are hosting the IPMA meeting in Nairobi in September 2017.
- A Kenyan fellow developed a method to prevent scaling for his project. The method has been applied to a direct use production well at Menengai in Kenya..

Examples of Initiatives undertaken by **FTP** fellows include the following:

- Fellows from the Tanzania Ministry of Fisheries have been **leading figures in two high-profile programmes**: the World Bank-supported Marine and Coastal Environment Man-

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<sup>36</sup> Fellows who specialise in GTP's new Project Management study line are offered to undertake certification through the Iceland Office of the IPMA.



agement Programme (MACEMP) and the more recent South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish) in Tanzania.

- A fellow from Jamaica used the knowledge in economic assessment gained in Iceland to **conduct a comprehensive project costing** for new and prospective ornamental fish farmers in the country. Based on this work, she has been invited by the National Technical and Vocational Training Body of Jamaica to write and validate modules on ornamental fish production. This same fellow has used the knowledge of selective breeding acquired at Holar University College to successfully breed aquaculture species considered for introduction in the country.
- The Uganda National Fisheries Resource Research Institute has, according to its director (himself an FTP fellow and PhD graduate) been invited to **lead the stock assessment component** in the 'Lakes Edward and Albert Integrated Fisheries Management II' programme, which is funded by the African Development Bank and the Global Environment Facility and implemented jointly with neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo. This invitation was only extended because of the skills demonstrated by an FTP fellow at the latest consortium meeting.
- Three FTP fellows from Tanzania are currently working in the **development of a National Plan of Action** to implement Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries with support from FAO (see Box 3).

### **Box 3: FTP fellow's contribution to small-scale fisheries guidelines in Tanzania**

In the beginning of 2017 three UNU-FTP fellows working at the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of Tanzania from 2004, 2010 and 2012 - in collaboration with the non-governmental organisation Environmental Management and Economic Development Organisation drafted a concept note to FAO headquarters requesting support for implementing the Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries (SSF) Guidelines in the country. The request was granted, and the fellows were asked again to draft another concept note with detailed activities in line with a proposed budget for each action and a work plan. One of the proposed activities consists of the formulation of the SSF Guideline National Plan of Action. The proposal is awaiting final endorsement by FAO headquarters for the work to start in July 2017.

One fellow observed, with respect to FTP's contribution to this work: "UNU-FTP has contributed in building capacity in our writing skills and sharpened our thinking perspectives. That is why we are able to help our country to solve fisheries management issues that we are facing in our country."

Examples of Initiatives undertaken by **LRT** fellows include the following:

- LRT fellows that worked for the CSO Green Gold took initiatives that led to the **land reclamation practices** of the Mongolian mining sector being altered.
- After knowledge gained from the Rangeland Management and Ecological Restoration lectures at LRT, a fellow from the NGO Camp Alatoo was the first to introduce the state and transition model for **ecological restoration in Kyrgyzstan** (previously, the common rangeland succession approach was used). He also introduced grazing plan development and management and a new method to assess the health of rangelands that he says is now

widely applied, working through 40 committees responsible for pasture management. Camp Alatoo has since shared its experience with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and a joint World Bank/ FAO project, and has been selected as one of five selected countries to test the Global Methodology for Rangeland Assessment.

- An LRT fellow helped plan the **relocation of a soap factory** through participatory approaches in northern Ghana. This involved bringing local soap manufacturers together, sensitising them on the negative impact on the environment that their activities were having, and then identifying a more suitable area for their activity.
- One fellow from **Uganda** used her research from Iceland to write a project proposal on behalf of her organisation. The **proposal on range land management** was submitted to the German Corporation for International Cooperation and received USD 50,000 in funding.
- One LRT fellow from Uganda has **produced a formal guiding document**, a Production and Environment Management Ordinance; while another who partook in a policy review process with the National Environment Management Authority **developed a bylaw** on rainwater harvesting for the fellow's area of jurisdiction.

**GEST** fellows have played key roles in the following initiatives:

- The GEST project of a Palestinian fellow working for UNRWA, which focused on gender differences in academic achievement in schools on the West Bank, was taken up by UNRWA, elaborated and **implemented in UNRWA schools**. With a special focus on boys, the initiative promotes inclusive education, learner-friendly environments, strengthened counselling and facilitating an inter-sectorial approach to gender equality in education.
- Inspired by her participation in the GEST programme, an official at the Ministry of Gender in Uganda has played a key role in launching a national programme called the **Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme** to be implemented in 116 districts. There is, however, no budget for the programme at the national level, so for it to be implemented it will need to draw on decentralised budgets.
- One of the fellows in Uganda is working on mainstreaming gender equality into a new **UN Climate Change Programme in Uganda** that is to be funded by the EU. Gender perspectives have been included in the methodology, including specific gender equality and women's empowerment components.
- One Ugandan fellow from a women's CSO successfully organised a national **water march** in 2016 in Kampala to highlight the gender issues related to water. She said she had gained the confidence, leadership and advocacy skills from GEST to undertake this initiative. The Minister for Water and Environment pledged support to the issue in the upcoming budget. She is also organising Ugandan CSOs in **advocacy** for women's health and abortions.

- One fellow from the public sector, wrote a project proposal for **preventing child pregnancy** as part of her assignment for GEST. Since her Ministry did not show interest in implementing it, she uploaded it on a website. She was subsequently contacted by a CSO working in northern Uganda who asked to adopt the proposal.
- Two GEST fellows, one working at the local government level and another employed by a large women's umbrella CSO work together to establish the first **government funded advisory centre (shelter) for female victims of violence**, based on the Icelandic model for women's shelters. Before that, the women's umbrella CSO established a shelter immediately upon returning from Iceland that was based on the knowledge gained from visiting a shelter in Reykjavík.

### 3.2.2 Changes introduced in academic institutions

Fellows that returned to academic institutions explained that their teaching skills, their ability to organise lectures and (sometimes) their command of the English language had greatly improved as a result of attending the programme in Iceland.

In many cases, fellows from LRT, FTP and GEST had **revised their curriculum** according to new knowledge brought home from Iceland and introduced new subjects. For instance:

- LRT fellows introduced the subject '**ecological restoration**' into the curriculum of most of LRT's academic partners. One Ugandan fellow from Makerere University introduced environmental conservation, natural resource conflict management and issues related to institutions and land rights in his lectures on environmental communication. This was motivated by the realisation that land tenure security, which is a complicated issue in Uganda, is important for soil conservation and thus for development.
- A fellow of GEST who was the IT expert of Makerere University's Gender Studies Department, introduced **gender analysis of ICT policies** into his ICT classes for students. Moreover, he has designed and introduced a new (and probably unique) Gender and IT component within a certificate course called Women's Economic Empowerment Programme. This has furthermore led him to develop a specific mobile application to help women's economic empowerment.

- FTP’s short courses on aquaculture held at Nha Trang University have **been incorporated into the MSc programme** in Aquaculture and Food Technology. Syllabi and material from FTP short courses developed as part of an Icelandic cooperation programme for Pacific Island Countries have been incorporated into the **undergraduate Fish and Fisheries Biology course** at the University of the South Pacific.<sup>37</sup>
- The final project of a FTP fellow from the most recent cohort consisted of **developing a full curriculum** for a course on Fishing Technology to be included in the MSc programme in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences at Makerere University. This will be a new subject that the university has not offered before.

In some cases, fellows have **introduced new approaches** within academic institutions. For instance, some LRT fellows have introduced gender issues into environmental lectures, including in relation to land rights. In Ghana one lecturer introduced gender mainstreaming after her participation in the programme, having previously only focussed on gender advocacy issues. Meanwhile, a GEST fellow from LUANAR in Malawi has prepared guidelines for mainstreaming gender equality perspectives in teaching and research activities.<sup>38</sup> Another fellow from LUANAR who attended the LRT programme introduced LRT’s “Mastermind approach” to mentoring in his department. His supervisors have been impressed and have discussed introducing it university-wide.

A few FTP fellows from Nha Trang University who took the Quality Management specialisation mentioned that after returning from Iceland they had taken part in visits to fish processing companies accompanied by experts from Matís and the University of Iceland. They maintained that this had led to strengthening the **collaboration between university and industry** in Vietnam, such that the latter became more frequently involved in research projects than before.

Several of the FTP fellows interviewed held that the training has led to participation in more national and international conferences, which they believed strengthened the reputation of their institution. This in turn resulted in **greater opportunities to collaborate** with other academic institutions. For instance, fellows from Nha Trang University in Vietnam explained that they had initiated research partnerships with universities in Belgium, Japan, Taiwan and Thailand by virtue of their greater international exposure. International exposure has also ben-

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<sup>37</sup> Heileman, 2009.

<sup>38</sup> This fellow has also devised a policy on gender equality, that is awaiting approval by the University Council.

effitted from the FTP fellowships **attracting new funding** to academic institutions. A fellow at Wayamba University in Sri Lanka, for instance, recently received funding through competitive national research grants for two projects that respectively investigate blue swimming crab and jellyfish resources in the country. He attributes the ability to attract that funding to the knowledge and skills acquired through the training in Iceland.

### 3.2.3 Improved practices in organisations

On average, 70 percent of survey respondents agreed strongly with the statement that they had brought new ways of thinking to their workplace since returning from Iceland. For the GEST fellows, this was as high as 81 percent. In terms of how their employer valued the novel skills and knowledge, LRT respondents most strongly agreed with the statement “my institution values the knowledge and skills I received through the UNU programme” (79%). Meanwhile, GTP respondents gave a relatively low score to this statement (57%).<sup>39</sup>

**Table 11: The extent the skills/knowledge gained by fellows are used and valued (from 0 – disagree to 3 - strongly agree)**

	GTP	FTP	LRT	GEST	Average
I have brought new ways of thinking to my workplace since I returned from Iceland.	2.61	2.62	2.55	2.67	2.61
My institution values the knowledge and skills I received through the UNU Programme.	2.39	2.50	2.73	2.69	2.58
Average	2.47	2.57	2.61	2.65	

### GEST

The five types of practices that GEST fellows in Africa most often introduced or improved in their organisations were: gender analysis, gender mainstreaming, gender responsive budgeting, climate change and gender approaches, and reporting in relation to **human rights mechanisms**. With regards to the latter, a fellow employed at the ministry concerned with gender in Malawi gained enough skills in Iceland to enable the ministry to draft its own Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) reports and gender

<sup>39</sup> The team verified whether this score was brought down by the fact that GTP have proportionately many more respondents who completed the training many years back. However, when controlling for this factor, the score did not improve significantly.

equality reports to the African Union. Previously, these tasks were typically undertaken by UN Women consultants. Meanwhile, fellows working in CSOs applied their GEST skills to enhance the CSO contribution to the Universal Periodic Review.

In Uganda, Ghana and Malawi fellows contributed to **gender responsive budgeting** efforts upon their return, spreading this approach at the central and/or decentralised levels, in a range of sectors. **Climate change and gender approaches** were also adopted by organisations associated with the returning fellows. In both Uganda and Malawi there was a high demand for practice relating to these two areas generated by international, national, and donor concerns. The Ministries of Finance in both countries require that budgets are gender responsive to be accepted, yet many public servants have lacked capacities to prepare and monitor such budgets. Meanwhile, donors in both countries – such as Norway, EU, DfID and UN Women are funding initiatives in these two areas, providing GEST fellows with concrete opportunities to make a difference.

## LRT

Some of the improved practices introduced by LRT fellows include participatory approaches, the establishment of permanent transects for measuring vegetation dynamics as a part of repeatable measurements in land monitoring, the promotion of indigenous seedlings, more effective geo-referencing and gender awareness. For instance, LRT fellows in Ghana, Uganda, and Mongolia introduced **participatory approaches** into the work of their organisations. These approaches, which comprised of equitable involvement of stakeholders to ensure ownership and success, also recognised that participation tapped into local knowledge and perspectives and thus expanded the span of potential solutions for different problems. LRT partners used participatory approaches in environmental education, bush burning, sustainable land management and revegetation, wetland management forest management and charcoal production, mining and environmental impact assessments. Participatory approaches were also used to move gravel and sand mining enterprises from agriculturally productive land.

The measuring of **vegetation dynamics** over time via transects was introduced into partner institutions such as the Savannah Agricultural Research Institute in Ghana. It was also included in monitoring systems developed by LRT fellows for the mining industry in Mongolia and Ghana. In these two countries LRT fellows also promoted the use of **indigenous plants and seedlings** instead of more thirsty exotic varieties that have been commonly used in revegetation/land reclamation efforts in rangelands and/or mining areas.

LRT fellows also promoted more effective and relevant use of **geo-referencing** technologies in partner organisations such as the Soil Research Institute in Ghana. In a couple of cases, LRT fellows had promoted **gender awareness** within their organisations. Examples of this included the Environmental Protection Agency in Ghana hiring more women in nurseries and Ethiopian agricultural organisations undertaking gender equality campaigns.

## GTP

GTP fellows brought back project management skills and an overview of the geothermal development process. This helped their organisations attract financing and **facilitated relations with foreign investors**. It allowed the organisations to prepare better project proposals, devise appropriate terms of reference for consultants, and apply effective oversight of the work.

The main GTP partner institutions in Kenya and El Salvador (KenGen and GDC in Kenya and LaGeo in El Salvador), that have had many employees attend the GTP programme have been strengthened to become **regional leaders in geothermal development**. They have undertaken professional services for geothermal projects in neighbouring countries. This is due to having a significant number of scientists and engineers from the Iceland training. These fellows have a broad knowledge of geothermal energy, a variety of specialist skills, and the confidence to apply these skills.

Several geothermal companies have improved their environmental practices as a result of fellows being trained in Iceland, where a high value is put on the environment. Fellows that have returned to KenGen and GDC have been active in **establishing environmental departments**, and other significant environmental initiatives, and take their obligations very seriously.

Fellows from El Salvador held that the training in Iceland has contributed to a **flat management structure**, in which people were listened to and treated with respect and have a better idea of their place in the team.

## FTP

The improved practices introduced by FTP fellows often stemmed from the project work they undertook while in Iceland. For instance, a fellow from Uganda who took the Fishing Technology specialisation introduced new principles and methods for **gear design** at the National Fisheries Resources Research Institute. Meanwhile, a fellow from Tanzania introduced an **environmental status assessment** procedure for marine protected areas that was adopted nationwide by the Marine Parks and Reserves. Another example is the UNU project of a fellow from Antigua and Barbuda that became a **template for value chain studies** among member countries of the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism. At the national level, his work on value chain analyses has been used to advise fish processing companies on consumer preferences, thereby directing them to produce more smoked and salted fish for the domestic market.

Improved **survey and stock assessment methods** is another area that FTP fellows acquired knowledge in during the training in Iceland. Such improvements have been introduced by fellows from Cuba, Jamaica, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda, to name a few. Box 4 provides an example from a Dominican fellow.

Partner organisations benefiting from several FTP fellows over time have seen cumulative improvements to practices. For instance, a number of Ugandan FTP fellows from the Quality Management line of specialisation have worked over the years to introduce improved fish product **quality control and certification** practices at the Ministry of Fisheries. Likewise, in Tanzania the introduction of **awareness and training for fisheries resource users** to complement regulation enforcement has been attributed to the influence of a large corps of FTP fellows who learnt in Iceland that enforcement alone cannot solve the problem of illegal fishing. Also in Tanzania a fellow introduced a system for **artisanal fisheries data collection** (developed as part of her UNU project) that later fellows working at the same institution have developed it further. It is now used across the country.

### 3.2.4 Knowledge dissemination

Fellows from all four programmes have been active in sharing knowledge upon returning to their home countries. 96 percent of the survey respondents answered that they have been able to spread the knowledge and skills they gained from attending the UNU programme. They have done so informally and formally, within their organisations and beyond. The respondents from GEST have been the most active in sharing knowledge, particularly beyond their own organisations: almost 70 percent of the GEST respondents provided expert advice beyond their organisation; compared to just over 40 percent of the respondents from the other three programmes. GTP respondents have been the most active in sharing knowledge, skills and experience informally within the organisations, with over 85 percent engaged in such activities.

Interviews and discussions with fellows and other stakeholders revealed the different types of knowledge sharing initiatives the fellows from the four programmes have been involved in.

Among the **GEST fellows**, the most common topics of disseminated information were gender responsive budgeting, men and masculinities, and gender and climate change. For instance,

- In Uganda, a fellow who worked for FAO prepared and implemented a **webinar presentation** on gender and climate change for the Uganda National Adaptation Plan for the Agriculture sector change targeting CSOs, university students and public servants.
- Two fellows at LUANAR designed courses, prepared a **toolkit/handbook on gender and climate change** and undertook training as part of a larger climate change programme funded by Norway. It is yet to be published.
- Also in Malawi, two gender and environment district officers were upon return immediately **co-opted by the Ministry of Agriculture to train colleagues** from other districts as part of a programme supported by UN Women. One of the fellows was also sent to Zimbabwe and South Africa to train and present.



- A fellow from a civil society organisation has established a CSO platform in Malawi that meets every other year for a three-day training and discussion on **men and masculinities**. It includes CSOs that work with HIV, gender equality, and alcohol abuse. She has invited two other GEST alumni to speak at these events.
- Two fellows have played key roles in the **Men Engage Network** against gender-based violence in Malawi and Mozambique, bringing in learning about men and boys from the GEST training.
- One Mozambican GEST fellow who is the gender and environment focal person in the provincial directorate for fisheries in Manica, Mozambique is **bringing in gender perspectives into fisheries**. Women are for the first time being trained, leading to changes in attitudes in the communities.

**LRT fellows** were active in spreading knowledge to communities and the broader public through **environmental education efforts**. Fellows from public agencies, CSOs and academic institutions used the materials from the Icelandic lectures to train colleagues and disseminated soft copies of books, documents and manuals. Examples include:

- In Ghana, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials who had trained in Iceland used **community radio and television to communicate good practices** on fire management, sustainable land management and waste management that they had learnt in Iceland.
- One former fellow made a YouTube video concerning the negative environmental, economic and social **impacts of illegal gold mining on a community**.
- One LRT fellow has contributed to **improving sustainable land management practices** in a district, by interacting and sharing new skills and knowledge from LRT with colleagues and farmers around the district.

**FTP fellows** shared knowledge to strengthen both **internal organisational capacities** and **external outreach and extension activities** upon returning from Iceland. Two examples include:

- A fellow from Cuba jointly with other FTP fellows developed an **annual workshop** on fish stock monitoring and assessment – which had been the subject of her specialisation in Iceland – to strengthen the capacity of incoming staff who did not have previous knowledge in fisheries.
- Three fellows working at the National Agricultural Research Laboratory in Kawanda, Uganda have **written a manual** for fish product quality improvement in Lake Victoria

fisheries,<sup>40</sup> and regularly hold **training sessions with extension officers** and fishing communities on those techniques.

More generally, several FTP fellows met in Vietnam and Tanzania explained that they regularly employ the **materials and teaching approaches** from the training in Iceland in the capacity building activities they carry out at their organisations.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Masette, M., Tinyiro, E.S. and Bamwirire, D. 2015. *Training manual for artisanal processing of small pelagic fishes in Uganda*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Kawanda: NARL Repository. The three fellows conducted research projects relating to the quality of fish products post-harvest.

<sup>41</sup> FTP fellows have access to course material through FTP's file storage system, which they can access remotely after leaving the programme. Materials are updated every year so fellows can access the most current lectures and reading materials.

#### **Box 4: More effective fisheries management in the Caribbean**

Fisheries data, from collection and storage to analysis and reporting, is notoriously a difficult issue to tackle in the Caribbean region. Much has been done over the past few decades to initiate data collection programmes or promote better analysis or reporting, but with mixed results. It is noteworthy, though, that all CRFM member states currently have some form of fisheries data system in place. That includes the Commonwealth of Dominica.

The Fisheries Division of Dominica has collected data for over two decades, and while it had made fair progress in data storage, not much was done with the accumulated data over that time. There was only one major report done in the early 1990s and little else apart from responding to ad hoc data requests and preparing annual information submissions to FAO and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. Data analysis was a tedious, manual process, even for the smallest of reporting demands.

One FTP 2015 fellow from Dominica, attended the Stock Assessment line of specialisation with the plan to one day improve the utility of data within and for the Fisheries Division. He had some experience in fisheries data management, analysis and reporting, but did not feel confident nor competent enough to implement the changes necessary to make data easier to work with and more accessible. His initial idea for the FTP research project was to improve the Fisheries Division's databases while incorporating open source technology. This would be useful for the financially constrained departments in the region. However, one aspect during the training in Iceland led the fellow to reconsider the focus of the project, namely FTP's focus on scientifically rigorous methodology and presentation, and the use of the "R" statistical software for data analysis and even further, reproducible reporting. He explains: "While I had some idea how scientific studies were done, I had seldom practised it in my work. Reproducible reporting was entirely new and instantly exciting to me as I saw the potential for more readily generating useful, high quality reports." The new tools, combined with his interest in using information technology for better understanding the fisheries sector, motivated him to begin change immediately upon returning home.

He has since gotten the opportunity to present his FTP work to staff at the Fisheries Division and the public on a few occasions and received positive feedback and interest in the work and its results. An article was prepared for inclusion in the CRFM regional newsletter and an internal report of the FTP experience was prepared for the Fisheries Division and the Ministry of Fisheries in Dominica. This work has already resulted in the development of code that will automate fisheries data reports for use by the Fisheries Division, its partners, fishers and the public. Draft versions of those automated reports have already been made available to Fisheries Division staff, who have given feedback for improvements. One of his colleagues contacted for this evaluation revealed that the improved reports are already making a difference in the quality of the reports and the speed at which they are produced.

At the regional level, the Dominican fellow has been in contact with Dr. Einar Hjørleifsson of MFRI, who visited the Caribbean earlier this year on an FTP-supported short-term assignment with the CRFM to strengthen the data and information systems of member states. Dr. Hjørleifsson visited Dominica and was able to review the local fisheries data system and recommend improvements. Some of the progress made since the fellow's return has helped with the planning and execution of the "CRFM-R initiative" launched by Dr. Hjørleifsson and the CRFM, which is trying to facilitate a forum-based approach to learning and using the R statistical package among member states.

A number of **GTP** fellows have shared their knowledge upon return. For instance, based on his learning from Iceland, a GTP fellow is currently **designing the environmental curriculum** for local geothermal training to be carried out by GDC in Kenya. Another GDC employee who is a GTP MSc graduate in geochemistry **re-designed the company training** for geochemistry analysts. Another Kenyan, who, in addition to geothermal training, also has a back-

ground in economics, **developed in-house tools** for financial monitoring and evaluation of geothermal projects which has been highly valued.

### 3.3 MICRO LEVEL RESULTS

The team collected volumes of data on interesting individual level changes resulting from the training programmes. The sections that follow examine four types of changes that fellows have experienced upon returning to their home countries, including i) applying new approaches, knowledge and skills; ii) gaining new opportunities and/or recognition; iii) embarking upon new academic pursuits; and, iv) advancing in their careers.

#### 3.3.1 Fellows applying new approaches, knowledge and skills

Many fellows explained that they had gained significant knowledge, improved or acquired new skills, changed their perspectives, and/or learnt new teaching approaches – which they were all applying to different degrees in their work. This is discussed in the following paragraphs.

The survey results show that on average, 75 percent of fellows from all four programmes assessed that they improved their technical and academic knowledge (see Annex 4). In interviews, GEST fellows held that they were using skills extensively in their work. This included analytical skills, applying a gender lens, gender responsive budgeting techniques, presentation skills, leadership skills, and project writing skills. LRT fellows interviewed in Ghana, Ethiopia and Uganda were making frequent use of participatory approaches that they had learnt in Iceland. They were also using mapping tools, such as ARCGIS and GPS more professionally and relevantly. Tools for land capacity assessment and for measuring vegetation changes, which were novel to most fellows, were also put to use.

FTP fellows in turn highlighted their heightened awareness about the status of fisheries in their own country and other fellows' countries, skills in data collection, analysis and management, increased awareness about the importance of data sources, and a generally more inquisitive and demanding attitude with regards to data and information. Together, such changes were, according to the majority of fellows interviewed, at the root of their improved ability to analyse a given situation or problem, formulate solutions and plan for their implementation. For many of the FTP fellows, this has been key for them initiating or becoming involved in new initiatives in their organisations.

In addition to methods in geothermal science and engineering, the most common learning amongst GTP fellows was the understanding of all the disciplines that comprise the topic of 'geothermal'. This holistic knowledge of the subject that the fellows learnt in Iceland is crucial to the development of good geothermal managers. On the personal development level, the GTP training gave them the confidence to speak up, propose initiatives and lead projects. It has motivated them and made them better team members.

Many also held that attending the programme had changed their perspectives. On average, 69 percent of the survey respondents deemed that they had to a large extent learnt new perspectives and new ways of working. With new skills and perspectives, most fellows from all four programmes reported that they were consulted more often at their workplace. Across the four programmes, fellows maintained that they had generally been able to apply the learning from Iceland in their workplaces (see Table 12).

**Table 12: Degree to which fellows have applied the learning from Iceland in their workplace (from 0-do not agree to 3-agree very much)**

	GTP	FTP	LRT	GEST	Average
I apply the training I received in Iceland regularly in my work.	2.48	2.60	2.57	2.60	2.56

The following are quotes from fellows about improvements they experienced in their workplaces, which they related to the training in Iceland:

- I think without what I learnt in Iceland, I would not have any idea where to start.... in issuing environmental permission for geothermal installation and exploration. – *GTP Fellow*
- I was able to develop simplified codes for analysis of catch assessment survey data, which has improved efficiency in terms of duration of analyses and minimisation of errors by over 90 percent. - *FTP fellow*
- I am using the data analysis and writing skills I learnt. The quality of my work has improved. – *LRT Fellow*
- Before attending the programme, I had never had any of my project proposals funded. Since Iceland, I have had a near 100 percent success rate. – *GEST Fellow*

Other skills that quite a few fellows especially mentioned were the training and teaching skills they had picked up from the programmes. A sample of fellow quotes includes:

- I have learnt a lot by participating as a lecturer in the UNU-GTP short course in Kenya. – *GTP Fellow*
- The training has been so useful and has helped to improve my teaching skills. Moreover, it enabled me to participate in training fisheries officer in the country on various processing and value addition techniques to minimize post-harvest losses. – *FTP Fellow*
- As a university lecturer, I now better understand research and how to read research papers. My teaching is more practical and therefore better. When students are hands-on in the field, they understand better. I am better at analysis. My supervisor sees the change. – *LRT Fellow*
- I have been undertaking a lot of training since I got back. I am using the approaches and material from GEST. – *GEST Fellow*

Seventy-five percent of the fellows surveyed held that they had developed personally to a large extent. Indeed a majority of the fellows interviewed at country level expressed that the training programme gave them significant confidence and motivation, that in many cases they felt had changed them in a fundamental way. Furthermore, a number of fellows from all four programmes specifically described the experience as ‘eye-opening’. A sample of comments provided in the survey include the following:

- It provided me the technical skills, credentials and credibility to management. UNU-GTP also cultivated my confidence (technical and non-technical matters). – *GTP Fellow*
- The programme has changed my way of thinking to a much wider (global) perspective. – *FTP Fellow*
- The group, country and individual presentations were very useful as that boosted my confidence and presentation skills. - *LRT Fellow*
- GEST enriched and enhanced my knowledge and self-esteem. It opened my mind and helped me find my career path. – *GEST Fellow*

#### **Box 5: Examples of skills applications in community initiatives**

Some fellows who wanted to contribute to change had constraints within their workplace to do so. Instead they applied their new skills and knowledge to community initiatives. This was particularly true of **GEST** fellows from Uganda. For example, one fellow has organised women groups in her home village to embark upon a **tree sapling enterprise**. Another started a **mango juice company**, with female pickers from home village. This idea was inspired by a Malawian fellow’s mango value chain project that she designed during the training programme (but which, as of yet, she has not gotten support for in Malawi). Another fellow in Uganda was using his position as senior social welfare officer to provide pro bono support to a **home for sexually abused girls**. He also initiated village level **savings and loans groups** for women. The idea came from a Mozambican fellow who had worked on a micro-finance programme in his country that was supported by UN Women.

Other examples of skills application at community level came about as a result of fellows working at the decentralised level, but not necessarily having the means or funds to cover a district. In Ghana, for instance, a former **LRT** female fellow **changed the gender dynamics at community level** by introducing community meetings with both men and women (in the past men and women met separately, and women’s views were marginalised). Apart from significantly strengthening voices of women in the community, joint dialogue led to better solutions to the many land degradation problems.

### **3.3.2 Opportunities for fellows and recognition**

In some cases, the improved capacity gave fellows unique opportunities and recognition. Amongst the GEST programme, these included one fellow from Uganda entering a **global project competition** and coming second place out of 510 and winning USD 10,000; another from Palestine being one of 100 people selected to attend the Women Deliver Conference, out of 5,000 applicants, as one of the top women’s leaders from the developing world; a Malawian who represented the CSO response to Universal Periodic Review in Geneva; a Ugandan who won an award from Oxfam for leadership within the multi-country programme Women’s

Economic Empowerment for Unpaid Care Workers; and another Malawian being asked to represent his country at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and African Union meetings on gender. One FTP fellow from Tanzania was awarded the Yamamoto Prize of USD 2,000 for the second best paper at the 2012 International Institute of Fisheries Economics and Trade conference.<sup>42</sup>

Fellows from LRT, FTP and GTP were selected to participate in regional and international conferences, as a result of their new capacities and/or their UNU project work. Once selected, many received competitive travel grants from the UNU programmes. LRT fellows presented at the conferences of the Society for Ecological Restoration, the European Geosciences Union in Austria, Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture, Society for Range Management, and one fellow is expected to present at an upcoming conference in Seattle. A fellow that presented at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences as part of the Future Forests programme was particularly commended for his communication skills, which he said he learnt in Iceland.

FTP fellows have been specifically invited on several occasions to present their work at the biennial International Institute of Fisheries Economics and Trade conferences. The World Seafood Congress is another event where FTP fellows have frequently presented their work, many of them with support from the programme. A fellow from FTP was also selected to contribute to the FAO-NEPAD assessment of the value of African fisheries.<sup>43</sup>

Meanwhile, 94 GTP fellows attended the last World Geothermal Congress in 2015 in Melbourne, Australia, and 20 percent of the 1,319 papers at the conference were presented by GTP alumni.<sup>44</sup>

### **3.3.3 Academic pursuits of fellows**

Fellows from all four programmes had been inspired by the training to pursue higher degrees. Of these, several have been awarded scholarships to study abroad. For example:

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<sup>42</sup> The Japan International Fisheries Research Society Yamamoto Prize is awarded to authors from developing countries at IIFET conferences, “for their outstanding work in the development of strategies for responsible fisheries management”. The paper presented at the conference was based on the fellow’s research project in Iceland.

<sup>43</sup> de Graaf, G. & Garibaldi, L. 2014. The value of African fisheries. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular. No. 1093. Rome: FAO. 76 pp.

<sup>44</sup> Conference publications are very important in the geothermal community. Since much of the new data and new knowledge generated in the geothermal sector are a result of commercial activity (exploration and development), geothermal experts typically represent their company at regional and international industry events.

*After attending the course in 2007, I applied for PhD studies in Aquaculture in the UK with a fully sponsored Commonwealth scholarship. The reason I decided to pursue this line of study is because I had attained a knowledge base in sustainable aquaculture from the six-month training and this field was rapidly growing with lack of human resource to manage this field. In a way I developed new thinking after having attended the UNU course.... All the skills I learnt I use currently when teaching my students. – FTP fellow*

In many cases, the project work in Iceland became the basis for Masters or PhD studies. A total of 24 FTP fellows and 65 GTP fellows pursued Masters and PhD studies in Iceland under the auspices of the UNU programmes (see Table 8 in section 2.4.2 for the detailed figures). Many others have pursued advanced studies elsewhere.

While the GEST and LRT programmes do not yet offer Masters and PhD scholarships,<sup>45</sup> around a fifth of the respective fellows have pursued further studies and several more strongly expressed the desire to continue their studies. One GEST fellow from Malawi revealed that while his degree from Malawi was not recognised, because of his fellowship with GEST, his diploma, and his experience an exception was made to allow him to join the Climate Change and Sustainable Development Master’s programme at the University of Cape Town. Since 2016, seven GEST fellows have also published articles on Wikigender.<sup>46</sup>

The survey results show that around one-fifth of the LRT, FTP, and GTP fellows had used the research work undertaken during the UNU programme to publish an article in a peer reviewed journal (see Table 13). Significantly fewer GEST fellows have had their UNU work published. Given that the vast majority of the final assignments undertaken by GEST fellows are project documents based on one month’s work, there has not been the same incentive to have them published. Focus has rather been on finding means to implement the projects.

**Table 13: How the research undertaken by fellows during the programmes were used**

	GTP	FTP	LRT	GEST
Published in a peer reviewed journal	21%	18%	22%	4%
Published in a book	18%	9%	8%	2%

<sup>45</sup> LRT awarded a former fellow its first scholarship for a Master’s programme at the Agricultural University that started in June 2017.

<sup>46</sup> Wikigender is a global online collaborative platform linking policymakers and experts from both developed and developing countries to find solutions to advance gender equality. It has a “Wikigender University” initiative to promote academic institutions around the world to contribute quality articles and network. A staff member from the OECD development centre taught at the UNU-GEST programme in 2017.

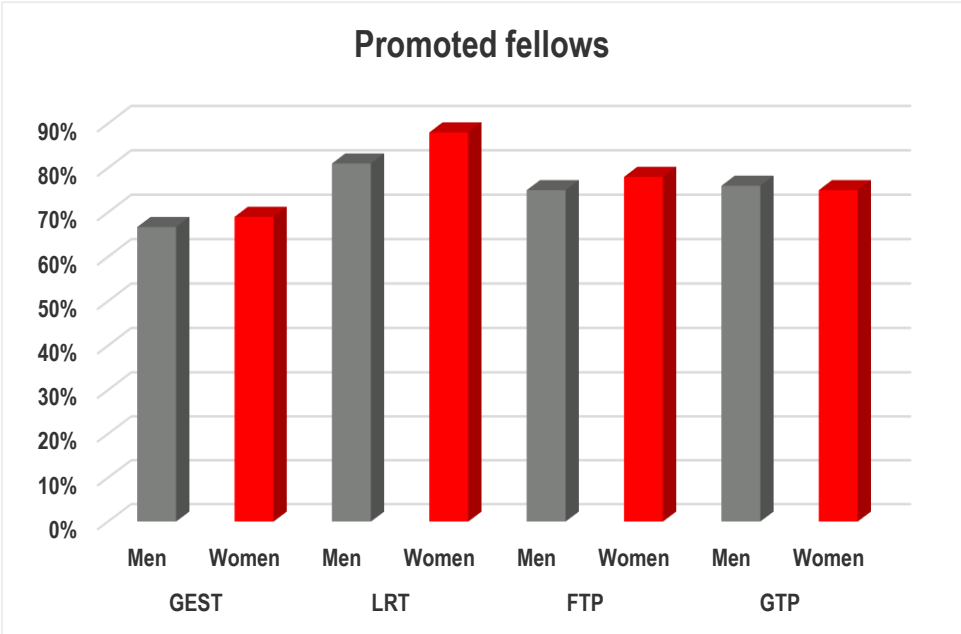


**3.3.4 Career development of fellows**

For the majority of fellows from all programmes, attending the training programmes was an important means of advancing their careers. It is not unusual that fellows have been promoted within 12 months of returning from Iceland. As some of the FTP fellows revealed, attending the six-month programme was considered a ‘sure ticket’ to greater responsibilities, more complex tasks and a promotion.

The survey results show that around three-quarters of all fellows have been promoted after returning home (see Figure 4). Men and women who attended GTP, FTP, and LRT were promoted slightly more than the GEST fellows. Women from LRT were the most promoted group of fellows, at 88 percent.

**Figure 4: Fellows promoted after attending the training in Iceland (%)**



On the other hand, promoted GEST women (73%) and GEST men (75%) most strongly ascribed the training as being an important factor in the promotion. Seventy percent of the promoted LRT women considered the training to be an important factor in the promotion, compared to 57 percent of the men. Meanwhile, 58 percent of the promoted GTP men considered the training to be an important factor in the promotion, compared to 54 percent of the women. The figures for FTP men and women who deemed that the training played an important role in their promotion is 55 per cent and 57 percent, respectively. In addition, an average of 27 percent of the fellows from all programmes maintained that the programme has *some* influence on their promotion; eight percent held that it had a little influence and three percent that it had no influence at all. Examples of how fellows’ careers have been influenced include the following:

- I was promoted to senior geologist (Industrial Minerals, then Principal Geologist (Exploration), now Assistant Commissioner. – *GTP Fellow*
- I had a chance to offer a new course on Geothermal Reservoir Engineering after my return. Later I carried out several consultancy work with the help of knowledge from training. – *GTP Fellow*
- The skillset I gained through the UNU programme I utilised to significantly improve the technical capacity of my department. This demonstrated my leadership and technical skills and contributed to my promotion. – *FTP Fellow*
- Promotions in my organisations are skill-driven, and I had the chance to be promoted with the analytical skills I acquired from UNU-FTP. – *FTP Fellow*
- I completed my training in 2008 and in 2009 I was promoted to a senior position to handle restoration of wetlands project in the Ministry of Water and Environment. – *LRT Fellow*
- I got delegated to represent my organisation in the CSO platform dealing with the SDGs. – *GEST Fellow*

Among those that had not been promoted, many mentioned that they were given more responsibilities and greater recognition by their superiors. For instance, LRT fellows working as lecturers in their countries expanded their course portfolio, with courses in ecological restoration and soil science. In Ethiopia some fellows who returned to Mekelle University and the Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development (BoARD) were charged with responsibility for GIS coordination. GEST fellows were typically called upon to undertake gender mainstreaming and gender analyses for their organisations.

- I have seen great progress because my superiors now assign me more work, since I am more capable. – *LRT Fellow*
- I have not been promoted but I feel that I have progressed, as I am being given higher responsibilities and I am more involved in executive management decision making. – *GEST Fellow*

In a few cases, fellows maintained that it was not that the additional training was not potentially useful for career development, but rather that their organisation did not value capacity enough or had a mechanism to promote employees (see also Box 5):

- My organisation does not look at merit. – *GTP Fellow*
- I completed the course but it has not been used to promote me to the next level. This is primarily because of my organisation, not the course. – *FTP Fellow*
- In the present promotion scheme of my organisation, training programmes do not provide any benefits. – *FTP Fellow*

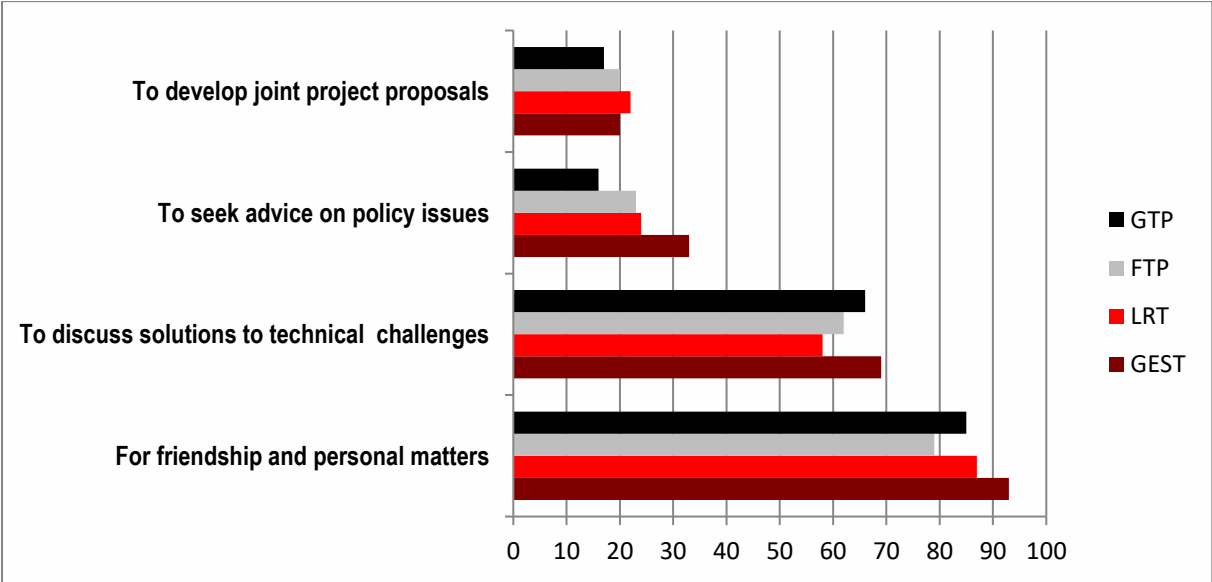
### 3.4 NETWORKING AND CROSS LEARNING

Networking among individuals and organisations that have benefited from capacity development efforts is considered an important dimension of strengthening capacities. Networking at the country level among trained individuals allows for potential collaboration, synergies, and exchange. Networking across countries can facilitate South – South learning through exchanges on practices and policies and could result in joint initiatives.

There is a significant amount of networking going on within all four programmes. The survey revealed that around 95 percent of fellows from the last ten years are in touch with each other. Men and women network with the same frequency, except among GTP fellows, where male fellows network about ten percent more than female fellows.

Much of the networking takes place within the same cohort of fellows. At least 80 percent of each programme’s fellows are in touch with three or more former fellows. GEST fellows are in touch with the highest number of other fellows, most likely as a result of the Facebook and WhatsApp groups established by some cohorts. 75 percent of all respondents are in touch with other fellows from their programme at least once every three months. GEST fellows are the most active networkers, with 78 percent in touch with other fellows at least once a month. Much of this is via Facebook. The UNU Iceland programmes have all made considerable efforts to manage Facebook groups.

**Figure 5: Pattern of networking of fellows from all programmes (%)**



Most of the networking taking place is for friendship and other personal matters (see Figure 5). However, fellows from all programmes have also networked with each other to discuss solutions to technical problems (average of 63%); to seek advice on policy issues (average of 24%); or to develop joint project proposals (average of 20%).

Country visits revealed that the knowledge about fellows from earlier or later years was relatively low among LRT and GEST, unless they happen to work within the same organisation. This was less marked for GTP and FTP. Fellows from these two programmes sometimes met with fellows from other cohorts during recruitment missions from Iceland – visits which the programmes have used as an opportunity to bring fellows together. Indeed, GTP and FTP fellows held that engaging partner organisations in developing and delivering short courses was very beneficial for strengthening networks in the country and sub-region. In addition, fellows that had gained a Masters or PhD degree in Iceland were often well known, served as a link among fellows in the country, played a leadership role among the alumni, and their publications were often consulted by the other fellows.

Fellows have made few efforts to organise themselves into semi-structured alumni networks. Rather, existing networks seem to be informal and fluid. There are a few exceptions. In China, where GTP has worked since 1980 and trained 85 fellows, there is a formal alumni network. There are also a few nascent alumni networking initiatives. In Mongolia, from where LRT have trained 18 fellows, alumni are organising a national rangeland forum this fall. The network has already held preparatory meetings with key stakeholders with 55 to 75 people attending. The network, which has yet to be formalised, sees itself as serving as a much needed bridge between different research institutes, which have human resource gaps at the mid-level as a consequence of the economic crisis that ensued during the transition period to democracy. It furthermore aims to stake out a role in training young people in land degradation. Meanwhile, in Mozambique GEST fellows have begun to establish an alumni network after initial impetus from the visit of a GEST staff member. So far, they have created a WhatsApp group and had a couple of meetings to share ideas and opportunities.

The interest in establishing future alumni networks varied among the programmes. GTP fellows interviewed expressed moderate interest. This could be because geothermal experts already have existing national, regional and international networking opportunities. Indeed, some former fellows have played active roles in forming and leading national associations, such as the Kenyan Geothermal Association; and later the African Regional Branch within the International Geothermal Association (IGA) – which contains associations from several countries (Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, etc.) that are led by former GTP fellows. These national and regional geothermal associations form the backbone of the geothermal community, and are generally leaders in hosting geothermal events, conferences and short courses. Furthermore, over the years at least a handful of fellows have served on the Board of Directors of IGA, which contains 30 geothermal experts from around the world. Moreover, the World Geothermal Congress, that is held every five years, is regarded as a major networking event for GTP.

Fellows interviewed from the LRT and GEST programmes were very interested in establishing network organisations. For instance, LRT fellows working as district environmental officers in Uganda were keen to interact on a regular basis. Likewise, GEST fellows recognised

great potential in linking up with each other at country level. They saw opportunities for building alliances, undertaking joint initiatives, briefing new fellows before departure, and debriefing them upon return to gain access to new learning and resources. After the evaluation team's visit to Uganda, LRT, GEST and FTP fellows began exchanging contact details with the aim of organising themselves or exchanging experiences.

### 3.5 CONCLUSIONS

The greatest contribution of the UNU Iceland programmes has been at the **micro level**. These are outcomes in terms of changes in the behaviour of fellows attributable to the learning acquired during the programme in Iceland. Considering that those are programmes that bring individuals abroad for specialised training, such a conclusion is to be expected. The types and strength of contributions at this level are nevertheless impressive, with a vast majority of fellows declaring that i) they have improved their confidence and motivation; ii) are applying new knowledge, approaches and skills; iii) have been given greater responsibility; and, iv) have been promoted. Several are embarking on new academic pursuits and some have gained recognition and/or been awarded novel opportunities, including at the international level.

Results at the **meso level**, in terms of changes in the systems, practices, methods and more broadly the 'behaviour' of organisations are also significant in number and diversity. Almost all fellows have disseminated the learning from Iceland either within their organisation or externally, in several cases in innovative ways and with important effects on other individuals or organisations. Novel or improved practices have been introduced by a majority of fellows in their organisations, ranging from administrative and managerial procedures, to technical processes and tools.

Fellows' academic institutions have also benefitted in terms of revised or expanded curricula, new training approaches and materials, and expanded research and teaching exchanges – in several instances accompanied by new project funding. While the results of changes introduced to academic curricula have not been possible to quantify, fellows were all of the view that such improvements benefitted their students and through them the sector as a whole.

Several UNU Iceland fellows are also playing key roles in developing or leading new projects and programmes in their organisations and beyond, often based on the project work undertaken in Iceland. Some of these initiatives have the potential of contributing to broader changes in policy and societal practices in their countries. In those cases where several fellows from the same agency or institute attended the UNU programmes, they often collectively raised the standards of practices in the organisation. This was particularly true of organisations that over many years have sent fellows to the FTP and GTP programmes.

Outcomes of the UNU Iceland programmes at the level of contributions to changes in national policy and governance systems are fewer and substantially more difficult to quantify. In spite of this, the evaluation has been able to collect a number of examples indicating that the pro-

grammes are having an impact at the **macro level**. An average of one in every five fellows has engaged with policy processes upon returning home, and approximately one in eight has seen her or his research used in policymaking. Again, several research projects conducted during the training in Iceland have formed the basis of macro-level changes introduced in the countries. A number of fellows have been very influential within their sectors in their countries and led important policy process. While acknowledging that their contribution is but one among many, all those interviewed recognised that their ability to fulfil their role owed much to the training in Iceland. Other fellows working on a more technical level have introduced novel or improved processes and technologies that have since been scaled up and had an impact on the practices country-wide.

Outcomes at the macro level seem to in part depend on who is recruited to the programme. The evidence from this evaluation suggests that recruiting mid- to senior-level fellows from public entities at the central government level is more likely to lead to policy changes at the national level. Early career professionals frequently do not have the position to initiate or lead complex change process, and decentralised government organs rarely have the mandate, the power or the resources to influence country-wide policy processes.

Macro and meso level results may also be a factor of the depth and comprehensiveness of the capacity development activity. The data gathered suggests that GTP and FTP fellows who have continued with Masters and PhD studies in Iceland have been particularly prodigious in contributing to important outcomes.

Finally, **networking** among fellows is occurring primarily within each cohort and often supported by social media platforms. Contacts between fellows combine personal and professional matters, and in a reduced number of cases fellows are collaborating or interacting about technical issues. There is a moderate interest for networking among fellows from GTP and FTP, while LRT and GEST fellows are mostly very keen and see a lot of potential in organising themselves into networks. However, to date the initiatives to establish networks have been minimal. While GEST has the ambition to provide support to establishing such networks, lessons learnt from the alumni networks of other capacity development initiatives are that they are most effective if the initiative comes from the alumni themselves and the members feel strong ownership.<sup>47</sup> Once the initiative has been taken to mobilise themselves, support from the outside can be useful to garner momentum.

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<sup>47</sup> For example, the child rights education training programme that was provided by the University of Lund; and the media training that was provided by FOJO.

## 4. Organisational effectiveness

This chapter presents the analysis of the organisational effectiveness of the UNU Iceland programmes, discussing first the programmes' governance systems (section 4.1); management systems including programme management, results based management, reporting, staffing, and elements of administration (4.2); their relations with the UNU, the UN system, Iceland's other development cooperation efforts, and the private sector (4.3); their funding (4.4); and cost structure (4.5). The chapter concludes with a summary of main points (section 4.6).

### 4.1 GOVERNANCE

All four programmes are based on multi-party agreements between the Government of Iceland, UNU and the programme's host institutions. These agreements vary in length, usually in the range three to five years. The host institutions have agreements of cooperation with their partners in Iceland and with some organisations in the partner countries. The programmes have comparable structures, summarised in Table 14.

The governance structure of the four programmes is similar. All have a programme board consisting of representatives from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland, UNU, the host institution, and the programme director. The boards of FTP and LRT also include representatives from partner institutions in Iceland. Whereas FTP, LRT, and GEST have had a board since their establishment, GTP's board was only created in 2015 with the latest renewal of the cooperation agreement with UNU and the Government of Iceland. The boards are responsible for overseeing the delivery of the programmes and the attainment of its objectives, including overseeing and approving the programme finances. For these functions, the boards are accountable to UNU and the Government of Iceland. Strikingly, none of the boards have members from a developing country.

In two of the programmes – FTP and LRT – the programme board has been the overall decision-making body, to which programme staff report and receive instructions from. These boards meet three to four times a year. GTP's programme board has acquired that role in the last two years, but meets only twice a year. GEST's board was seen as an interim structure while awaiting the establishment of a UNU institute in Iceland. It also only meets twice a year. Several stakeholders saw scope for the boards to play a more proactive role in providing direction for the programmes, particularly in relation to strategies for enhancing the effects of the programmes at country level and establishing linkages with other actors. This was particularly true for GEST that felt the need for direction to plan its growth, develop its programme content and strategies for funding, partnerships and research.

**Table 14: Key elements of the structure of UNU Iceland programmes**

	GTP	FTP	LRT	GEST
	United Nations University Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland			
	Orkustofnun (National Energy Authority) (chair) UNU (vice rector) Ministry for Foreign Affairs UNU-GTP Director (ex-officio)	Marine and Freshwater Research Institute (chair) Matis Ltd Univ. Akureyri Univ. Iceland Fisheries private sector UNU-FTP Director	Agricultural Univ. of Iceland Soil Conservation Service of Iceland (chair) Icelandic Forest Service UNU-LRT Director	Univ. Iceland UNU-GEST Director
<b>Studies Committee</b>	Head of each study line Director	Does not have one	Director Lecturers	Staff and lecturers
	Orkustofnun	Marine and Freshwater Research Institute	Agricultural Univ. of Iceland Soil Conservation Service of Iceland	Univ. Iceland, School of Humanities
	The host institution provides fiduciary responsibility for the programmes. Programme staff are employees of the host institution.			
<b>Programme staff</b>	Director Deputy Director Environmental Scientist/Editor School Manager Service Manager  <i>5 FTE positions</i>	Director Deputy Director Project Manager Office Manager  <i>4 FTE positions<sup>48</sup></i>	Director Deputy Director Office manager  <i>3 FTE positions</i>	Director Head of Research Project Manager (2)  <i>3 FTE positions<sup>49</sup></i>

## 4.2 MANAGEMENT

### 4.2.1 Programme Management

All four programmes characterise themselves as being operationally flexible, quick in decision-making, and solutions-oriented. This allows them to accommodate new opportunities and respond to the needs and requests of partners. Indeed, all four programmes generally have an outward-looking perspective and a corresponding organisational culture.

All programmes have established routines and systems to facilitate the running of the programme. They are able to provide a quality programme in a timely and smooth manner. How-

<sup>48</sup> The staff of UNU-FTP will increase to 4.5 full-time equivalent positions in the summer of 2017.

<sup>49</sup> Additional staff positions will be filled in June 2017. UNU-GEST has a number of associated staff on project basis, whose number varies from year to year.



ever, some of the programmes were self-critical and recognised room for improvement. FTP noted that it had a tendency to take on too much, which affected organisation and focus. GEST's staff held that its limited funding base has affected its organisational systems and structured work processes, which contributed to overburdening its staff, and overlapping and unclear divisions of labour. Moreover, staff have had to address diverse sets of tasks which sometimes undermines focus.

Except for FTP, the programmes are supported by a studies committee. In the case of GTP, the studies committee to some extent filled the role of the governing body of the programme until the establishment of the programme board in 2015, although the decision-making responsibility was with the director. The GTP studies board is made up of heads of the different lines of study. The GEST studies board is similarly made up of staff and key lecturers. The LRT studies committee has often co-opted participants, including foreign experts, to work with it. The studies committees are responsible for developing and reviewing the programme syllabi and materials, ensuring academic quality, relevance, and actuality of the programme content. The minutes and reporting related the studies committees are mostly in Icelandic.

LRT has widened the mandate of the studies committee to play a more active role in the strategic development of the programme. The programme director regularly consults the members of the committee, uses them as a sounding board, and involves them in decisions such as criteria and alternative approaches to recruitment of fellows. LRT maintains that the studies committee has been a significant asset for the programme that has brought diverse perspectives and promoted constructive dialogue about the programme's direction.

In the absence of a studies board, FTP's programme board, which includes experts in some of the areas that are taught in the six-month course, occasionally advises on the programme's academic content. In 2015, the programme brought together its heads of specialisation in a joint workshop to discuss the content of the programme and any necessary changes. Although one FTP stakeholder was of the view that the programme should be advised by a studies board composed of international fisheries experts, this view was not shared by others, who generally believed the existing governance structures to be sufficient for ensuring programme quality and relevance.

The management of the programmes has benefited considerably from the host institutions, who have provided supportive environments, access to human resources and facilities, and administrative assistance. The programmes consider the host institutions to be vital for their success. The host institutions have similarly regarded the programmes to be an asset, bringing lecturers, employment opportunities, and widening their international networks.

GEST, which is placed in the School of Humanities of the University of Iceland, is co-located at and has the same director as the RIKK Institute for Gender, Equality, and Difference and the EDDA Research Centre, which it closely collaborates with. GEST has established relations and cooperates with different faculties of the University. Although interacts with several

individual scholars from the Social Science Faculty (mostly as lecturers), GEST does not collaborate institutionally with the Departments of Gender Studies and Development Studies of the Social Science Faculty, which could seem relevant. However, both the departments run their courses in Icelandic which represents a barrier in relation to foreign students. Moreover, from the Gender Studies website it appears that it is primarily geared towards gender issues in developed countries. Although this evaluation has not assessed the capacity and competence of the Faculty of Social Science in relation to the specific needs and objectives of the GEST programme, given the language issue and focus, it would seem that there may be no added value of those two departments playing a role in the five-month training programme. On the other hand, there may be scope for other forms of collaboration that could be mutually enriching.<sup>50</sup>

#### **4.2.2 Results based management**

Results based management, which ensures that processes, products and services contribute to the achievement of desired results (outputs, outcomes and goals) is an approach that the UNU programmes in Iceland have been developing.

All programmes have developed multi-year strategic plans. These plans contain many relevant elements to guide the programmes, but also some shortcomings. Some examples are provided in Box 6 below. Generally, the strategic plans do not contain theories of change that explain the path from the activities that the programmes undertake to the expected chain of results that will lead to the desired change. Nor do all the plans fully outline what will be monitored and how.

All four programmes have been strong in adaptive management. They have systems for following up the quality of each of the components of their five- or six-month training and short courses. As discussed in Chapter 2, lecturers are reviewed and modules are regularly revised and updated, in part based on regular feedback from fellows in the form of surveys, follow-up processes, and other assessment methods. All programmes have an organisational culture that values continuous follow-up and improvement.

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<sup>50</sup> A number of interviewees mentioned that rivalries within the University are a key factor hindering institutional collaboration between GEST and the Faculty of Social Sciences – for example in the delivery of joint seminars, lecture series or other academic activities. GEST, however, has responded to this criticism by stating that it is not interested in or preoccupied by such rivalries. Rather, “the goal is to maintain the quality of the programme, to protect its special status, and to make sure that its development reflect its mission statement.”

Meanwhile, systematic monitoring of results in terms of changes at country level has been weak. The programmes have not been able to verify systematically what change has taken place as a result of actions undertaken by fellows upon returning home. Some of the programmes have MoUs with partner organisations and have hoped that these would improve the feedback loop, though this has usually not been the case. Monitoring is mostly undertaken using informal methods, including ad hoc email exchanges, word-of-mouth, discussions during conferences, country visits, and short courses. On a couple of occasions, surveys of former fellows have been undertaken by FTP, LRT and GEST, but the quantitative data has not provided sufficient information about changes taking place in the fellows' organisations.

While the programmes have developed clear criteria of how to select fellows, none have developed explicit recruitment strategies, in document form. A recruitment strategy involves defining a selection of countries to recruit from and the type(s) of participant(s) (e.g. from research institutions, from CSOs, from industry, from ministries, etc.) that are prioritised in the different countries. It also involves an assessment of what critical mass of former fellows can best affect change. Given the centrality of recruiting suitable fellows to achieve results on the ground, the approach to recruitment needs to be articulated, monitored, and adjusted in relation to feedback.

The programmes are aware of their respective shortcomings with regard to managing results, an area they all would like to improve in. Some of the challenges they are facing include lack of financial predictability, insufficient systems to gather information on results, time, and guidance. The programmes reported that they would like more meaningful discussions on achieved results with their boards, UNU, MFA and/or the other UNU programmes in Iceland. From the minutes of the programmes' board meetings, it is not evident to what extent progress against the strategic objectives is discussed and assessed at those meetings.

### **Box 6: Examples of strengths and shortcomings in the strategies of the UNU Iceland programmes**

**GTP's** strategic plan describes the desired impact of its activities as "Contribution to UN Sustainable Development Goals 7 and 13 of increased access to energy and less carbon emissions". It is generally a sound document with a basic theory of change. However, it claims that the development of clean high quality energy sources will have "multiple effects on all levels of society in developing countries" and improve the health of women who will reduce the use of biomass cooking. This involves a number of substantial assumptions concerning poverty and rural electrification trajectories.

**FTP's** strategic plan is the only one that recognises the importance of responding to the particular needs of partner institutions and the country level situation by highlighting the importance of "developing a holistic understanding of the specific needs of its partner countries, which in turn allows UNU-FTP to relate content to the state of fisheries in their countries and meet the needs of each institutional partner". On the other hand, FTP states it will increase the proportion of its budget used to finance activities in partner countries, because of the concern of the UNU Strategic Plan that "a number of UNU institutes exist in more developed nations, while there is an absence of such activity in the less developed partner countries." Financing activities at country level does not intrinsically entail better results. FTPs efforts at country level would more appropriately be based on the extent that specific needs identified at country level can be addressed by FTP in a way that is efficient, effective and adds value.

The **LRT** strategic plan lists some important information it needs to gather to monitor results on the ground:

- Information on former fellows' career development, research and outreach activities
- Information from partner institutions on living conditions/livelihoods of local people
- Collecting and comparing information on land health and degradation changes from partner institutions

On the other hand, its results framework needs adjustment. It identifies "Annual six-month post graduate training programme for professionals from developing countries faced with severe land degradation" as an output that is supposed to lead to the outcome of "strong, advanced and well recognized six-month training programme that provides former fellows with strong professional network". A more appropriate outcome would be one that describes the type of change that LRT would like to see its fellows contribute to at the country level.

The **GEST** strategy states that it is a goal of the five-month studies and training course to "to strengthen the capacity of the attending fellows and the institutions and organisations they represent for developing and implementing gender responsive/transformational projects and policies." This represents a clear outcome statement that links with UNU's mission "to promote gender equality and social justice in developing, conflict and post-conflict countries". On the other hand, under its strategic goal of "creating a platform for transnational dialogue and knowledge exchange", it mentions institutional collaboration (p. 16) with a host of northern based academic institutions, but none from the south, even though it actually does collaborate with southern academic institutions.

### 4.2.3 Reporting

The information that the programmes do gather on results are not reported. While UNU's project management system, Pelikan, requires reporting from the programmes in a number of areas, it does not require analysis and reporting on progress towards the objectives of the programmes' strategic plans.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, UNU's headquarters do not perform RBM systematically in the follow-up of the overall UNU strategic plan. Likewise, MFA has not set requirements for reporting on programme results at the country level.

Annual reports were produced by each of the programmes separately until 2014, after which they have been produced in Pelikan. The annual reports are primarily narrative descriptions of the activities carried out over the course of one year. Since the programmes began preparing these reports in Pelikan, their level of detail has decreased significantly.

All programme staff interviewed considered Pelikan cumbersome and excessively time-consuming to use. None of the programmes could identify any benefits with Pelikan.

Annual activity reports are typically presented at the last board meeting of every calendar year, at which also budget proposal for the next year are discussed.

### 4.2.4 Staffing

All programmes are staffed by a small team of qualified, competent, and committed individuals, led by a director. The programmes themselves, their boards, and the fellows regard this as a key strength. The programmes' core staff is small relative to the number of activities that the programmes engage in. Overworked staff is a problem for most, if not all programmes.

In addition to core staff, the programmes rely on lecturers. GEST has also made good use of internationally recruited interns and temporary staff. While this allows for flexibility, particularly when financial resources are unpredictable, it can impede planning and create insecurity.

Programme staff are employed by the respective host organisation, and thereby subject to its employment conditions. No concerns regarding these conditions have been raised with the evaluation team during interviews or the SWOT exercise. Staff turnover has been low in LRT, FTP and GTP, indicating a generally high level of job satisfaction. In GTP there have only been two programme directors since 1979; the current one was previously the deputy director

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<sup>51</sup> The only exception was found in the 2013 FTP Annual Report, which contains a paragraph referring to a matrix that had been used to analyse progress towards the goals of the Strategic Plan, and mentioning the areas with insufficient or unclear progress. That matrix was not included in the report.

and had been with GTP for 23 years when he became director, while the most recent staff member joined more than five years ago. GEST has had a comparatively higher staff turnover, with four staff members having left since the start of the programme, although some remain engaged as lecturers. Unpredictable funding has been one of the reasons for this. Underfunding and the ensuing lack of stability in staffing has, according to GEST staff, impeded sustainable growth, further increased workloads, and sometimes led to some staff being less engaged.

In recent years, vacant positions have been advertised. Positions at any of the UNU programmes are highly sought after, as demonstrated by a recent job opening for a project manager at FTP that attracted close to 100 applications.

Communication within the programmes appears to be good. Having a small staff facilitates this. Moreover, the sectors are relatively small and programme team members have close relationships with most relevant actors.

#### **4.2.5 Administration**

From the perspective of fellows and postgraduate students, the administrative aspects of all four programmes were smoothly carried out. Several fellows commended the proficient organisation that the programmes demonstrated.

Each programme has its own system for financial accounting. They follow the systems and procedures of the respective host organisation – including with respect to financial audits – since the host institutions have exclusive responsibility for the administrative and financial performance. As with the narrative reporting, the Government of Iceland does not have any specific requirements concerning financial reporting or financial or system audits of the programmes.

It was beyond the scope of this evaluation to undertake organisational assessments of the programmes.

### **4.3 EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

This section looks at the extent to which the four programmes have interacted with external actors over the years. It discusses the relations with other UNU institutes and UNU HQ; the extent to which the programmes have worked with other UN entities; the relationship with MFA-ICEIDA; and the extent to which the programmes have worked with the private sector.

#### **4.3.1 Relations within the UNU organisation**

The UNU global structure contains a wide variety of organisations, with very diverse structures. The Iceland programmes differ from all of them and have operated at the periphery of the rest of UNU. General administration, human resources and financial oversight have been out of UNU's control. In theory, UNU HQ has some influence through representatives on the

Iceland programme boards, a structure which UNU has uniformly applied with regard to all institutes and programmes. In practice, UNU HQ has rarely asserted itself within the different programme boards. The UNU programmes in Iceland have been regularly represented at the UNU Conference of Directors meetings, up to 2013 by the GTP Director, and since 2014 on a three-year rotational basis among the four programmes. Furthermore, the Communications Focal Point (a staff member of GTP) of the programmes participates in an annual meeting for all UNU Communications Focal Points to share knowledge and experiences and synchronise communication efforts within the UNU family.

The Icelandic programmes were highly valued by the UNU rectors serving until 2008. The rector at the time encouraged the establishment of the two younger programmes. The programmes enjoyed full support from UNU HQ and were often regarded as models. Since then the UNU programmes in Iceland have sometimes felt misunderstood by UNU HQ, particularly when there has been a change of priorities introduced by new rectors. They have felt that the scope, potential, and limitations of the programmes have been misread, leading to unrealistic expectations and demands. UNU's current aim of strengthening its think tank function does not match up well with the core strengths of FTP, GTP, and LRT. GEST, however, sees UNU's objective as an opportunity for it to strengthen its research work, an area that has so far received little funding and has consisted of a few disparate initiatives (see section 2.4.3).

The strategic plans of all programmes acknowledge UNU's mission and strategy, and contain objectives and measures aligned with these. The programmes strive to adhere to the guidance and direction emanating from UNU HQ, at the same time as they retain a large degree of freedom with respect to the content and structure of the programmes. As independent programmes funded directly by MFA, they have had considerable leeway in relation to UNU rules and policies. They are, however, required to apply UNU's project management system Pelikan.

With the exception of LRT, which has employed lecturers from two UNU Institutes (UNU-EHS and UNU-INWEH),<sup>52</sup> the programmes have relatively little interaction with UNU institutes outside Iceland. Recent engagements include visiting lecturer at GEST from UNU-MERIT<sup>53</sup> in 2017 and a collaboration between GEST and UNU-MERIT on a blog about gender research carried out by UNU institutes. In the spring of 2017 all four programmes participated in a workshop on UNU communication strategies with the head of UNU MERIT's

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<sup>52</sup> UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security, and UNU Institute for Water, Environment and Health.

<sup>53</sup> UNU Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology.

communication unit. Through UNU-EHS, GTP has hosted four Master's students from the Pan-African University. They stayed in Iceland for three months, and were supervised by an expert associated with GTP. In 2015 and 2016, GTP delivered lectures on geothermal energy in Bonn for UNU-EHS. There has also been a collaboration with UNU-FLORES in Dresden on a multi-media learning package for geothermal water resources. Both UNU HQ and the programmes in Iceland see opportunities for closer collaboration and exchanges. In particular, the cross-cutting nature of gender equality would position GEST well for collaborating on this issue with several of the UNU institutes.

Collaboration among the UNU Iceland programmes has also been relatively modest. The programmes meet a few times a year, and on an ad hoc basis share practices with one another. LRT and GTP have, for example, shared ideas such as producing a booklet for each cohort that introduces each fellow, their background, and interests. There have also been a few joint initiatives:

- GEST has partnered with GTP and FTP in developing and delivering sessions on gender. However, both FTP and GTP could benefit additionally from GEST's competence in this area to ensure a stronger gender perspective throughout their respective training programmes.
- In 2014, with AUI in the lead, GEST and LRT have also submitted a joint project application to the Global Resilience Partnership with partners from Niger and Iceland, which was not successful (see section 4.4 below).
- GEST and FTP have collaborated since 2015 in the Matís-led NDF project 'Reduction of greenhouse gases and deforestation related to food processing in Sub-Saharan Africa', with focus on post-harvest processing of fish in Lake Tanganyika. GEST has contributed with a gender analysis of fisheries value chains, whereas FTP has been in charge of the training component of the project.
- GTP and GEST held a joint seminar on Gender and Energy with an American lecturer.
- GTP has provided assistance to GEST on its documentary on gender disparities and discrimination in the geothermal sector.

#### **4.3.2 Relations with the UN System**

The programmes have engaged with the UN system in five ways: interacting with the UN system at the country level; participating in UN-led events; engaging with UN agencies at the headquarters level; jointly undertaking initiatives; and taking in fellows from UN organisations.

A number of UN agencies working at the country level have mandates related to the UNU Iceland programmes. These include, for instance, UN Women, FAO, UNDP, UNEP, and the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRC). UNU programmes have had little contact with



UN agencies at the country level, who generally know little (if anything) about the UNU programmes. GEST has, nevertheless, at different points made contacts with UN Women in Uganda, Malawi and Mozambique; and LRT has made contact with UNDP in Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia.

In some cases, the UN system could have been useful for providing suggestions with regard to recruitment. The UN system can also potentially act as an important partner on the ground after fellows return from the training. The team met with staff from FAO, UN Women, and the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Malawi and Uganda, all of which were keenly interested in closer collaboration and saw many potential ways of interacting that could enhance the effects of the training at the country level. Firstly, the UN system would benefit from knowing who the different programmes have trained so that these capacities can be drawn on as needed in relation to government and donor initiatives which the UN system may be involved in. Secondly, they also expressed an interest in the projects that the fellows have developed in Iceland. The UNRC office in Uganda publishes a weekly bulletin which could feature such projects. Also in Uganda, the UN Women office suggested that GEST projects could be presented to the gender equality committee of the development partners, some of which might consider funding such projects as pilots. Thirdly, the UN agencies interviewed were very open to supporting any UNU alumni networks, including providing logistical support for bringing the fellows together. Lastly, the UN system could assist with certain administrative matters. For instance, the UN has set rules for per diems and accommodation allowances, that are typically based on government levels, and which all development actors – particularly those from the UN system – should use to avoid allowance inflation in developing countries.

GTP, FTP, LRT, and GEST attend international conferences within their thematic area organised by the UN system. GTP has participated in the GEF funded biennial African Rift Geothermal Development Facility (ARGeo) Project that is implemented by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

FTP's engagements in recent years include, for example, joining the UN Oceans group as a representative of the UNU in 2014, the same year a presentation was made at the UNESCO-FAO 'Fishing for Development' conference in Paris. In the fall of 2016 the programme participated in a panel discussion at the UNFCCC CoP 22 in Marrakesh. This year FTP was present at the FAO conference dialogue on blue growth in Africa, and the programme held a side event at the June 2017 Ocean Conference in New York. UNU-GEST has regularly attended the Commission on the Status of Women conferences in New York.

LRT has participated in UNFCCC, UNCCD and SDG fora. For example, it co-organised a side event at the UNFCCC COP 21 meeting in Paris in 2015, having organised another side event at the UN Convention to Combat Desertification COP 12 in Ankara that same year. Discussions have taken place within LRT on the programme becoming a UNCCD fellowship programme. During the 2015 International Year of Soils, LRT cooperated with the UN Socie-

ty in Iceland to organise a series of outreach events for the general public. The LRT director also took part in the high-level symposium on land degradation at the Addis Ababa International Conference on Financing for Development in July 2015.

GEST has attended the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York on several occasions. In June 2017, with funds from MFA-ICEIDA, it collaborated with UNEP, UN Women, and MFA to organise a workshop on women entrepreneurship and sustainable energy in Africa under the auspices of the 16th African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN 16) in Gabon.

FTP, GEST, LRT, and GTP have entered dialogue with a number of UN agencies such as the World Bank, FAO, WFP, UNDP, UNEP, and IFAD. In a few instances, FTP and GEST have also undertaken initiatives or projects with UN agencies. For instance, the FTP programme included core programme lectures and guest lectures by FAO experts in the period before 2004. FTP supported a FAO publication on a symposium on rights-based fisheries. Between 2005 and 2008, FTP had a cooperation agreement with FAO supported by the Government of Iceland for developing and delivering short courses on fisheries in five developing countries. The collaboration, however, was marred by high levels of bureaucracy and was discontinued. GEST has been the most active in trying to find inroads and opportunities within the UN system. Some of these have borne fruit, resulting in a series of collaborations that represent a wide range of topics and processes. Examples include the following:

- Upon request from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland, GEST undertook a six-month research assignment within the FAO project ‘Gender-specific Impacts of Climate Change on Fisheries Livelihoods’.
- GEST is about to sign a 190,000 USD contract with WFP’s gender office to undertake a project that involves using a mobile gaming app to provide training in gender mainstreaming.
- GEST has recently been included in an Embassy of Iceland and UN Women programme in Mozambique on enhancing national capacity to implement and generate knowledge on women, peace and security.
- Since 2015, GEST has hosted the launch of the annual UNDP publication *Human Development Report* in Iceland on behalf of UNDP’s Human Development Report Office, which has included meetings of experts.
- GEST was one of many sponsors of UNEP’s Global Gender and Environment Outlook that was presented at the UN Environment Assembly in 2016.
- GEST signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2016 with the UN’s International Training Centre in Turin. The agreement has not yet led to any concrete collaboration.

GEST has not, however, made progress in interacting with UN Women headquarters and determining opportunities for collaboration and synergies as well as a division of labour. Nor has it entered into an agreement with UN Women’s gender training centre in Santo Domingo

– which hosts the library of the former UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and undertakes short courses around the world.

GEST is also the only programme that has regularly taken in fellows working for UN organisations. As of May 2017, 13 fellows from UN Women, UNRWA, UNFPA, the UN Resident Coordinator office of Uganda and FAO had completed the programme. The UNRWA staff were exceptionally granted leave with salary to attend the programme. However, the fellows from the other UN agencies were not granted leave. They had to reapply for their positions upon return. In at least two cases they were not rehired.

#### **4.3.3 Relations with MFA / ICEIDA / Iceland's Bilateral Development Assistance**

The support to the UNU programmes has been handled by the multilateral section of Iceland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs and which is represented on the boards of all programmes. Over the years, Ministers for Foreign Affairs and government officials have regularly promoted the programmes in international meetings, fora, and with other UN agencies. This has included suggesting partnerships which in some instances have materialised.

Although ICEIDA – Iceland's former arm for bilateral cooperation – was previously represented on the board of FTP, the interaction between the programmes and Iceland's bilateral cooperation has been more ad hoc in nature. Nevertheless, collaboration was quite frequent with FTP during certain periods – usually stemming from personal networks, and as such, the relationships have been close. In comparison to the coherence of the efforts of other, larger bilateral development assistance, the interaction between ICEIDA and the programmes would appear highly functional. However, some stakeholders interviewed claim that opportunities were missed to draw on the capacity of the UNU programmes to inform Iceland's bilateral strategies, programmes, and initiatives.

Even in the countries where Iceland has bilateral development assistance (currently Malawi, Mozambique, and Uganda, but more countries before 2012), the Embassy of Iceland has only been marginally involved in the UNU programmes. The embassies have sometimes provided practical assistance and spread information about the call for applications. Sometimes they have helped to identify suitable partner organisations at country level and assisted with introductions. Occasionally they have been involved in the selection process of candidates in the partner countries. In relation to GEST, for example, ICEIDA programme officers promoted a candidate in Uganda and requested GEST to waive its age criterion in relation to a candidate in Malawi. Both candidates were accepted and have been exceptionally active in promoting substantial change within their organisations upon return.

Embassies have occasionally been asked to invite former fellows to functions, which has allowed for networking among alumni. For instance, when the Iceland's Foreign Minister visited Malawi in 2015, he had dinner with six GEST fellows. Likewise, the Icelandic Embassy in China hosted a reception for UNU alumni in 2009 in conjunction with a visit by the Deputy Director. This led to the formation of an alumni network in China.

When fisheries constituted core components of Icelandic development cooperation, collaborative opportunities between FTP and ICEIDA were plenty and varied. This included funding two-to-four fellows a year. The training in Iceland was regarded as an important resource for the capacity development efforts of ICEIDA. ICEIDA has also funded several of FTP's short courses over the years, providing financial and technical support to the development and delivery of those courses. Some were integrated in ICEIDA-supported programmes in the countries. The declining importance of fisheries vis-à-vis other themes in Icelandic development cooperation is mirrored in the diminishing cooperation that this programme has had with MFA-ICEIDA supported programmes in the partner countries.

The cooperation between GTP and ICEIDA was limited until 2012. It amounted to support for MSc studies in Iceland for a Ugandan fellow, some small project funding for geothermal exploration projects in Uganda and Djibouti and a more recent project in Eritrea. However, ICEIDA increased its engagement in the sector when the five-year Geothermal Project in East Africa was launched in 2013 with the support of NDF and World Bank. It has funded six-month training for one or two Africans a year, various short courses in sub-region, and a fairly extensive project with training, geothermal drilling, and exploration activities in Rwanda between 2013 and 2014.

With regard to GEST, interaction with the old ICEIDA was modest. Nevertheless, in 2013, GEST was commissioned by ICEIDA to run four two-day courses on gender-sensitive project development for ICEIDA staff in Iceland, Malawi, Mozambique, and Uganda. ICEIDA also supported the short-term course in Uganda. Since ICEIDA became integrated into MFA, contacts appear to have become more frequent. For instance, as mentioned in section 2.4.3, a partnership with the Icelandic embassy in Maputo and UN Women has recently been signed. MFA has also provided contacts and introductions in relation to the project with WFP, the Nordic Women Mediators network, GEST's research work in Mozambique, collaboration with the World Bank on gender assessment of their geothermal projects, and its proposed future short courses in Uganda. MFA-ICEIDA has also co-hosted the launches of the Human Development Report in 2016 and 2017.

LRT has had minimal engagement with ICEIDA.

#### 4.3.4 Relations with the private sector

Two of the programmes have extensive relations with the private sector: GTP, which includes relationships with Icelandic companies and companies in partner countries; and FTP, predominantly with Icelandic companies.

Stakeholders interviewed referred to the importance of the close relation the programme enjoys with the private sector in Iceland. A number of companies operating in the Icelandic fisheries value chain are involved in delivering the six-month programme, primarily through receiving fellows during field visits. Other companies also contribute with materials and/or facilities for the fellows' research projects.

FTP considers it to be an important privilege for the programme to be invited to visit Icelandic companies. Such visits have become increasingly difficult for other types of student groups. The long-standing relationship between FTP and those companies play a role in making the visits possible. The companies value the benefits in terms of international exposure and inflow of new ideas and perspectives that the annual contact with a group of foreign fisheries professionals allows. FTP fellows in turn highly value the opportunity to observe how the Icelandic fisheries sector operates in practice. Many declared that it has helped them better understand and contextualise the theoretical elements of the programme.

Cooperation with private sector companies in partner countries has been very modest throughout FTP's history, and the programme has attracted less than 10 fellows from private companies. The difficulty for private fishing companies in the partner countries to release an employee for a period of six months was cited as the key reason for the low number of private sector fellows. The programme has had a number of fellows from parastatal organisations in partner countries, which despite not being formal private sector entities, are largely run as private enterprises.

A further dimension of FTP's engagement with the private sector is the sponsoring of fellows by private companies. The Icelandic company Samherji, which operates along the coast of Namibia, has sponsored three Namibian fellows in the past two to three years. Earlier, another company had supported a person from Chile to attend a part of the programme in Iceland. Samherji has also sponsored the visit in 2014 of a delegation from Namibia to Iceland to learn about the Icelandic fisheries sector. FTP has had other requests from private Icelandic operators to collaborate in the training of fisheries professionals, but none has materialised.

GTP relies on many lecturers from the private sector. This practice allows GTP to hire according to need, and is adaptive to changing training needs. The risk of losing teaching capacity is minimal, as the work is reasonably paid, and staff report satisfaction at being able to teach and interact with the fellows. Access to the private sector is important for the fellows to learn the latest practices in geothermal resource development.

## 4.4 FUNDING

Table 15 provides an overview of the budget for each programme for the years 2015 and 2016 and the core contribution from the Government of Iceland through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. As illustrated in the table, all programmes depend on MFA funding for the most part of their operations. This is particularly true of the five- and six-month training in Iceland. The amount of these funds, however, have sometimes been unpredictable and on occasion MFA's funding decisions have been taken after some of the programmes have already recruited fellows for the upcoming year. This uncertainty has prevented long-term planning.

**Table 15: 2015 and 2016 budgets of the UNU Iceland programmes (1,000 ISK)**

Year	Budget element	GTP	FTP	LRT	GEST
	<b>Total cost of programme</b>	380,320	190,997	90,385	60,912
	<b>Contribution from MFA</b>	214,920	187,300	79,100	50,800
	<b>MFA contribution of total cost</b>	57%	98%	88%	83%
	<b>Total cost of programme</b>	358,930	229,053	94,276	113,898 <sup>54</sup>
	<b>Contribution from MFA</b>	214,200	196,700	75,100	57,100
	<b>MFA contribution of total cost</b>	60%	86%	80%	50%

MFA has granted unequal amounts to the four programmes. For instance, in 2016, GTP received almost four times as much as GEST, and nearly three times more than LRT, even though GTP has been able to raise substantial funds from other sources. There are two main explanations for this inequality. First, there has been a history of FTP and GTP expecting and receiving a certain level of funding. Although the initial intention with the creation of LRT and GEST was that these programmes would eventually receive comparable levels of funding, their establishment coincided with the Icelandic economic crisis, such that resources for comparable funding levels were not available. In fact, some informants maintain that only because of substantial advocacy on behalf of GEST was it possible to establish the programme at all. The government, however, did not keep its pledge of increasing the funding of these programmes to the levels of GTP and FTP in the first few years of operation. Instead, the funding

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<sup>54</sup> The large increase in the GEST budget between 2015 and 2016 is to a large extent due to new research and project development activities, which account for close to ISK 41.5 million in the 2016 budget. According to the 2016 budget document, only about ISK 13 million in external funding had been secured for those activities. The MFA contribution to GEST for 2016 includes both the core contribution to the 5-month programme and the contribution to research and project development activities, respectively ISK 54.1 million and ISK 3 million.

levels have remained more or less the same for the last five years, with the unequal distribution locked into place.<sup>55</sup> The reduced level of funding of GEST and LRT has prevented these two programmes to grow to the same size as the two older ones.

Second, some of the differences in the funding are the result of the programmes having different operations, which is reflected in their cost structures. For instance, the practical work for GTP, FTP, and LRT requires more costly equipment and personalised follow up of the fellows' work over a two to three month period – not seldom involving visits to the field, something that does not occur in GEST to the same extent. Moreover the market rates for experts from the different sectors vary; for instance geothermal energy experts were mentioned by some interviewees as being generally more expensive. Yet another aspect revealed by one informant who had supervised both GEST and GTP fellows is that the same expert can be paid substantially different amounts per day by the two programmes for the role of supervisor involving the same type of work. This suggests that the programmes might employ different approaches to negotiating the fees paid to its supervisors.

All of the programmes have made efforts to identify alternative sources of funding. One of the difficulties in mobilising resources has been the status of the programmes. By not being part of a formal UNU institute, the programmes have been considered from the outside as Icelandic bilateral initiatives, rather than multilateral programmes, and thus not attractive to other donor such as Sida (which has supported UNU-WIDER in Finland for many years). The strengthening of the Icelandic króna in recent years has also been a disadvantage for the programmes, in terms of mobilising foreign resources.

GTP has been the most successful in obtaining additional resources. Its long track record and reputation in the geothermal world has been an asset in this regard. In 2015 and 2016 GTP obtained around 40 percent of its funding from other sources – mainly geothermal entities (government or private) that sponsor fellow participation. GTP also received grants from EEA to cover the cost of fellows from Europe, that made up around 15 percent of the cohorts from 2014 to 2016. GTP also offers tailor-made courses on demand that are typically funded by actors in the geothermal industry. GTP does not formally market their short courses. They are publicised by word-of-mouth and networking. The inputs from private companies are not,

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<sup>55</sup> The distribution of the funding levels between the programmes was decided by a percentage division in a parliamentary resolution on the international development of Iceland 2011-2013 and 2013-2016. MFA increased the funding to LRT and GEST in 2017 since the MFA was no longer tied to the former resolution.

however, considered a reliable source of funds. Thus, GTP regards its core funding as critical to keeping its human and physical resources intact.

FTP has had financial contributions from the Ministry of Fisheries, former ICEIDA, partners in other cooperation programmes, and Icelandic fishing companies. Additional funding sources have varied from year to year. In the mid-2000s, the Malaysian government covered part of the costs for fellows from the Malaysian Fisheries Development Authority. FTP is expecting a partner organisation from China to subsidise a fellow in the six-month programme in 2017.

LRT has devoted comparatively little effort to resource mobilisation and instead chosen to consolidate its programme. In 2014 it failed to obtain a highly competitive grant from the Global Resilience Partnership for a joint project with AUI in the lead and including GEST, SCI, and partners in Niger. In 2016 LRT received its first non-core funding – a three-year Erasmus+ grant totalling 85,680 Euros<sup>56</sup> – for establishing an education platform with partner institutions (see section 2.4.3). Its upcoming short course in Uganda in the fall of 2017 will be funded with resources from MFA associated with the Paris Agreement.

Having the smallest amount of core funding, GEST has been the most active programme in searching for funds. However, it does not seem to have developed a clear resource mobilisation strategy yet. It has submitted a range of different proposals in diverse areas to a number of various donors – such as NDF, NATO, WFP, EEA, the Watanabe and Sasakawa Foundations, the Icelandic Equality Fund, the Energy Research Fund, Erasmus, and the World Bank. GEST's success rate has been mixed, usually securing small amounts as low as €4,000, which raises questions about the actual net benefit of the funds in relation to the transaction costs. Nevertheless, it has had more results in the last year, with several grants from Icelandic sources. First, it received a grant of around USD 100,000 from the Icelandic Gender Equality Fund for its documentary on gender and the geothermal sector. Second, it has furthermore received funding from MFA-ICEIDA for:

- The June 2017 workshop at AMCEN 16 (see section 4.3.2);
- Undertaking an evaluation of Iceland's National Action Plan for UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2016;
- Its training role in the UN Women project "Promotion of Women and "Girls' Effective Participation in Peace, Security and Recovery in Mozambique 2017-2020".

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<sup>56</sup> The total grant was EUR 438,530, shared among the partnering institutions.



In addition, since its training programme began offering a university diploma and 30 ECTS, GEST receives a contribution for each fellow from Iceland's Ministry of Education. GEST has moreover raised around USD 165,000 in Erasmus grants for fellows and faculty mobility for 2017 to 2019.

Efforts to diversify and mobilise resources are time-consuming and divert staff from the programmes' core functions. There is also a risk that the priorities of the funder (such as choice of country and type of participant) take precedence over the programmes' own strategic priorities. When accessing funds from industry sponsors in comparatively richer countries there is a risk that the support to stakeholders from poorer countries is diminished. Therefore, although GTP, for example, could potentially fund much of its activities by selling its services to the geothermal industry actors, it may be doing so at the expense of potential fellows from countries with the greatest needs.

#### 4.5 COST EFFICIENCY

This section compares the cost of the five- and six-month programmes in Iceland with one another, with other similar capacity development programmes, and estimates the marginal cost per fellow for each programme, using financial data provided by the four programmes.

Annex 5 describes the methodology underlying the cost estimations and contains the complete results of the analysis. The calculations are based on approximations of the share of the costs for the five- or six-month courses of the total programme costs, which were provided by the four programmes. These calculations have been complicated by the fact that the programmes have different financial reporting systems, and hence cost items are not always directly comparable across programmes. The results presented here thus correspond to the best possible estimate given the data made available by the four programmes, but **should be regarded as approximations**.

The table below presents the estimated cost per fellow and day for the four programmes based on the averages for the last five years.

**Table 16: Costs and estimated cost per fellow and day for the five- or six-month UNU Iceland programmes (average 2012-2016, 2013-2016 for GEST<sup>57</sup>)**

Budget element		GTP	FTP	LRT	GEST
Number of fellows per programme		32.1	22.2	11.3	11.75
Programme duration (days)		176	183	188	144
Total programme cost (1000 ISK)		162,758	113,740	66,416	48,128 <sup>58</sup>
Cost per fellow (1000 ISK) <sup>59</sup>		5,072	5,146	5,882	4,196
	1,000 ISK	28.9	28.1	31.3	29.1
	USD	232	226	251	233

These cost comparisons reveal that FTP has the lowest average cost per fellow per day, closely followed by GTP and GEST. The difference between the value for FTP (lowest) and LRT (highest) is relatively small, however, amounting to approximately 10 percent.

The comparison of programme costs revealed two other important issues. First, the financial reporting varies significantly between the programmes, which renders financial comparisons difficult and uncertain. This is largely due to the fact that MFA does not impose a uniform financial reporting template, and therefore the programmes have adopted the template of their host institutions. Second, there are noticeable differences between the programmes in some of the cost items. These are mostly justified by the different organisation and nature of the programmes, yet there seems to be room for the programmes to compare some of their common costs and assess whether savings could be made by aligning with the less costly options.

The evaluation team estimated how the programme cost per fellow would vary with the number of fellows using a model described in Annex 5. As depicted in Figure 6, the cost per fellow declines with an increase in the number of fellows, which is to be expected given the relatively large share of fixed costs of the total costs of all programmes, and the fact that several of those fixed costs are either constant or only partially dependent on the number of fellows.

<sup>57</sup> For GEST, the last four years were used, since this programme only started operating in its current configuration in 2013.

<sup>58</sup> Because of its shorter duration, the costs for GEST's programme have been adjusted to the average duration of the 6-months programmes

<sup>59</sup> Small differences in the estimates of cost per fellow and cost per fellow and days are due to rounding off.

The decrease is very pronounced until the number of fellows reaches approximately 15, after which the cost per fellow remains relatively constant in all four programmes.

**Figure 6: Estimated variation in cost per fellow with the number of fellows**

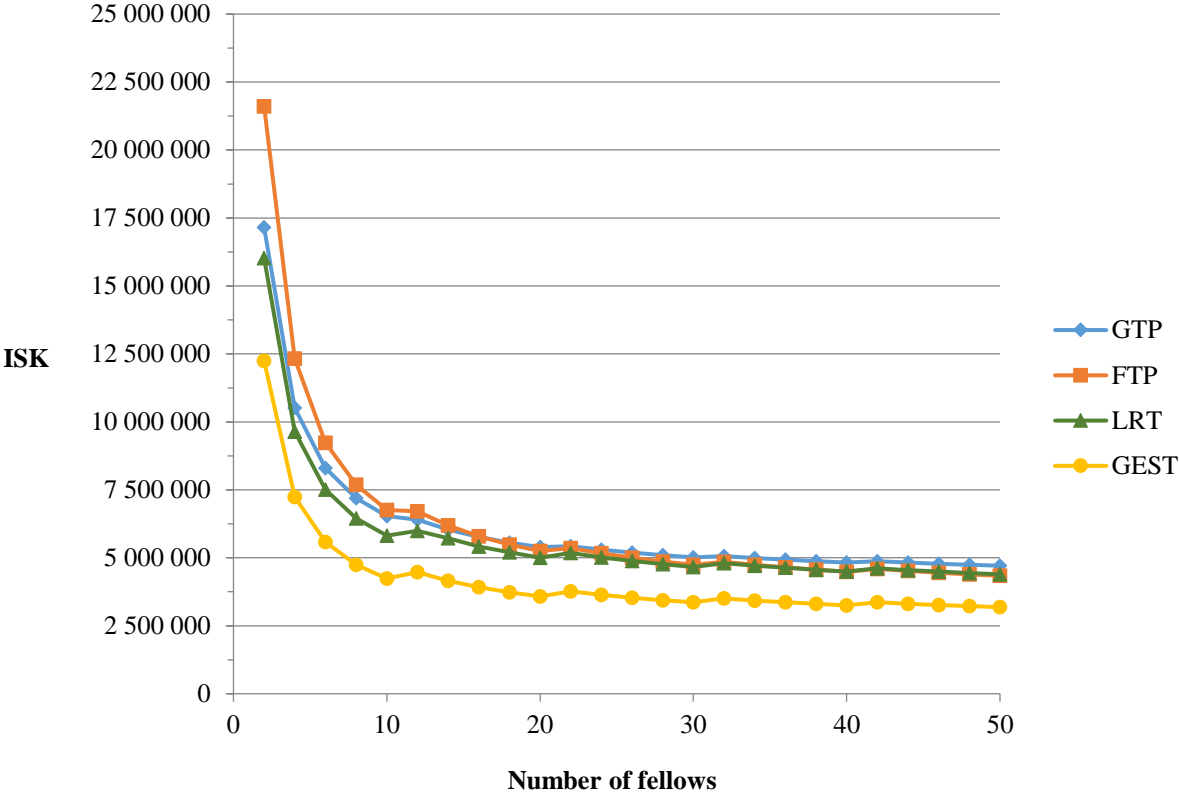


Figure 6 illustrates potential for economies of scale. It suggests that there are important savings to be made for each additional fellow until the number of fellows per cohort reaches 15 to 20 fellows, after which the marginal difference remains close to nil. This is true for all four programmes, both in relative and absolute terms. In the cases of GEST and LRT, increasing the annual intake to 20 or slightly above, would reduce the cost per fellow by approximately 20 percent compared to the current average annual intake of 12 to 14 fellows. While resulting in higher total programme costs, MFA as a funder would get higher value for its contribution.

For the comparison with other capacity development programmes, the evaluation team has identified a sample of programmes that bear some resemblance to the UNU Iceland programmes, including:

- Sida International Training Programmes. For this comparison financial data was used averaged from 30 different programmes that were completed between 2011 and 2015, with-in subject areas ranging from Sexual And Reproductive Health and Intellectual Property to Integrated Sustainable Coastal Development and Environmental Assessment.

- University of Auckland postgraduate certificate in Geothermal Energy Technology. This is a 13-week full time programme, which provides scholarships from New Zealand Aid to participants from developing countries.
- UN Women programme on Empowering UN System Gender Focal Points, consisting of a four weeks online and five days face-to-face course.
- ILO's International Training Centre (ITC) in Turin Gender Academy training programme.
- International Ocean Institute Ocean Governance: Policy, Law and Management programme in Nova Scotia, Canada.

For this analysis the evaluation team used the average for the period of 2014 to 2016 for the four UNU programmes, a period that is closer to the reference year of the data from the other programmes used in the comparison.

Whereas the evaluation team had access to the complete financial data for the Sida ITPs, for the four last programmes it was only possible to access tuition fee data. While tuition fees give an idea of the relative cost of the programmes, the evaluation team has no way of knowing whether or not the tuition corresponds to the actual cost per participant. The tuition could include a profit margin, thereby being higher than the actual cost; or be subsidised, and thereby be lower than the actual cost. These comparisons **should therefore be regarded with care**.

Table 17 presents the comparison of the cost per fellow for the UNU Iceland programmes and the external programmes selected. The UNU Iceland programme have costs per fellow within the interval of the costs of the other programmes.<sup>60</sup> They are much cheaper than the Sida ITPs – which a review by Price Waterhouse Cooper concluded were cost-effective vis-à-vis the results – and the ILO gender programme, and have costs comparable to those of the International Ocean Institute and the University of Auckland. They are significantly more expensive than the UN Women programme, which is likely a consequence of the fact that 80 percent of this course is given online.

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<sup>60</sup> The figures for the UNU Iceland programmes are based on the 2014-2016 averages.

**Table 17: Cost comparisons with external programmes (see Annex 5 for details)**

Programme	Number of fellows	Number of days	Cost per programme	Cost per fellow (ISKx1000)	Cost per fellow and day (ISKx1000)	Cost per fellow and day (USD)
<b>GTP</b>	31.3	176	ISK 157,765,650	5,035	28.6	<b>233</b>
<b>FTP</b>	21.3	183	ISK 117,908,307	5,527	30.2	<b>243</b>
<b>LRT</b>	12	191	ISK 70,749,948	5,896	30.9	<b>251</b>
<b>GEST</b>	13	144	ISK 51,891,311	4,059	28.2	<b>227</b>
<b>ITP</b>	25	32	SEK 4,301,329	3,100	97.3	<b>811</b>
<b>ILO ITC Gender</b>	158	13	EUR 3,500	417	32.1	<b>311</b>
<b>Univ. Auckland</b>	-	65	NZD 23,776	1,838	28.3	<b>250</b>
<b>IOI Canada</b>	12	58	USD 13,500	1,529	26.4	<b>233</b>
<b>UN Women</b>	-	25	EUR 2,945	351	14.0	<b>124</b>

## 4.6 CONCLUSIONS

The governance of the four programmes is assured by boards in which the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, UNU, and the host agencies are represented, but there are no members from developing countries. There is scope for more guidance from the boards, particularly with regard to holding the programme to account in relation to their respective strategies and achieving results.

The UNU programmes in Iceland have worked to establish results based management systems, but all four programmes see a need to improve in this area. In particular, systems to monitor results at country level need strengthening. Furthermore, the strategic plans themselves could be strengthened to include a theory of change with a corresponding recruitment approach outlined. The plans could also be reinforced so that they become effective monitoring tools.

On the other hand, the programmes monitor and assess their activities and outputs regularly, revising and updating their training efforts accordingly. This adaptive management approach is matched by organisational cultures within the teams that promote operational flexibility and are solutions oriented. They are generally able to accommodate new activities and seize opportunities.

A key strength of the programmes are the small but competent and committed teams that make up the core staff. Those programmes that have established a studies committee have found this structure useful to ensure organisational effectiveness. In particular, LRT have made good use of this structure.

As programmes within the UNU family, fully funded by the host nation, GEST, LRT, FTP, and GTP have operated at the periphery of UNU. While the collaboration has generally worked very well, it has been at arm's length. The programmes have interacted with other UN entities to a relatively modest degree. There are expectations among some of the programmes that this may increase should a UNU Institute in Iceland be formed.

Over the years, the programmes have had interaction with the different parts of the UN system, although engagement with the UN system at country level has been minimal. There are considerable prospects for working closer with the UN at country level. In particular, there is a role it can play as a partner post training to ensure follow-up, support networking of alumni, promote the projects of fellows, and link them with development partner initiatives.

The former ICEIDA constituted an important partner to FTP in the earlier years, but interaction decreased considerably since ICEIDA's move away from fisheries. On the other hand, MFA-ICEIDA has become an important partner of GTP in the last four years and contacts with GEST have also grown. With ICEIDA now being an integral part of MFA, some informants believe that connections between the bilateral and multilateral arms of Iceland's development assistance will be improved. Some stakeholders would like to see the UNU programmes play a more active role in the planning and strategizing of Iceland's development assistance. While this would have been straightforward in the past with direct core funding coming from MFA, should the programmes be organised as a UNU institute, MFA's accessibility to the programmes will be one step removed.

The core funding from MFA has been critical to the programmes, making up most of their respective budgets. However, the size of the annual grants has been somewhat unpredictable and sometimes tardy, and the resulting uncertainty has affected long-term planning. Moreover, an unequal distribution among the programmes has been locked into place since the Icelandic financial crisis.

All programmes have made attempts to identify alternative sources of funding. GTP has managed to carve out a niche for itself by providing on-demand short courses, but is nevertheless strongly reliant on MFA funding for its core functions, as is the case with the other programmes.

There are some important cost differences in areas common to all programmes, which suggests that savings could be made by the programmes by jointly comparing their different cost items and then adjusting to the practices of programme with the least expensive approach. The estimated marginal cost calculations per fellow reveal that there are important marginal savings to be made up to a level of 15 to 20 fellows per programme. This supports the view that there are economies of scale to be made in the two newer programmes, which have so far had 15 or less fellows per year funded by MFA. The comparison with other capacity development efforts show that the cost for the Icelandic programmes per fellow per day is at a reasonable and generally competitive level.

## 5. Relevance

The current goal of Iceland's international development cooperation is to contribute to the eradication of poverty by improving living standards in the world's poorest countries. Its priority areas are natural resources (energy and fisheries), human capital (education and health), and peace-building (governance and reconstruction), as well as the two cross-cutting themes of gender equality and the environment. This chapter examines the extent to which the four UNU programmes in Iceland are relevant to Iceland's current priority areas and cross-cutting themes. It also looks at relevance in relation to country level priorities and needs, UNU's latest strategic plan and the Sustainable Development Goals.

### 5.1 POVERTY REDUCTION

Eradicating poverty – the state of lacking power, choice, and material resources – is at the heart of the SDGs and central to Iceland's development cooperation policy. The UNU Iceland programmes do not support poor and marginalised people directly. The immediate beneficiaries are all employed, have academic degrees, and are relatively well off. Indirectly, however, the four programmes can potentially contribute to eradicating poverty at an overall level by promoting sustainable economic growth – presuming that this is pursued within policies to promote equity within the countries. GTP, FTP, and LRT address the sustainable use of natural resources that can provide increased income for developing countries and potentially avoid the costs of environmental degradation for future generations. LRT's training has specific relevance to poverty in that poor people are more reliant on marginal lands that are easily degraded. Similarly, with respect to FTP, the livelihood opportunities of the poor can be particularly impacted, both positively and negatively, by choices made in fisheries and aquaculture development and management. GEST's foci on women's economic empowerment and gender responsive budgeting also have the potential to contribute to growth and ensure efficient use of resources. In addition, GEST addresses the issues of lacking power, choice and human rights, which are critical elements in the effort to eradicate poverty.

In terms of country selection, LRT's and GEST's country selection has had a strong poverty focus, including some of the poorer countries in the world. GEST's use of Erasmus scholarships risks diluting this approach, however, particularly with its intention to recruit from middle income countries such as Serbia.

To some extent, the level of a country's poverty is taken into consideration in FTP's and GTP's country selection. GTP strategy mentions taking into account the human development ranking of countries from which it recruits. Likewise, FTP has intended to recruit mostly from Africa and small island states.<sup>61</sup> However, in practice, among the 60 countries that GTP and FTP have recruited from, the majority are not classified as least developed countries. Both programmes also maintain that, generally, countries that have a certain level of infrastructural and institutional development have the greatest potential to benefit from the programmes. Moreover, tertiary level capacity development initiatives like these programmes do draw benefit in terms of participants supporting and learning from each other, by having some participants from somewhat more developed countries. This adds an important dimension to group dynamics and discussions during training sessions. In addition, some large lower-middle income countries, like India, have sizable poor populations, suggesting that the programmes may have an effect on poverty even if they target middle income countries. Nonetheless, there appears to be scope for expanding the representation of fellows from poorer countries (with potentially viable geothermal and fisheries resources). Often the short courses held in partner countries have a greater representation from the least developed countries.

In terms of poverty perspectives and approaches within the training content, all four programmes can be further strengthened. Although GTP reflects on the SDGs in its strategy and have named some of its short courses after the SDGs, incorporating socio-economic dimensions in the training has occurred to a relatively limited extent. Similarly, a specific perspective on poverty is absent from the curriculum of the FTP six-month programme. It is present in several of its short courses, though, notably those targeting extension services in partner countries. The programme regards its influence on poverty as indirect, by means of assisting countries improve the sustainability and the economic gains from their fisheries. Meanwhile, LRT has raised issues such as land rights and introduced methods to ensure participation of community members. GEST, too, incorporates rights perspectives and marginalisation. Yet some of the fellows from both these programmes have expressed that the poverty context and its implications, such as the pressure it has on land and natural resources, can be strengthened further.

Strengthening the poverty perspective in the programmes further would perhaps require recruitment of lecturers from developing countries who have first-hand knowledge of the range

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<sup>61</sup> Several of the small island states that FTP works with are, however, upper middle income countries according to the OECD-DAC classification. See <<http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist.htm>>.



of poverty issues that affect the developing world. Likewise, if developing countries were represented on advisory boards to the programmes, this could bring developing country perspectives closer to the governing structures of the programmes.

## 5.2 GENDER EQUALITY

This section examines gender parity in relation to recruitment and staff. It also considers the extent to which gender issues are addressed within the training context.

With its main focus on gender equality and women's empowerment, GEST is obviously strongly aligned with Iceland's gender policy. As discussed in Chapter 2, LRT has worked to integrate gender concerns in its training and has a specific gender policy. Although both GTP's and FTP's strategies devote a portion of the training to promoting gender equality, there is scope to strengthen the gender perspectives further.

Of the four programmes, LRT has been able to achieve the greatest level of parity among male and female fellows (48% women). As mentioned in previous chapters, this has constituted a challenge since there are few women working in some LRT partner institutions. FTP's total number of fellows comprises 37 percent women, with significant variations from year to year. The programme does make efforts to increase the share of female fellows, but is frequently confronted with insufficient number of adequately qualified female candidates,<sup>62</sup> as well as established gender roles in partner countries that occasionally prevent women fellows from attending the programme in Iceland. The programme has over the years catered for the specific needs of female fellows, notably with respect to pregnancy support while in Iceland. GTP has over its history had 22 percent female fellows, but has been making a strong effort to include women in the programme, such that women comprised 41 percent of the fellows in the 2016 cohort. Like LRT and FTP, identifying suitable female candidates is challenging, particularly from Muslim majority countries. GEST, on the contrary, has had more women than men – 62 percent of fellows – but in 2015 the cohort included equal numbers of men and women.

Survey respondents were asked to answer to what extent they believed it to be true that women are discriminated against in their sector of work. A more detailed account of this is provided in the survey report in Annex 4. For LRT, GTP, and FTP, 60 percent of the men respondents believed that it was untrue that women were discriminated against, while only 11 percent

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<sup>62</sup> In this regard, it is important to recall that FTP selects candidates primarily on the basis of their professional merit; women are given preference only in cases where they are equally qualified as male candidates.

of GEST's male fellows held this view. On average, 64 percent of the women from LRT, GTP, and FTP programmes believed that women were discriminated against to some extent. While the differences in responses in part reflect differences in sectors, countries and organisations, the mostly diverging perceptions among male and female fellows suggest that gender equality, gender analysis, and gender mainstreaming approaches constitute relevant elements for all programmes to consistently integrate.

### 5.3 NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

GTP, FTP and LRT have natural resources and environmental sustainability at the core of all of their activities. Environmental sustainability considerations are part of a number of modules and lectures, and all three programmes have lectures or modules specifically on environmental management. On a more fundamental level, these three programmes are rooted in the Icelandic narratives of i) geothermal as one of the pillars of Iceland's global leadership in the share of renewable energy; ii) science-based sustainable fisheries having been the backbone of Iceland's wealth; and, iii) Iceland having pioneered, innovated and succeeded in reversing a history of extensive land degradation under very difficult environmental conditions. A fundamental concern with environmental sustainability underpins Iceland's uniqueness in the geothermal, fisheries, and land management sectors and is an essential component of the experience that programme fellows acquire and subsequently take home.

In comparison, natural resources management and environmental sustainability are important but less of an integral part of GEST. The programme does contain a two-week module dedicated to the theme of 'Gender and the Environment', which examines relationships between gender and sustainable or unsustainable forms of development and natural resources management. As mentioned in Chapter 4, GEST is currently cooperating with FTP on a fisheries project in Tanzania concerned with climate change mitigation, and has cooperated with LRT on a proposal for the Global Resilience Partnership that did not succeed in getting funding. It is also significant in this context that GEST fellows occasionally develop projects directly relating to environmental sustainability issues: the 2014 and 2016 cohorts, for example, had four and three such projects developed, respectively. GEST's only short course so far also focused on environmental issues.

### 5.4 HUMAN CAPITAL

Education and health are not at the core of the four UNU programmes, but they do address these themes to some extent. With respect to contributing to education in partner countries, all four programmes recruit from universities and research institutes and have been effective in building the capacity of tertiary institutions, as reviewed in Chapter 3. GEST has a module specifically on health and bodily integrity, which also discusses issues of gender-related violence.

## 5.5 PEACE

Promoting peace is not a central objective in any of the programmes. Nevertheless, GEST's module 'Gender, Peace and Security' discusses gender dimensions of security – in particular women's role in conflicts, peace processes, and post-conflict reconstruction. LRT contains a full-day lecture on conflict management, which several fellows interviewed referred to as useful. Given the mounting conflicts over environmental resources, especially concerning access to and use of land, it would be beneficial to ensure that conflict sensitive perspectives are given adequate attention in GTP, FTP, and LRT.

## 5.6 RELEVANCE TO NEEDS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The four UNU Iceland programmes together have worked in 101 countries. Assessing the extent to which the four programmes address key priorities in all these countries was not feasible within the scope of this evaluation. In any case, such an analysis would be very general and of questionable use. The team has instead used the survey to gather data from fellows on i) the extent to which they deemed the programme to be relevant to their own needs; and ii) what they considered to be three important challenges in their sector of work in their countries.

The fellows consider that the programme curricula largely address their needs and interests and those of their organisations, and balances the different topics within each subject in an adequate manner. The fact that over 91 percent of all fellows surveyed declared that they apply the knowledge gained from Iceland in their daily work attests to the practical relevance of the training.<sup>63</sup>

Box 7 provides some examples of how the fellows judged the training to be relevant. Knowledge and skills have served to improve performance; been passed on to colleagues and students; and provided a framework for collaboration with different stakeholders. Policy analysis, project management, and data management skills were mentioned as particularly relevant in their work. Fellows from all four programmes also highlighted how valuable better interpersonal skills have been for their work.

Regarding the country level challenges to geothermal energy, fisheries, land restoration, and gender equality identified by survey respondents, the range and detail varies greatly. When

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<sup>63</sup> 91.5 percent of all fellows surveyed 'agree very much' or 'agree somewhat' with the statement "I apply the training I received in Iceland regularly in my work". (See survey report, Annex 4)

grouping together similar answers, the team found that four types of challenges were raised to a significant degree by respondents from all programmes. These include the i) the lack of capacities and expertise – at individual and organisational levels; ii) the lack of funding, investments and resources; iii) the lack of political commitment, will, and strong governance in the sector; and, iv) poor policies, poor policy implementation or lack of policies.

## 6. Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter presents the conclusions of the evaluation team about the effectiveness, impact, sustainability, relevance, and cost-efficiency of the UNU Iceland programmes. It closes with recommendations based on a discussion of opportunities and areas for improvement.

When concluding about the achievements of the UNU programmes, it is important to highlight that these are high quality capacity development programmes, and thus differ considerably from the other UNU entities, which mostly have a research profile. Pursuant to the goal of developing organisational capacity through individual-level training, the programmes have been competently, flexibly, and smoothly managed and had due regard to developing country needs and Icelandic development cooperation priorities. With most of its resources – and all of its core funding – provided by the Government of Iceland, the programmes have in practice functioned more like bilateral capacity development programmes than as integral parts of UNU.

### 6.1 EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT

There are many important macro-, meso-, and micro-level results in developing countries that the UNU Iceland programmes have contributed to through its fellows. With respect to macro level effects, fellows have engaged in policy processes upon returning home, and research undertaken in Iceland has on occasion formed the basis of policy-level changes introduced in the fellows' countries. Beyond recognising the contributions of fellows to those changes, however, it is difficult in most cases to quantify the extent to which the programmes have influenced national policies.

With respect to meso-level or organisational changes, the programmes have also had significant effects in terms of number and diversity on systems, practices, methods, and more broadly the 'behaviour' of organisations. Novel or improved practices have been introduced by a majority of fellows in their organisations, ranging from administrative and managerial procedures, to technical processes and tools. Fellows are also playing key roles in developing or leading new projects and programmes in their organisations and beyond, often based on the project work undertaken in Iceland. Likewise, academic institutions have benefitted in terms of revised or expanded curricula; new training approaches and materials; and expanded research and teaching exchanges, in many instances accompanied by new research funding. In those cases where several fellows from the same agency or institute attended the UNU programmes, they often collectively raised the standards of practices in the organisation. This was particularly true of organisations that over many years have sent fellows to the FTP and GTP programmes.

As expected, the greatest contribution of the UNU Iceland programmes has been the change experienced by the individual fellows attending the training in Iceland. The types and intensity of contributions at this level are impressive. A majority of fellows report that they have

been promoted upon return to their workplace as a result of the training. The vast majority of fellows also gained confidence and motivation, applied new knowledge, approaches, and skills, and were handed greater responsibility. Several are embarking on new academic pursuits and some have gained recognition at the national, regional or international levels. Some have been awarded new professional development opportunities, including at the international level.

The programmes' contributions to networking among fellows are modest in comparison. Some former fellows remain in contact with one another for personal reasons and sometimes for technical or collaboration purposes. The GTP fellows have tapped into and sometimes played a key role in the national, regional and international geothermal association structures. Only in very few cases have fellows organised themselves at country or regional level to meet and exchange information and ideas. For FTP, LRT, and GEST especially, informal networks at country level could play a role in fostering cross-learning from recently returned fellows, sharing information, and promoting synergies and opportunities for leveraging. This would in turn enhance the sustainability of programme results.

### **6.1.1 Contributing factors**

Many factors contribute to the results achieved by the programmes at the country level. First, the UNU programmes in Iceland provide training that is of high quality. It combines theory, professional skills training, and project work that gives fellows a unique edge. Overall, the four programmes have managed to achieve a relevant balance between theory and practice that maximises the usefulness of the programmes for the fellows. Moreover, the programmes draw advantage from the Icelandic context and have catered to the practical and social needs of the fellows in a way that fellows have described as welcoming, caring and generally very efficient.

Second, the programmes are appropriately intense, making the most of the fellows' time in Iceland. The length of training is unusual for this type of programmes. It is long enough for fellows to immerse themselves over many weeks, but short enough that many employers feel they can cope with the staff shortage that ensues. Changing the length of the programme would not be an advantage. Two of the programmes already offer MSc and PhD scholarships at Icelandic universities that give fellows opportunities to conduct more in-depth research. LRT will support its first MSc fellow starting June 2017 and GEST plans to offer such fellowships as soon as financially and institutionally possible.

In addition to the content, design, and overall quality of the programmes, other important factors contributing to their success in achieving results at the country level include:

- Building on nearly 40 years of experience of running training programmes in Iceland and learning lessons along the way;
- A robust recruitment process of fellows to which much care, attention, time, and resources are devoted;

- A competent and committed team that makes up the core staff;
- Experienced and knowledgeable lecturers;
- Responsive and adaptable management approach that involves monitoring, assessment, and reflection processes;
- Smooth administration of the training programmes;
- Supportive additional activities (short courses, post-graduate scholarships, travel grants for conferences, etc.);
- Supportive host agencies that provide a conducive environment and access to a range of resources; and,
- Core funding from MFA.

Of these, the recruitment process is particularly critical for the programmes to select candidates who can draw maximum benefit from the training in Iceland and contribute to change upon returning home. In this regard, establishing institutional partnerships with organisations in developing countries has been advantageous for LRT, FTP, and GTP by providing a useful entry point into the respective sector. Institutional partnerships, moreover, enhance the sustainability of the capacity gained by the fellows within their respective workplaces. On the other hand, GEST has been served well by looser agreements with partners from civil society, the public sector, and academic institutions, which the programme recruits from.

For capacity development efforts of this kind to have some effect at the country level beyond the individual fellows being trained, it is important to build a critical mass of people in a country with the capacity and motivation to promote change. All programmes have recognised this since they were established, but only LRT has adhered strictly to this principle in its recruitment strategy. The country selection of GTP and FTP (and very recently GEST) has sometimes been dictated by their additional funding sources and/or Iceland government interests, leading to an increase in the number of partner countries. This has sometimes worked against the programmes' aim of building critical masses in the partner organisations and countries.

To a certain extent, recruitment determines at what level outcomes will be produced. Recruiting mid- to senior-level fellows from public entities at the central government level is more likely to lead to policy changes at the national level. Early career professionals frequently do not have the position to directly initiate or lead complex change process. Decentralised government structures rarely have the mandate, power or resources to influence country-wide policy processes. On the other hand, some forms of transformative change require the initiative of skilled individuals at the decentralised and/or grassroots levels – such as activities to promote land restoration – particularly in countries with devolved government. These types of considerations seem to be made within the programmes, but are yet to be captured specifically in the respective strategy documents.

## 6.2 SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is high in terms of the benefits of the training continuing after the fellows have completed their studies in Iceland. The many results at country level speak to this. Participants are applying and sharing their skills and knowledge, and serving as change agents. Sustainability could potentially be further enhanced through alumni networks. The extent to which short courses at country level have produced sustainable results is less clear since there is insufficient follow up data on what participants have learnt and applied in their workplaces. Nevertheless, since fellows are frequently engaged in the planning and delivery of GTP and FTP short courses – at times constituting the core of the lecturers and supervisors – these courses can be considered as contributing to sustaining capacity built through the six-month training.

In terms of financial sustainability, the programmes are strongly, if not fully, dependent on funding from MFA. The degree of financial dependency varies between programmes though, and from year to year. The size of the annual grants from MFA have been unpredictable and decisions on fund allocations sometimes tardy, resulting in uncertainty that has hampered long-term planning. Programmes have made efforts to diversify their funding sources, but with mixed results. GTP has had most success. Through its reputation and networks and the clear demand for custom made short courses from within the geothermal industry, GTP has been able to supplement the MFA core funding by undertaking such activities.

Since the provision of short courses is a crowded scene in the sectors represented by the other three programmes, such activities are less likely to generate significant additional income. Moreover, the specific advantage of the UNU Iceland programmes vis-à-vis other actors in this context is not obvious, especially since the programmes tend to employ comparatively more expensive international experts to deliver the courses in developing countries. It will be critical to assess the extent to which the UNU Iceland programmes can both add value and promote sustainability when examining opportunities to provide short courses.

## 6.3 RELEVANCE

The UNU programmes in Iceland are generally very relevant to Iceland's strategy for development cooperation, particularly in relation to natural resources management, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. The activities of the programmes are also relevant to a majority of the SDGs, both directly and indirectly. The programmes are also deemed highly useful by fellows and respond well to the challenges at the country level identified by the fellows.

The programmes' alignment with and contribution to the UNU Strategic Plan 2015-2019 are less clear. While there are a number of elements in which the programmes support the mission and objectives of the Plan, there is a clear misalignment between the strong focus on research and policy advice in the Strategic Plan, and the capacity development activities that are the core of the UNU Iceland programmes. Forcing the programmes to fully align with the Strategic Plan might jeopardise the programmes' core features and deliverables. Any eventual fu-



ture adjustments of the structure, scope or content of any of the programmes needs to be done in such a way as to not diminish their capacity to continue offering high-quality capacity development activities to professionals from developing countries.

## 6.4 COST EFFICIENCY

The comparison of the costs of the four UNU Iceland programmes reveals that on average FTP has the lowest cost per fellow, followed by GTP, GEST and LRT. There are some important cost differences in areas common to all programmes, which suggests that savings could be made by the programmes by jointly comparing their different cost items and then adjusting to the practices of programme with the least expensive approach.

The analysis of marginal costs per fellow supports the conclusion that GEST and LRT could gain from increasing the annual intake of fellows from the current level of 12 to 14 to a level of 20 or slightly above.

Capacity development initiatives that are undertaken in developed countries are often questioned in terms of cost-efficiency. Doubts are often raised about whether flying participants across the world to study in expensive developed countries is justified, when training can be undertaken with lower costs in developing countries themselves. The analysis conducted suggests, however, that when a capacity development initiative, such as the ones in Iceland, achieves important results at country level by drawing on all the advantages of bringing participants to a developed country to study, the higher costs seems to be a justified and constitute a sound investment in the capacity of developing country participants. Moreover, the cost comparison with other capacity development efforts in developed countries shows that the cost per fellow and day of the UNU Iceland programmes is at a reasonable and at a generally competitive level.

## 6.5 OPPORTUNITIES AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Despite their generally strong performances, there are a number of opportunities for the programmes to improve further. These include more systematic results based management, closer engagement with the UN system, and actions to enhance the relevance of the programmes.

It is possible that the four UNU Iceland programmes may be organised under a new UNU institute to be established in Iceland. The details of how this new organisation might function have yet to be determined. Nonetheless, the new institute could provide additional opportunities for the programmes in terms of strategic leadership, more interaction with the other UNU institutes, improved resource mobilisation efforts, the ability to streamline functions and capitalise on economies of scale in relation to certain activities and administration (e.g. certain types of procurement, accounting, IT management, communications, public relations, etc.). In forming such an institute, it would be important to draw on the best practices of each programme.

There are, however, fears among programme stakeholders that a potential institute might involve additional layers of bureaucracy and costs that would undermine the programmes' current efficient and flexible approaches. Effective leadership from MFA and UNU headquarters during the process of establishing such an institute would be paramount. They would need to ensure that the programmes would be able to maximise gains from the new structure, and avoid any pitfalls that could diminish the unique strengths and value that the programmes offer in building capacity and affecting change. The programmes and their respective host institutions would need to be regularly consulted and updated. The formation of a small task force with clear terms of reference could be helpful to support the process. This task force could, for instance, include a representative from each programme, programme stakeholders in Iceland and from UNU. An external facilitator may also be needed at certain points of the process.

### **6.5.1 Management for results**

There is scope to strengthen the governance of the programmes and to enhance the strategic guidance provided by the boards. Currently, neither MFA nor UNU have taken a lead in promoting a results focus or demanding accountability against the goals and targets set in the programmes' strategies. Nor have the boards been particularly proactive in reviewing achievements and providing strategic direction. The reporting requirements – both narrative and financial – from MFA and UNU have been minimal, the quality of reports having even declined since UNU introduced the Pelikan system.

#### **Recommendation 1**

**The advisory boards should play a more proactive role in providing strategic direction for each programme and assume guardianship of each programme's strategic plan. Furthermore, MFA should demand analytical annual narrative reports that venture beyond reporting on activities and outputs and address achievements at country level. In addition, MFA should demand uniform financial reports from each of the four programmes. Finally, the governance structures should include representation from developing countries, in line with UN practice.**

With their adaptive management practices already in place, the programmes have a head start in developing an effective results based management approach. So far, the strategic plans that the programmes have developed have not been systematically used to monitor and report on results or for annual planning. Moreover, there is scope for developing more robust theories of change, intervention logic, results framework, and M&E frameworks for all programmes, and for integrating these into their operations and management.

A key instrument that each programme has to promote results at country level is its recruitment strategy. While the programmes have developed de facto recruitment strategies, these are not sufficiently formalised on paper or systematically monitored. Such strategies are so

fundamental to the programmes' respective training components that they should constitute a core of their strategic plans and be regularly monitored.

**Recommendation 2: The programmes should revisit their strategic plans and determine what key factors have undermined their usefulness for learning and managing, as well as for reporting and accountability. The programmes should begin the process to revise or redraft their strategic plans in line with the basic guiding principles provided in Annex 6, with the aim of producing a useful, robust, and realistic results based management framework. It should include or attach a programme recruitment strategy, based on results information. The programmes should promote buy-in for its strategic plan and recruitment strategy from all staff, the board and/or studies committees. Outside facilitation for this process may be useful. The strategic plans and recruitment strategies should be revisited regularly – typically on an annual basis – and revised as necessary.**

### **6.5.2 Monitoring of results**

While the programmes have been apt at monitoring their training activities and outputs, the follow-up of potential results on the ground has been ad hoc and not systematically documented. Obtaining results data from the wide range of countries understandably presents challenges for all programmes. While regular monitoring requires some investment, it does not have to be very resource intensive. Monitoring should be realistic and systematic, but not necessarily exhaustive. Annex 6 provides some guidelines and ideas related to monitoring.

**Recommendation 3: On an annual basis and in consultation with their governing structures, the programmes should devise a results monitoring plan, based on their respective prioritised needs for information, and determine what monitoring methods and approaches to apply.**

### **6.5.3 UN partnerships**

The programmes should explore ways of forging closer ties with the UN system in the partner countries. The UN system could potentially serve as a partner that ensures follow-up, supports networking of alumni, promotes and makes use of the fellows' projects, and links them with ongoing development partner initiatives. As such, it could support future results based management processes. It could also potentially provide information on country level trends, processes, fora, and donor priorities, and offer administrative advice on for instance, per diem levels and venues. Moreover, since the Icelandic programmes have more interaction with actors at country level than most other UNU institutes, the programmes can pave the way for other UNU entities to connect more systematically to UN Country Teams.

**Recommendation 4: The programmes should forge closer ties to the UN Country Teams with the aim of promoting synergies, information exchanges, strengthening follow-up mechanisms, and potentially linking with and leveraging ongoing country level processes. To begin with, the programmes should consider to make contact with the UN Resident Coordinator's office in Uganda – a country in which all the programmes have a critical mass of former fellows and in which the RC's office, through the evaluation team, has expressed interest to engage with the programmes.**

In line with its own interpretation of the UNU Strategic Plan, GEST has trained a number of UN employees, in spite of the UN system having its own gender training structures for its staff. With the exception of UNRWA, the UN agencies have not granted leave with pay and some fellows have lost their positions upon return. Training UN employees with ODA that is meant to build the capacity of organisations from developing countries is not appropriate and reflects weak guidance from UNU and MFA. An exception to this stance would be the training of UNRWA's Palestinian staff, given the special role UNRWA has as a de facto public service provider for Palestinian refugees. For UNRWA, the GEST programme has served as an important source for training.

**Recommendation 5: The UN programmes in Iceland should not include UN employees in its five- or six-month training courses, with the exception of UNRWA employees.**

While GEST has signed an MoU with the ILO Training Centre in Turin concerning gender training, it should also engage with UN Women at the headquarters level and its gender training centre in Santo Domingo to establish synergies, define the respective roles, and avoid overlaps.

**Recommendation 6: GEST should engage with UN Women at the headquarters level to establish synergies, define the respective roles, and avoid overlaps. The UNU Office in New York and Iceland's permanent representation in New York could appropriately assist in this process.**

#### **6.5.4 Networks at the country level**

While there is moderate interest from GTP and FTP fellows to establish alumni networks, the alumni from the younger programmes are generally very keen and see a lot of potential in organising themselves into networks. Apart from exchanging ideas and news, fellows believe that networks can take initiatives, advocate, organise training events, brief, and later debrief new fellows. Networks can also serve as a useful resource for follow-up of results.

Lessons learnt from the alumni networks of other capacity development initiatives are that they are most effective if the initiative comes from the alumni themselves and the members feel strong ownership. After the alumni have mobilised themselves, the programmes' role should be to facilitate. This could take the form of providing electronic platforms, information, and tools (e.g. sharing examples of statutes, ideas for how to effectively organise members, share information on the activities of other networks, etc.). The programmes might also be able to help link the networks with the UN system at the country level, engage with them during recruitment visits, and encourage contacts with the embassies of Iceland in countries where these exist. However, the networks should develop and be sustained in line with the demand from alumni and not be maintained by external financial support.

**Recommendation 7: The UNU programmes in Iceland should encourage the formation of networks but allow the initiatives to emerge from the demand of the alumni. The networks should not receive regular direct financial support from the programmes.**

### 6.5.5 Enhance programmes

The programmes are offering training of solid quality that is leading to results at the country level. Going forward, it is important to ensure that the factors that contribute to quality capacity development and subsequent results are safeguarded.

**Recommendation 8: The five- or six-month training programmes should maintain the balance between theoretical and practical content, the project work, the professional skills training, the social components, and the current length.**

The diploma and ECTS that the University of Iceland offers GEST fellows have been highly valued. Meanwhile, many FTP and LRT fellows who have experienced the limitations of the UNU certificate in terms of future academic pursuits and promotions, strongly urge the programmes to upgrade the certificate to a university diploma. This may also encourage more women to apply for the programmes. Moreover, accreditation is in line with UNU strategic priorities. Should the courses offer credits, the programmes would furthermore receive a contribution from Iceland's Ministry of Education for each fellow. While GTP fellows did not raise the issue of credits much, it may also be of benefit to them. However, the Bologna process standards that need to be met for granting credits entails a fairly demanding and long procedure. Therefore, it will be important to undertake an assessment of both the potential benefits and costs of introducing credits.

**Recommendation 9: GTP, FTP, and LRT should further explore the possibilities of offering a university diploma and ECTS for fellows completing the six-month training programme. Drawing on the experience of GEST, this will involve assessing both the benefits and the costs of meeting the Bologna process standards.**

By becoming a more integral part of UNU and thus the UN system – which strongly promotes diversity – the programmes have an opportunity to internationalise themselves further. While all programmes have appropriate global perspectives, having lecturers and board/studies committee members from developing countries with solid experience from developing country contexts would be a means of enhancing the poverty perspectives and approaches in the training content. This could further enhance their credibility. In this regard, partner institutions and former fellows and graduates could be a potential source of expertise. In the case of GTP, which has seen a steady aging of its corps of lecturers, engaging younger lecturers from developing countries could also serve to renew its lecturer pool.

**Recommendation 10: The programmes should make more effort to diversify its corps of lecturers and advisers to include professionals from developing countries.**

Short courses implemented in partner countries constitute an important part of the activities of GTP and FTP, while both LRT and GEST would like to develop this component further. The courses have served as a useful way to identify candidates for the six-month training courses.

The provision of short courses is, however, a crowded scene, with a number of different actors in different countries providing training in subjects related to fisheries, gender equality, land restoration, renewable energy, and the environment. It is therefore critical for the programmes to assess the extent to which their short courses can add value, promote sustainability and be competitive cost-wise. Demand-driven initiatives that cater to specific needs with strong ownership at country/sub-regional level are key. The programmes should aim for building the capacities of country-level institutions to conduct their own training.

**Recommendation 11: The programmes should undertake demand-driven short courses that are tailored to expressed needs and for which there is ownership at country level. The ultimate aim should be to contribute to sustainable capacity development structures at the country level.**

The findings indicate that fellows who have been granted scholarships for Masters or PhD programmes in Iceland have been particularly proficient in contributing to results at the country level. GTP and FTP should continue to offer this type of support, while LRT and GEST should start providing Master's scholarships. Tracer studies of former Master's and PhD graduates should be undertaken at regular intervals to monitor the effects of these programmes.

**Recommendation 12: All four programmes should offer post graduate studies in Iceland. Former graduates should be encompassed by the programmes' monitoring efforts. MFA should consider funding Master's and PhD components for all four programmes.**

While GTP, FTP, and LRT have made significant efforts to improve gender parity and introduce gender perspectives into the programmes, there is scope for further improvement, in particular in the cases of GTP and FTP. By drawing on the expertise of GEST, the other programmes could examine how gender equality considerations could be further integrated into their training programmes, without necessarily adding additional lectures.

**Recommendation 13: The programmes should consider drawing on GEST as a resource to train staff and lecturers on gender equality analysis and integration of gender issues and perspectives into training components. GEST could furthermore offer similar services to other UNU institutes.**

All four programmes can strengthen poverty perspectives and approaches within the training content. The poverty context and its implications, such as the pressure it has on land, natural resources, social structures, and energy use need stronger attention. GTP could also include regulation in a developing country context into its modules. Likewise, given the mounting conflicts over environmental resources, in particular concerning access to and use of land, it would be beneficial to strengthen conflict sensitive perspectives in the three natural resource-related programmes GTP, FTP, and LRT.

**Recommendation 14:** The programmes should explore how they can further strengthen the poverty perspectives in their courses. This includes introducing conflict sensitive perspectives. Having representation from developing countries in their governing structures and recruiting lecturers from developing countries would be ways to address this.

### **6.5.6 UNU partnerships and aligning with UNU priorities**

In the event of a UNU institute being established in Iceland, the programmes would be drawn into the fold of the UNU family. This could lead to more and better synergies, mutual learning, and improved prospects of collaboration on ongoing and new initiatives. As mentioned in recommendation 13 above, GEST could potentially offer gender training and expertise to other UNU institutes.

While the programmes have contributed through their fellows to influencing a range of policies within the fellows' countries, none of the programmes are geared towards providing policy inputs at the global UN level. None of the programmes have the critical mass of research activities, nor the track record to undertake the high impact policy-oriented researched envisaged by the UNU Strategic Plan. Similarly, the programmes lack the communication and outreach capacity necessary for providing advice to a large and varied audience of international policy actors. Addressing these limitations would require additional staff and years to build up, and more importantly a different strategic orientation, away from the current core of capacity development provided in Iceland. On the other hand, it would be feasible for the programmes to focus on building research and training capacities in partner countries in a more systematic manner. This is furthermore a priority mentioned in the UNU Strategic Plan. Short courses and the five-month geothermal diploma course in El Salvador have to some extent already contributed in this direction.

### **6.5.7 Funding and Resource Mobilisation**

While the many years of core funding provided by Iceland has been critical to the success of the programmes, the long-term planning of the programmes have been hampered by the fact that the support has been short-term and sometimes uncertain from year to year. Moreover, the funding levels among the four programmes have been fixed in an unequal pattern as a result of the economic crisis of 2008. Given the relevance and results of the programmes, the improved Icelandic economy, and the government's commitment to increase ODA, the government should consider making good on its pledge to bring the funding of the younger programmes to the level of the older ones. Based on the calculations regarding the marginal cost of fellows, MFA will obtain the greatest value for its contribution if the annual cohort sizes consist of at least 20 fellows.

**Recommendation 15:** MFA should provide multi-year funding to the UNU programmes in Iceland. It should fund the programmes at a level that will assure a minimum annual intake of 20 fellows.

While GTP, FTP, and LRT have made significant efforts to improve gender parity and introduce gender perspectives into the programmes, there is scope for further improvement, in particular in the cases of GTP and FTP. By drawing on the expertise of GEST, the other programmes could examine how gender equality considerations could be further integrated into their training programmes, without necessarily adding additional lectures.

**Recommendation 16:** The programmes should be strategic and discerning in its resource mobilisation, so that conditions for funding do not compromise objectives and relevance to poverty reduction or lead the programme in a different direction. The programmes should prioritise larger grants, so as to reduce the proportion of transaction costs.