



International Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainability and Societal Change

under the auspices of UNESCO

Annual Report 2024

July 2025

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GRÓ • International Centre for Capacity Development,
Sustainability and Societal Change

Austurhöfn, 101 Reykjavík, Iceland

grocentre.is

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Drawing on Iceland's experience to advance sustainable development around the world

Over the last 45 years experts in geothermal energy, fisheries, land restoration and gender equality from more than 100 mostly low and middle-income countries have undertaken fellowships in Iceland to strengthen their professional capacity to better equip them to drive progress within their home countries. Drawing from Iceland's own history and experience, the GRÓ programmes are designed to share knowledge, foster capacity and empower professionals in partner countries to accelerate progress in sustainable development.

This report highlights the results and achievements of the four GRÓ training programmes, on Geothermal Energy, Fisheries, Land Restoration and Gender Equality, in 2024. It also outlines the key priorities that guided the work of GRÓ – International Centre for Capacity Development. Sustainability and Societal Change - that operates under the auspices of UNESCO.

Since their inception the GRÓ programmes have been an integral part of Iceland's international development cooperation efforts. Their roots go back to the late 1970s, when Iceland had only recently transitioned from being a recipient of development assistance to taking its first steps as a donor and a partner. Just over a century ago Iceland was one of Europe's poorest countries, mostly reliant on small-scale farming and fishing. Today Iceland ranks among the world's most prosperous nations, scoring consistently high in global indices that measure economic and social well-being and gender equality.

Iceland's transformation has been powered by a clear vision: to harness natural resources sustainably, build a strong knowledge-based economy and invest in people. From pioneering renewable energy and science-based fisheries management to ecosystem restoration and inclusive social policies, our journey offers valuable lessons in sustainable development.

The themes of the four GRÓ training programmes are not only within sectors where Iceland has long-standing and recognised expertise; those sectors are also among the very foundations upon which Iceland's development was built. It is therefore fitting that the professionals trained through these programmes have become catalysts for progress in their own countries.

GRÓ alumni around the world are a growing network of powerful agents of change and we are extremely proud of their achievements. Upon returning home many have assumed leadership roles in government agencies, academia, and civil society. Each day they carry out vital work that drives sustainable development forward across the globe as documented throughout this annual report.



Þorgerður Katrín Gunnarsdóttir
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland

Icelandic Summary – Samantekt á íslensku

GRÓ – Þekkingarmiðstöð þróunarsamvinnu er sjálfstæð miðstöð sem starfar undir merkjum UNESCO, Mennta-
vísinda- og menningarmálastofnunar Sameinuðu þjóðanna, og miðar að því að koma íslenskri sérfræðiþekkingu
á framfæri við þróunarlönd, einkum fátækustu ríkin. GRÓ-skólarnir fjórir (Jafnréttisskóli, Jarðhitaskóli,
Landgræðsluskóli og Sjávarútvegsskóli) hafa starfað um áratugaskeið og hafa frá upphafi verið ein af
meginstoðum alþjóðlegrar þróunarsamvinnu Íslands. Jarðhitaskólinn er hýstur hjá Íslenskum orkurannsóknum
(ÍSOR), Sjávarútvegsskólinn hjá Hafrannsóknastofnun, Landgræðsluskólinn hjá Landbúnaðarháskóla Íslands
og Jafnréttisskólinn hjá Háskóla Íslands. Í ársskýrslunni er gerð grein fyrir starfi GRÓ-skólanna fjögurra árið 2024
og öðru starfi á vegum GRÓ – Þekkingarmiðstöð þróunarsamvinnu, sem starfrækt er sem ráðuneytisstofnun
sem heyrir undir utanríkisráðuneytið.

Árið 2024 útskrifuðust 97¹ sérfræðingar úr þjálfunarnámi á vegum GRÓ – Þekkingarmiðstöðvar
þróunarsamvinnu og var kynjahlutfall nemendahópsins jafnt en 49% nemenda voru konur. Alls höfðu í lok ársins
1.767 sérfræðingar lokið 5-6 mánaða þjálfun á vegum GRÓ.

GRÓ skólarnir bjóða sérfræðingum sem vinna á umræddum fagsviðum hjá samstarfsstofnunum skólanna til 5-
6 mánaða þjálfunarnáms á Íslandi. Árið 2024 voru 33% nemenda frá lágtekjuríkjum (LDC) og 47% frá lægri
millitekjuríkjum (LMI), en GRÓ stefnir að því að a.m.k. 80% nemenda komi frá ríkjum sem tilheyra þeim
tekjuflokkum í takt við stefnu Íslands um þróunarsamvinnu. Þá var meira en helmingur nemenda frá Afríku, eða
55% sem einnig er samkvæmt áherslum sem settar eru fram í breytingakenningu GRÓ. Frá Asíu komu 27%
nemenda og 13% frá S-Ameríku, sem voru hinir stærstu hóparnir. Tíundi hver nemandi tilheyrði þróunarlandi
sem telst til smáeyríkja (SIDS). Nánari upplýsingar um lýðfræðilegar breytur nemendahópsins má finna á bls. 9.

GRÓ styrkir einnig útskrifaða nemendur til framhaldsnáms og nutu 30 slíkra styrkveitinga á árinu, 16 til
doktorsnáms og 14 til meistaranáms. Alls útskrifuðust sjö styrkþegar á árinu. Var þar um að ræða einn doktor frá
Tansaníu og fjóra meistara frá El Salvador, Keníu, Níkaragúa og Úganda á styrk frá Jarðhitaskólanum. Einnig
útskrifaðist einn doktor frá Nígeríu og einn meistari frá Jamaíku sem voru á styrk frá Sjávarútvegsskólanum. Í
árslok höfðu samtals 111 nemendur lokið meistaranámi með styrk frá GRÓ og 24 doktorsnámi frá því byrjað var
að veita styrki til framhaldsnáms.

GRÓ – þekkingarmiðstöð þróunarsamvinnu: lykiltölur í lok árs 2024



1.767

nemendur hafa
útskriftast frá GRÓ-
skólunum fjórum



111

hafa lokið
meistaranámi.



24

hafa lokið
doktorsnámi.



5.494

hafa lokið styttri
námskeiðum.

Ýmis stutt námskeið voru haldin á árinu. Jarðhitaskóli GRÓ stóð fyrir tveggja vikna námskeiði um
yfirborðsrannsóknir, boranir og auðlindastýringu í El Salvador, auk stutts yfirlitsnámskeiðs sem haldið var á
netinu fyrir starfsfólk orkumálaráðuneytis Bólívíu. Þá voru haldin tvö námskeið með samstarfsaðilum í Shanxi
héraði í Kína, nokkurra daga þjálfun fyrir tyrkneska sendinefnd á vegum Alþjóðabankans og að auki kenndi
Jarðhitaskólinn hluta af 3 mánaða diplómanámi sem LaGeo í El Salvador stóð fyrir og sem sérfræðingar í Suður-
og Mið- Ameríku sóttu. Jafnréttisskóli GRÓ stóð fyrir þremur námskeiðum, tveimur í Malaví um jafnréttismál og
loftslagsbreytingar í samstarfi við LUANAR háskóla og einu námskeiði í Úganda um jafnréttisfræðslu fyrir
ungmenni. Jafnframt hleypti Jafnréttisskólinn nýju netnámskeiði um karlmenn, drengi og karlmennsku af
stokkunum en þar er fjallað um mikilvægt hlutverk karla og drengja til að stuðla að auknu jafnrétti.

¹ Heildarfjöldi útskrifaðra var 97 þar sem einn nemandi frá árinu 2022 lauk lokaverkefni sínu árið 2024 og útskrifaðist, en 96 nemendur sóttu skólana á árinu.

Sjávarútvegsskólinn styrkti tíu fyrrum nemendur til að taka þátt í alþjóðlegri ráðstefnu auðlindahagfræðinga (IIFET) sem haldin var í Malasíu. Allir styrkþegarnir voru með erindi um ýmsa þætti sjávarútvegs og byggðu sum þeirra á rannsóknaverkefnum þeirra á Íslandi.

Í febrúar héldu GRÓ, sendiráð Íslands í Úganda og svæðisskrifstofa UNESCO í Kampala viðburð fyrir útskrifaða nemendur í landinu þar sem um 60 nemendur GRÓ skólanna fjögurra komu saman. Nemendur þar vinna nú að stofnun samtaka þar sem útskrifaðir nemendur skólanna geta starfað saman við að miðla af kunnáttu sinni eða afla nýrrar þekkingar. Einnig er tilgangur slíkra félaga að tengja nemendur við sendiráð Íslands á vettvangi og skapa samstarfstækifæri með UNESCO.

Að auki voru haldnir viðburðir fyrir útskrifaða nemendur Jafnréttisskólans á Indlandi og nemendur Sjávarútvegsskólans frá M-Ameríkuríkjum. Þá var blásið til fundar útskrifaðra nemenda Jarðhitaskólans í Kína.



Dr Godfrey Kubiriza, fyrrverandi nemandi Sjávarútvegsskóla GRÓ leiddi skipulagningu viðburðarins í Úganda af hálfu nemenda og bauð þátttakendur velkomna. Alls sóttu um 60 útskrifaðir nemendur fundinn sem haldinn var á svæðisskrifstofu UNESCO í Kampala.

Samstarf við UNESCO

Á árinu hélt GRÓ áfram að efla samstarfið við UNESCO með margvíslegum hætti. Í febrúar var haldinn viðburður fyrir útskrifaða nemendur skólanna fjögurra í Úganda í samstarfi við svæðisskrifstofu UNESCO í landinu, eins og áður sagði. Þá hóf Chinenye Anekwe, fyrrum nemandi Jafnréttisskóla GRÓ frá Nígeríu, störf hjá svæðisskrifstofu UNESCO í Nýju Delhi á Indlandi á árinu. GRÓ fjármagnaði stöðu hennar þar í gegnum samstarf við Sjálfboðaliða Sameinuðu þjóðanna (UNV).

Landgræðsluskóli GRÓ hélt áfram samstarfi við verkefnið Maðurinn og lífhvolfið (e. *Man and the Biosphere - MAB*), en árlega er ungum sérfræðingum sem starfa á svæðum í Afríku sem tilheyra MAB netverki UNESCO boðið að taka þátt í sex mánaða þjálfunarnáminu á Íslandi. Að þessu sinni voru MAB nemendurnir frá Bia svæðinu í Gana og Skógræktarstofnun Nígeríu.

Framkvæmdastjóri UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay, heimsótti Ísland í október. Hún hitti nemendur Jarðhitaskóla GRÓ og kynnti sér starf miðstöðvarinnar. Einnig fundaði GRÓ á árinu með Gabrielu Ramos, yfirmanni félags- og hugvísindasviðs UNESCO, sem og Vidar Helgesen, yfirmanni alþjóðahaffræðinefndarinnar (IOC), og Peter Thomson, sérlegum erindreka í málefnum hafsins sem skipaður er af framkvæmdastjóra Sameinuðu þjóðanna.

GRÓ kynnti starfsemi sína á árlegum fundi landsnefnda og fastanefnda allra Norðurlandanna gagnvart UNESCO, sem fram fór í Hveragerði í september.

Zazie Schäfer, yfirmaður þverlægra málefna hjá UNESCO og stjórnarkona í stjórn GRÓ, heimsótti Ísland í febrúar til að sækja stjórnarfund og funda með forstöðumönnum skólanna. Í lok október tók Lidia Brito, aðstoðarframkvæmdastjóri UNESCO og yfirmaður náttúruvísindasviðs stofnunarinnar, við sæti UNESCO í stjórninni. Antonio Abreu, sviðsstjóri vistfræði og jarðvísinda innan UNESCO, sótti Ísland heim í nóvember til að kynna sér starfið og funda með stjórn og forstöðumönnum, auk þess að flytja ávarp við útskrift Jarðhitaskólans.



Stjórn GRÓ ásamt forstöðumönnum skólanna fjögurra og starfsfólki og nemum Sjávarútvegsskóla GRÓ í febrúar.

Í maí sótti forstöðumaður GRÓ, Nína Björk Jónsdóttir, fund stofnana á sviði náttúruvísinda, sem eins og GRÓ, starfa undir merkjum UNESCO sem svokallaðar Category 2 stofnanir. Alls eru 129 slíkar stofnanir starfandi um heim allan. Á fundinum, sem haldinn var í Malasíu, var starf GRÓ skólanna kynnt og lögð áhersla á hvernig starfið stuðlar að því að draga úr losun gróðurhúsalofttegunda og standa vörð um líffræðilegan fjölbreytileika.

Þá tók dr. Warsha Singh, sem stýrir fiskveiðistjórnunarlínu Sjávarútvegsskóla GRÓ, þátt í pallborði í höfuðstöðvum UNESCO í París í tilefni af alþjóðlegum degi kvenna í alþjóðasamstarfi. Þema fundarins var mikilvægi þess að jafna stöðu kynjanna til að efla viðbragð við neyðarástandi í loftslagsmálum.

Helstu verkefni GRÓ — Þekkingarmiðstöðvar þróunarsamvinnu

Viðamikil óháð úttekt fyrirtækisins GOPA á starfi GRÓ á árunum 2018-2023, sem utanríkisráðuneytið lét gera árið 2024, staðfesti góðan árangur af starfinu. Helsta niðurstaða úttektarinnar var að skólarnir hafi með skilvirkum hætti stutt við ungt fagfólk og samstarfsstofnanir í 76 ríkjum á tímabilinu og þannig náð tilætluðum árangri í að gera útskrifuðum nemendum kleift að vinna að heimsmarkmiðum Sameinuðu þjóðanna. Þá hafi þjálfun sem nemendur hlutu skapað grundvöll fyrir þá til að tileinka sér nýja þekkingu, hæfni og aðferðir.

Í byrjun árs endurnýjaði GRÓ þjónustusamninga við hýsistofnanir skólanna fjögurra, Hafrannsóknastofnun, Háskóla Íslands, ÍSOR og Landbúnaðarháskólann. Dr. Guðni Axelsson sem gegnt hefur stöðu forstöðumanns Jarðhitaskóla GRÓ frá árinu 2020 lét af störfum um mitt árið og tók Bjarni Richter við keflinu.

Helstu verkefnin sem GRÓ vann að á árinu 2024 voru stefnumótun um hvernig efla megi stuðning við nemendur eftir útskrift og hvetja útskrifaða GRÓ nemendur til stofnunar samtaka í heimalöndum sínum þar sem þau geta unnið saman að því að miðla þekkingu sinni og afla sér nýrrar þekkingar, auk þess að tengja nemendur við íslensk sendiráð og skrifstofur UNESCO. Einnig var unnið að því að samræma hvernig staðið er að styrkveitingum GRÓ til framhaldsnáms fyrir útskrifaða nemendur, samræma spurningalista og árangursmælingar skólanna og fleira.

About GRÓ

The GRÓ International Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Societal Change was established on January 1st 2020 and operates under the auspices of UNESCO as a Category 2 Centre based in Iceland. It is the first multi-disciplinary Category 2 Centre at UNESCO. The Director General of GRÓ in 2024 was Ms Nína Björk Jónsdóttir.

Four training programmes are operated by GRÓ:

- **GRÓ Geothermal Training Programme (GRÓ GTP)**, established in 1978 and hosted at Iceland Geosurvey (ÍSOR), works on increasing the use of renewable geothermal resources. Mr. Bjarni Richter took over the position of director of the GRÓ GTP in July, following the retirement of Dr Guðni Axelsson, who had served as director since 1 January 2020.
- **GRÓ Fisheries Training Programme (GRÓ FTP)**, established in 1997 and hosted at the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute, works on the protection and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources. The director of GRÓ FTP in 2024 was Mr Þór Ásgeirsson.
- **GRÓ Land Restoration Training Programme (GRÓ LRT)**, established in 2007 and hosted by the Agricultural University of Iceland, works on ecosystem restoration and sustainable use of land. The director of GRÓ LRT in 2024 was Dr Sjöfn Vilhelmsdóttir.
- **GRÓ Gender Studies and Training Programme (GRÓ GEST)**, hosted by the University of Iceland, established in 2009 works towards advancing gender equality and social justice. The director of GRÓ GEST in 2024 was Dr Irma Erlingsdóttir.

The GRÓ Centre operates under its own legal identity and is guided and overseen by a Governing Board, appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland, and set up as a unit within the Ministry. Regulation nr. 1260, adopted on 18 December 2019 applies to the operations of GRÓ – Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainability and Societal Change. The Centre operates based on Act No 121/2008 on Iceland's International Development Cooperation, Act no. 115/2011 on the Government Offices of Iceland, the Public Finance Act No 123/2015, Iceland's policy for international development cooperation, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and international obligations.

The four training programmes have been an important part of Iceland's development cooperation portfolio for decades. In addition to the core funding provided by the government of Iceland, external funding is obtained, mainly through counterpart contributions from partner institutions, grants and by participation in international projects.

This report covers the activities of GRÓ in 2024.



Annual Report 2024

Main activities of GRÓ 2024

Year in Review 2024

The year 2024 was a busy year for GRÓ International Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainability and Societal Change and the four GRÓ training programmes on geothermal energy, sustainable fisheries, land restoration and gender equality.

In total, 97² fellows graduated from the four GRÓ training programmes in 2024, bringing the total number of GRÓ alumni to 1767. Two PhD and five MSc GRÓ scholarships recipients graduated in 2024. Various short courses were held in the year and a new online course launched. Alumni events were organised, including a joint GRÓ alumni event in Uganda held in cooperation with UNESCO and alumni were supported to attend international conferences in their fields.

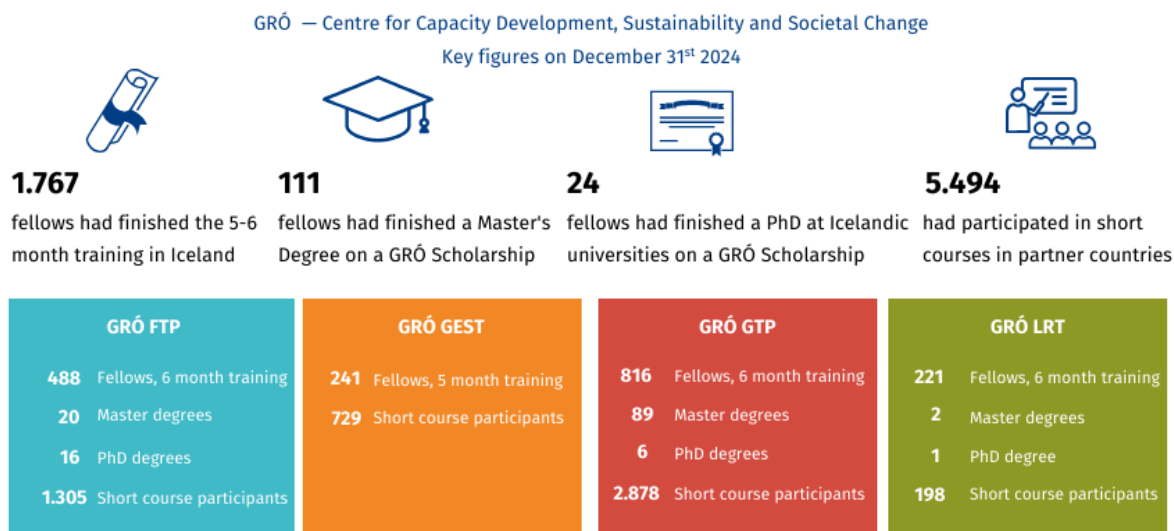


GRÓ GTP held a short course in El Salvador at the Ahuachepan geothermal power plant

The main priorities of the GRÓ centre in 2024 included a renewal of the service agreements with the four Host Institutions of the training programmes for the period 2024-2026, based on a new cost model. Other key initiatives included finalising a GRÓ alumni strategy and developing a GRÓ Postgraduate Scholarship Programme, as well as working on finalising the joint monitoring and evaluation of the four programmes. GRÓ also worked on strengthening the cooperation with UNESCO, as GRÓ operates under the auspices of UNESCO.

The consultancy firm GOPA completed in 2024 a comprehensive external evaluation, commissioned by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, of GRÓ and the work of the four training programmes in the period 2018-2023. The evaluation concluded that the results achieved by the GRÓ Programmes are impressive, highly successful in terms of the delivery of knowledge transfer, capacity and skills enhancement benefiting individuals and organizations in lower- and middle-income developing countries.

The main activities of the GRÓ centre and the four training programmes in 2024 are provided below. Further details of the activities of each GRÓ training programme are described in Annex 1 (p.19–40) of this report. The main results of the work in 2024 are also set forth in Annex 3 (p.49-59).



² The total number of fellows trained in 2024 was 96. One of the GRÓ FTP graduates in 2024 began the program in 2022 and completed the final project in 2024.

Postgraduate 5–6-month training



GRÓ GTP fellows learning about the use of geothermal for horticulture.

The postgraduate 5–6-month training is the core activity of the GRÓ programmes. Experts working for GRÓ partner institutions in the four thematic fields of geothermal energy, sustainable fisheries, land restoration and gender equality are invited to come to Iceland to advance their knowledge and expertise at the GRÓ training programmes.

In 2024, 97 fellows from 35 countries graduated from the GRÓ 5–6-month postgraduate training. The cohorts were all similar in size, with 23–26 fellows each. GRÓ's Theory of Change specifies that GRÓ particularly aims for gender balance within each cohort and to work with countries that are classified as Least Developed Countries (LDC's), countries in Africa and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Gender balance was achieved in 2024, with 49% of fellows being women. Of the fellows 33% hailed from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and 47% were from Low-Middle Income countries, in line with GRÓ's aims to have at least 80% of the fellows from countries belonging to those income categories. One in ten fellows was from a SIDS country. Looking at geographical distribution, 55% were from Africa and 27% from Asia, which were the two biggest regional groups.

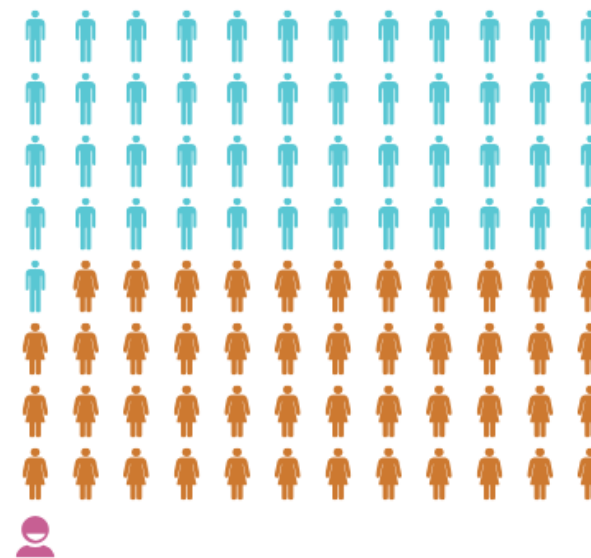
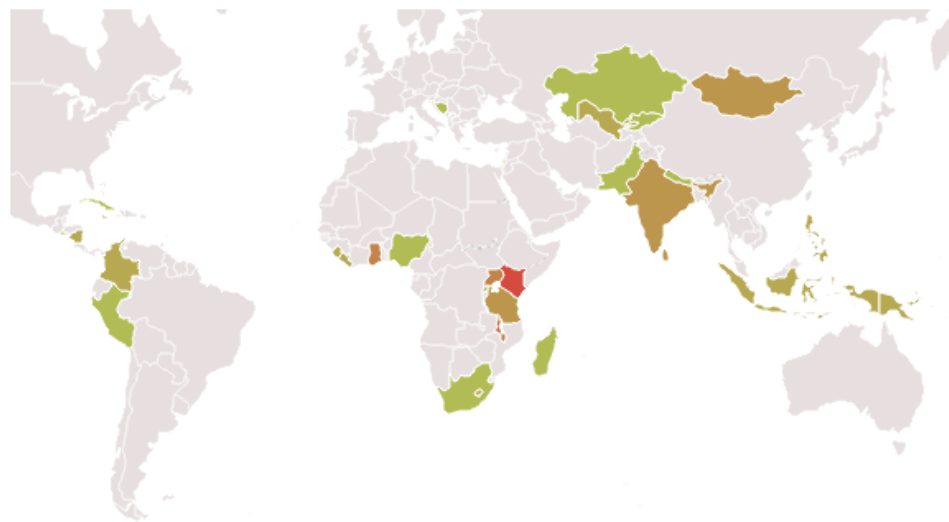
Further breakdown of demographic attributes of the GRÓ 2024 cohort can be found on page 9



GRÓ GEST fellows in front of the Presidential residence in Iceland in May 2024 after their meeting with the President of Iceland, Dr Guðni Th. Jóhannesson and first Lady Eliza Reid

GRÓ fellows 2024

	Number of fellows	Female	Male	Other	LDC	LMI	UMI	HI	Africa	Asia	Latin America	Other
GRÓ Fisheries Training Programme	25 (25%)	11 (44%)	14 (56%)	0 (0%)	10 (40%)	9 (36%)	5 (20%)	1 (4%)	11 (44%)	5 (20%)	5 (20%)	4 (16%)
GRÓ Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme	23 (24%)	13 (57%)	9 (39%)	1 (4%)	9 (39%)	10 (44%)	4 (17%)	0 (0%)	15 (65%)	7 (30%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)
GRÓ Geothermal Training Programme	26 (27%)	14 (54%)	12 (46%)	0 (0%)	3 (11%)	14 (54%)	9 (35%)	0 (0%)	10 (38%)	9 (35%)	7 (27%)	0 (0%)
GRÓ Land Restoration Training Programme	23 (24%)	9 (39%)	14 (61%)	0 (0%)	10 (43%)	13 (57%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	17 (74%)	6 (26%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
In total:	97 (100%)	47 (49%)	49 (50%)	1 (1%)	32 (33%)	46 (47%)	18 (19%)	1 (1%)	53 (55%)	27 (28%)	12 (12%)	5 (5%)



Postgraduate Scholarships

Total GRÓ Scholarship Graduations			
	Male	Female	In total
Master's degrees			
FTP	10	10	20
GTP	67	22	89
LRT	1	1	2
In total:			111
PhDs			
FTP	11	6	17
GTP	3	3	6
LRT		1	1
In total:			24
* as of 31.12.2024			

All four GRÓ training programmes provide scholarships for postgraduate studies in Iceland to alumni who have graduated from the 5–6 month training. The first Master's scholarship was awarded in 1999 and the first doctoral scholarship in 2005. At the end of 2024 a total of 24 alumni had finished a PhD and 111 a Master's degree with GRÓ's support.

In 2024, 30 alumni were studying on a GRÓ scholarship. Of the scholarship recipients 16 were studying for a PhD, and 14 for a Master's degree. Seven scholarship recipients graduated in 2024, two with a PhD and five with a Master's.

Five of the graduates were alumni of the GRÓ Geothermal Training Programme. Dr. Makoye Mabula Didas from Tanzania graduated with a PhD in Geophysics from the University



Leanne Alicia Morris MSc in Fish biology

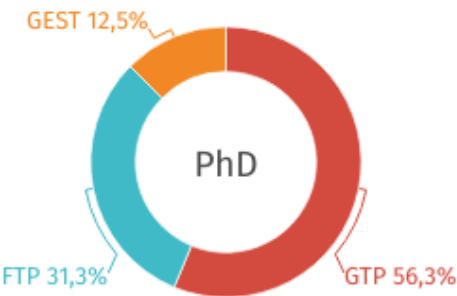
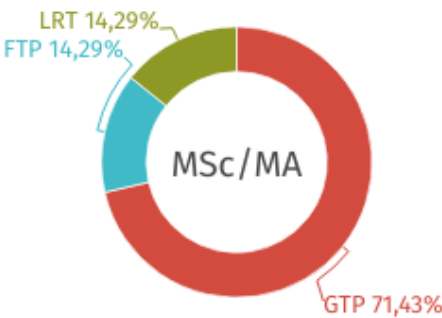
of Iceland and four GRÓ GTP alumni graduated with Master's Degree. These were Ms. Mayra Raquel Hernández Cabrera from El Salvador, Mr. Fred Ssemuyaba from Uganda, Mr. Daniel Wanga Odongo from Kenya, and Ms. Agata Rostran Largaespada from Nicaragua.

Two graduates were alumni of the GRÓ Fisheries Training Programme. Dr. Olanrewaju Femi Olagunju from Nigeria graduated with a PhD and Ms. Leanne Alicia Morris, from Jamaica graduated with a MSc in in Fish biology from the Hólar University.

Work continued on the development of a GRÓ Postgraduate scholarship programme following the external evaluation of GRÓ's Master's and doctoral scholarship programme that was carried out in 2023.

GRÓ Scholarship Recipients 2024

	Total Scholarship Recipients	Female	Male	LDC	LMI	UMI	Africa	Asia	Latin America
MSc/MA	14	7	7	5	4	5	7	1	5
PhD	16	11	5	8	6	2	12	3	1
In Total	30	18	12	13	10	7	19	4	6



Short courses and online training

The four GRÓ training programmes held several short courses in 2024 that were attended by 417 participants. Close to 3200 took GRÓ LRT online courses and another 3200 new participants signed up for GRÓ GEST courses available online in the year. GRÓ GEST also released a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) for the edX platform on Men, Boys and Masculinities.

The GRÓ Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme implemented six trainings. A course on Teaching Gender to Youth was conducted in three phases in Uganda. Two short courses were held on Gender and Climate Change in Malawi. GRÓ GEST also contributed to the launch of Men Engage Africa Training Institute (MATI) in 2024. The initiative aimed at advancing gender equality in Africa through innovative leadership development.



Participants and instructors at the Gender & Climate Change training at Chikwawa district in Malawi, supported by GRÓ GEST.

The GRÓ Geothermal Training Programme held a two-week course on Geothermal Exploration, Drilling and Management in El Salvador and two courses in Shanxi Province in China. The first course was on exploration, evaluation and management of geothermal resources and the second one on utilisation of geothermal resources. A Geothermal Study Tour, organized for the World Bank for specialists in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Turkey working on greenhouse development, took place in Iceland. An online training course was also held for the Ministry of Energy in Bolivia.

The GRÓ Land Restoration Training Programme organized a two-day short course on community-based forest landscape restoration in Sierra Leone in 2024, in collaboration with the Icelandic Red Cross.

GRÓ Alumni activity

The GRÓ Centre has in 2024 continued work on the finalisation of a GRÓ alumni strategy. The strategy aims to strengthen GRÓ's support of alumni after their return home and to create opportunities for the alumni to share their knowledge and to create new knowledge that benefits alumni in their work in their home countries. The strategy also aims to better connect the alumni to Icelandic embassies in the partner countries and with UNESCO. The joint GRÓ Alumni Network is an addition to the already existing four thematic GRÓ alumni networks of each training programme. In 2024, GRÓ finalised guidelines for alumni to create joint GRÓ alumni networks.

GRÓ, the UNESCO Project Office in Kampala and the Icelandic Embassy in Uganda held a joint GRÓ alumni event at the UNESCO office in Kampala in February, in cooperation with the alumni, following a previous event held in 2023. About sixty alumni attended the event. The alumni presented their current work in Uganda and how the training has helped them advance the UNSDGs through their work. UNESCO also gave a presentation.



Alumni from the four GRÓ training programmes at a joint alumni event at the UNESCO country office in Kampala in February.

Alumni in Uganda are working on developing the first joint GRÓ alumni country chapter. Uganda is one of the biggest partner countries of GRÓ. All four GRÓ training programmes have been active in the country for many decades, training almost 130 Ugandan experts.

Other alumni events organised for or by alumni of the individual programmes included a GRÓ GEST alumni meeting in New Delhi, hosted by the Embassy of Iceland in India, where GRÓ GEST alumni from Sri Lanka, Nepal and India came together to discuss their work on gender equality and social justice and to share ideas. Also, a GRÓ FTP Alumni meeting was held for alumni from countries in Central America and the Caribbean.

Ten GRÓ FTP alumni presented major research projects at the IIFET 2024 in Malaysia in July. This was the 6th time GRÓ FTP sponsors alumni to participate in the biennial conference of the International Institute of Fisheries Economics and Trade (IIFET). The theme of the conference was on Aquatic Food Systems in the Blue Economy.

Ms. Chinenye Anekwe, GRÓ GEST alumna from Nigeria, was deployed in 2024 to work for a 12-month period at the UNESCO New Delhi Office in India, as a GRÓ GEST- UNESCO Gender Equality Specialist. Ms. Anekwe was selected following an advertisement among GRÓ GEST alumni. The position is fully funded by GRÓ through an agreement GRÓ and the United Nations Volunteer Programme concluded in 2023. Ms. Anekwe works on the inclusion of gender equality considerations into social inclusion and transformation policies across South Asian countries.



Chinenye Anekwe, UN Volunteer and GRÓ GEST alumna, with Kristín Anna Tryggvadóttir, Deputy at the Embassy of Iceland in India and Aishwarya Sehgal GRÓ GEST alumna and Programme officer at UNESCO New Delhi Office.

Cooperation with UNESCO

GRÓ works under the auspices of UNESCO as a Category 2 Centre. GRÓ has in 2024 continued to work on strengthening the cooperation with the organisation. The following are some of the main projects GRÓ worked on with UNESCO entities in 2024:



GRÓ LRT MAB 2024 fellows, Uhunwa Precious Igbo-Osagie from Nigeria and Dominic Awukuvie from Ghana.

GRÓ and UNESCO continued their partnership to reinforce capacity for ecosystem restoration in Africa under the Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB). Two fellows from UNESCO Biospheres attended the GRÓ Land Restoration Training Programme in 2024. The GRÓ LRT MAB fellows were from the Bia Biosphere Reserve in Ghana and the Forest Research Institute of Nigeria.

GRÓ has continued to focus on strengthening the cooperation with UNESCO's Regional Offices for Eastern Africa, as 30% of the alumni come from the area. GRÓ, the UNESCO Project Office in Kampala and the Icelandic Embassy in Uganda held a joint GRÓ alumni event at the UNESCO office in Kampala in February 2024.

The GRÓ Centre participated in an International Symposium of Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the auspices of UNESCO in the field of Natural Sciences in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia in May. The Director General of GRÓ, Ms. Nína Björk Jónsdóttir, took part in a panel discussion on addressing the planetary crisis: climate change and biodiversity, where she presented the work of the four training programmes, with a particular focus on the geothermal, land restoration and fisheries training programmes, that work in the field of natural sciences.

Dr Warsha Singh, head of the GRÓ FTP line of specialisation on Aquatic Resource Assessment and Monitoring took part in an event organised on UNESCO International Day of Women in Multilateralism 2024. The theme of the event was: *Gender Equality to solve the Climate Emergency*.

As mentioned in the chapter above, GRÓ GEST alumna, Ms. Chinenye Anekwe from Nigeria, was deployed in August 2024 to start her 12 month United Nations Volunteers (UNV) position as a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Specialist at the UNESCO New Delhi Office. The position is fully funded by GRÓ.



UNESCO Director General, Ms. Audrey Azoulay, with GRÓ Geothermal Training Programme fellows.

GRÓ received various high-level visits in 2024. The UNESCO Director General, Ms. Audrey Azoulay, visited GRÓ and met the GRÓ Geothermal Training Programme fellows in October.



Halla Tómasdóttir, President of Iceland, at the meeting of Nordic delegations and National Commissions to UNESCO, with the Icelandic Permanent delegation to UNESCO, the Chair of the Icelandic National Commission and GRÓ representatives

Other distinguished visitors in 2024 included Ms. Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO, Mr. Vidar Helgesen, Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, Ms. Zazie Schäfer, Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning and GRÓ Governing Board member, and Mr. Antonio Abreu, Director of the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences. Also, GRÓ met with Mr. Peter Thomsen, United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean.

In September, GRÓ gave a presentation about its work to the Permanent Delegations and National Commissions of the Nordic Countries to UNESCO. Ms. Halla Tómasdóttir, President of Iceland, who took office on 1 August 2024, closed the Nordic UNESCO meeting, so the presentation was also an opportunity to discuss the work of GRÓ with the newly elected president of Iceland.

GOPA External evaluation

In 2024 the consultancy firm GOPA conducted a comprehensive external [evaluation of the work of GRÓ in 2018-2023](#), commissioned by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The evaluation concluded that the GRÓ Programmes have achieved impressive outcomes, particularly in delivering knowledge transfer and enhancing capacity and skills for individuals and organizations in lower- and middle-income countries. The evaluation set forth 37 recommendations that the GRÓ centre and the four programmes have analysed and will implement, where appropriate, based on the management response.

The findings confirm that the GRÓ programmes are highly relevant and fully aligned with Iceland's international development cooperation policies and strategic priorities. They complement the wider development efforts of Iceland undertaken at the international level and in partner countries. Additionally, the GRÓ programmes contribute meaningfully to advancing Iceland's cross-cutting priorities in gender equality, human rights and the environment.

The evaluation reports that the direct results of the GRÓ programmes establish a strong basis to promote behavioural change among individuals (direct beneficiaries of the training) and their home organizations. This is achieved via GRÓ alumni and training beneficiaries applying the new learning, skills, and tools obtained via the GRÓ programmes to advance local development change. Feedback obtained from the beneficiaries, reported in the evaluation, strongly suggests that the programmes, chiefly via the GRÓ alumni, but also training and capacity development partnerships with organisations in the partner countries, have delivered concrete changes within the countries to achieve development change and real impact.

Theory of Change for GRÓ

In 2024, GRÓ continued work to finalise the last outstanding issues so the results framework adopted in 2023 can be fully implemented. Following the publication of the GOPA External evaluation report in 2024, it was possible to establish the baseline for indicators where comparable data was lacking. GRÓ also worked on coordinating questionnaires for fellows and partner institutions so that answers can be compared across the four programmes. GRÓ started using coordinated questionnaires in 2025.

Information on the results of the work of GRÓ in 2024 is inserted into the results framework, as seen in Annex 3 of this report: GRÓ Results Framework 2023-2027. As findings from coordinated questionnaires are not available for the year 2024, not all indicators are filled in.

The GRÓ results framework is an important tool to measure results across the four GRÓ training programmes. Collecting such information and monitoring the quality and satisfaction of GRÓ fellows and partner institutions in a coordinated way, will enable GRÓ to better monitor and assess the results of the work, which is important for guiding and enhancing the work of GRÓ for the future.

Website and Branding

Numerous presentations were given on the work of GRÓ to different audiences in 2024, including to high level visitors from UNESCO and to other Category 2 Centres working under the auspices of UNESCO (see chapter on UNESCO), as well as civil society actors in Iceland.

In September a delegation from Mongolia visited Iceland, as a part of a high-level sustainable finance and business innovation exchange organised by the Nordic House in Mongolia. The visit was partially funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers' Nordic Embassy Cooperation.



Delegation from Mongolia visited Iceland in September. In 2024, Mongolian GRÓ Alumni were 54 in total (37 from GRÓ LRT, 16 from GRÓ GTP and 1 from GRÓ GEST). Mr. Purevsuren Dorj, Head of the Renewable Energy Division of the National Energy Centre of Mongolia, GRÓ GTP Alumni and MSc Scholarship recipient, was a part of the delegation, here pictured in the centre.

The work of GRÓ and the Annual Report of GRÓ for the year 2023 was presented to the Foreign Committee of the Icelandic Parliament Alþingi in September and to the Icelandic Development Cooperation Committee in October.

The Director General had several meetings with ambassadors accredited to Iceland to discuss GRÓ and the work of the four training programmes. At the meetings, information was provided on the GRÓ centre and the four training programmes, with a particular focus on the cooperation with the country in question or potential areas of cooperation. The GRÓ centre also met with the fellows of each GRÓ training programme shortly after their arrival to Iceland to tell them about GRÓ and the work of the other three training programmes, the cooperation with UNESCO and GRÓ's efforts to establish an overall GRÓ alumni network, in addition to the already established thematic networks of each programme.

The GRÓ website, www.grocentre.is provides a holistic overview of the work of GRÓ and the four training programmes, as well as their impact in GRÓ's partner countries. The website regularly publishes news items, mostly in English but sometimes also in Icelandic. In 2024, the total number of visits to the GRÓ website was 372,551 from 224,300 unique visitors from over 190 countries.

The GRÓ Governing Board and GRÓ Centre

The Director General of GRÓ and the Governing Board of GRÓ are appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Nína Björk Jónsdóttir is the Director General of GRÓ and Jón Karl Ólafsson is the Chairman of the board. Other board members in 2024 were: Ragnar Þorgeirsson, representative of the Ministry of Culture and Business Affairs, Sæunn Stefánsdóttir, representative of the Icelandic National Commission to UNESCO and Guðrún Margrét Guðmundsdóttir, representing the Development Cooperation Committee. Ms. Zazie Schäfer, Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning at UNESCO, was UNESCO's representative on the GRÓ Governing Board until November, when Dr Lidia Brito, Assistant Director General for Natural Sciences, was appointed to take over this role by the Director General of UNESCO.



GRÓ Governing Board in February 2024. From the left: Nína Björk Jónsdóttir, Sæunn Stefánsdóttir, Jón Karl Ólafsson, Guðrún Margrét Guðmundsdóttir, Zazie Schäfer and Ragnar Þorgeirsson.

The GRÓ Governing Board held four meetings in 2024, on the following dates: February 7th, May 6th, September 12th and November 13th. Among the biggest matters addressed by the board during the year were the service agreements with host institutions, the GRÓ Alumni Strategy, the external evaluation of GRÓ, the cooperation with UNESCO and more.

The board also met with the four GRÓ programme directors following the November meeting to discuss GRÓ's strategy and priorities, the work ahead, cooperation with UNESCO and other issues. Several meetings also took place with host institutions, particularly to discuss the new service agreements that took effect at the start of the year.

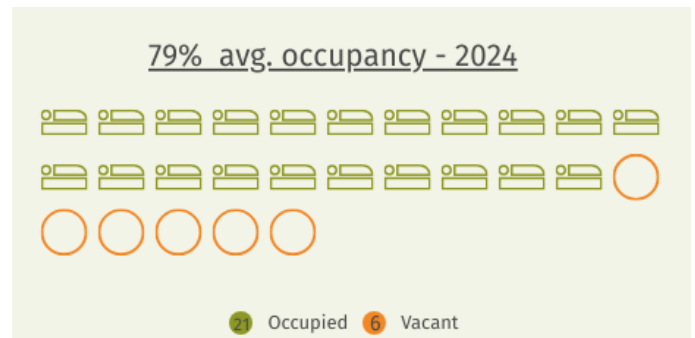
The GRÓ centre had two staff members in 2024, the Director General and an administrative officer in a 50% position. The staff of the training programmes are employed by the respective host institutions.

The GRÓ House

GRÓ continued to house fellows at the GRÓ House on Grensásvegur 14 in 2024. Three of the training programmes, use the house for their fellows, all except GRÓ GEST, whose fellows are housed in university accommodation at the University of Iceland. GRÓ has also continued to enjoy good cooperation with Icelandic Student Services (FS) that has helped GRÓ bridge the extra need for rooms for fellows over the summer months, which is when two of the training programmes have fellows staying in the country.

On average, GRÓ GTP fellows occupy the house for six months and GRÓ LRT and GRÓ FTP fellows for three months respectively. The GRÓ FTP still needs to rent additional housing for their fellows staying in the capital area, but some of their fellows stay in Akureyri, in the north of Iceland, during a large part of their training.

The house can at each time accommodate up to 27 fellows and there are three communal areas where fellows can cook together and socialize.



Swimming lessons for GRÓ fellows

The GRÓ centre continued to organise swimming lessons in 2024, for fellows attending the programmes. By offering joint lessons, fellows from different training programmes meet and learn to swim together and can at the same time enjoy the benefits of the warm geothermal water in the numerous outdoor pools in the capital area.

GRÓ fellows have mentioned Icelandic swimming pool culture and learning to swim as an empowering part of their stay in Iceland. Swimming plays a central role in everyday life in Iceland. In fact, the country's distinctive "swimming pool culture" has been nominated for UNESCO's list of [Intangible Cultural Heritage](#).



Bjarney Gunnarsdóttir swimming instructor with fellows from the GRÓ LRT and GRÓ GTP

Financing

Financial contributions to the GRÓ centre from the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs were 849,6 million ISK (6,2 million USD) in 2024. This amount financed the activities of the four GRÓ training programmes and the centre itself. The contribution to GRÓ amounted to 6,3% of the total International Development Cooperation budget of Iceland in 2024.

Work continued in 2024 to explore opportunities to maximise synergies and efficiencies in GRÓ's work. GRÓ continued to rent the guesthouse on Grensásvegur, which houses fellows from three of the training programmes, as detailed in a specific chapter of this report. Furthermore, the GRÓ centre covered considerable costs for the individual programmes, such as travel costs and laptops for fellows. The following table provides a breakdown of contributions to each of the four training programmes, as well as adjusted contributions that include costs borne by the GRÓ centre for each programme, as well as the costs of running the centre itself.

Total MFA contributions to GRÓ			
2024	Direct contributions (ISK)	Adjusted contributions (ISK)	
GRÓ GTP	216,660,180	253,887,646	*
GRÓ FTP	205,000,000	221,245,994	*
GRÓ LRT	167,462,654	183,525,970	*
GRÓ GEST	142,400,000	143,264,081	*
GRÓ Centre	118,055,503	47,654,646	
Total:	849,578,337	849,578,337	

**including costs covered by the GRÓ centre on behalf of the GRÓ programmes*

External Funding of GRÓ Training Programmes - as ratio of total funding -	
2024	%
GRÓ FTP	4%
GRÓ GEST	11%
GRÓ GTP	13%
GRÓ LRT	1%

GRÓ Total	6%

The GRÓ training programmes also obtain other sources of funding, as is illustrated to the left. These sources include funding from the Erasmus+ programme which provided funding for GRÓ GEST and GRÓ LRT activities. The GRÓ GTP's partner institutions in Kenya and the Philippines provided funding to allow additional staff from their institutions to attend the programme. External funding to the GRÓ FTP included contributions from the World Bank and Dalian Ocean University in China. Various other sources of funding include other direct funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland for additional development projects, from the Icelandic Research Fund and the Icelandic Red Cross. Host institutions of each programme also provide various forms of support.



Annex 1:

GRÓ training programmes

- Summary of main activities in 2024

GRÓ FTP Summary Annual Report 2024

GRÓ Fisheries Training Programme			
464	Fellows, 6 month training	1,305	Short course participants
19	MSc - completed	2	MSc - ongoing
16	PhD - completed	6	PhD - ongoing
*As of 31.12.2024			

1. Postgraduate Training Programme

The six-month training in Iceland is the core activity of GRÓ FTP with an intake of fellows in mid-November and a graduation in May the following year. The 25th cohort, consisting of 25 fellows³ (11 women and 14 men) from 15 countries, graduated on May 15th 2024. The fellows graduated from four lines of specialisation: five attended the Aquatic Resource Assessment and Monitoring (ARAM), 10 the Fisheries Policy and Management line (FPM), four the Quality Management of Fish Handling and Processing (QM), and five completed training in Sustainable Aquaculture (SAq). Over the years, the lines of specialisation on offer have evolved from seven in the early days of the programme to four today, reflecting the changing needs of GRÓ FTP’s partner countries.

On 17th of November the first fellows of the 26th cohort arrived in Iceland for the six-month training, which officially commenced on 18th of November with 23 fellows, 12 women and 11 men, from 14 countries. The training is composed of three main modules: a six-week introduction to fisheries development (including orientation), a seven-week specialisation module, and a 14-week individual research project. Each line is supervised by a senior scientist, or “head of line”, from one of GRÓ FTP’s partners institutes in Iceland, ensuring the highest standard of course content and supervision in the final research projects.

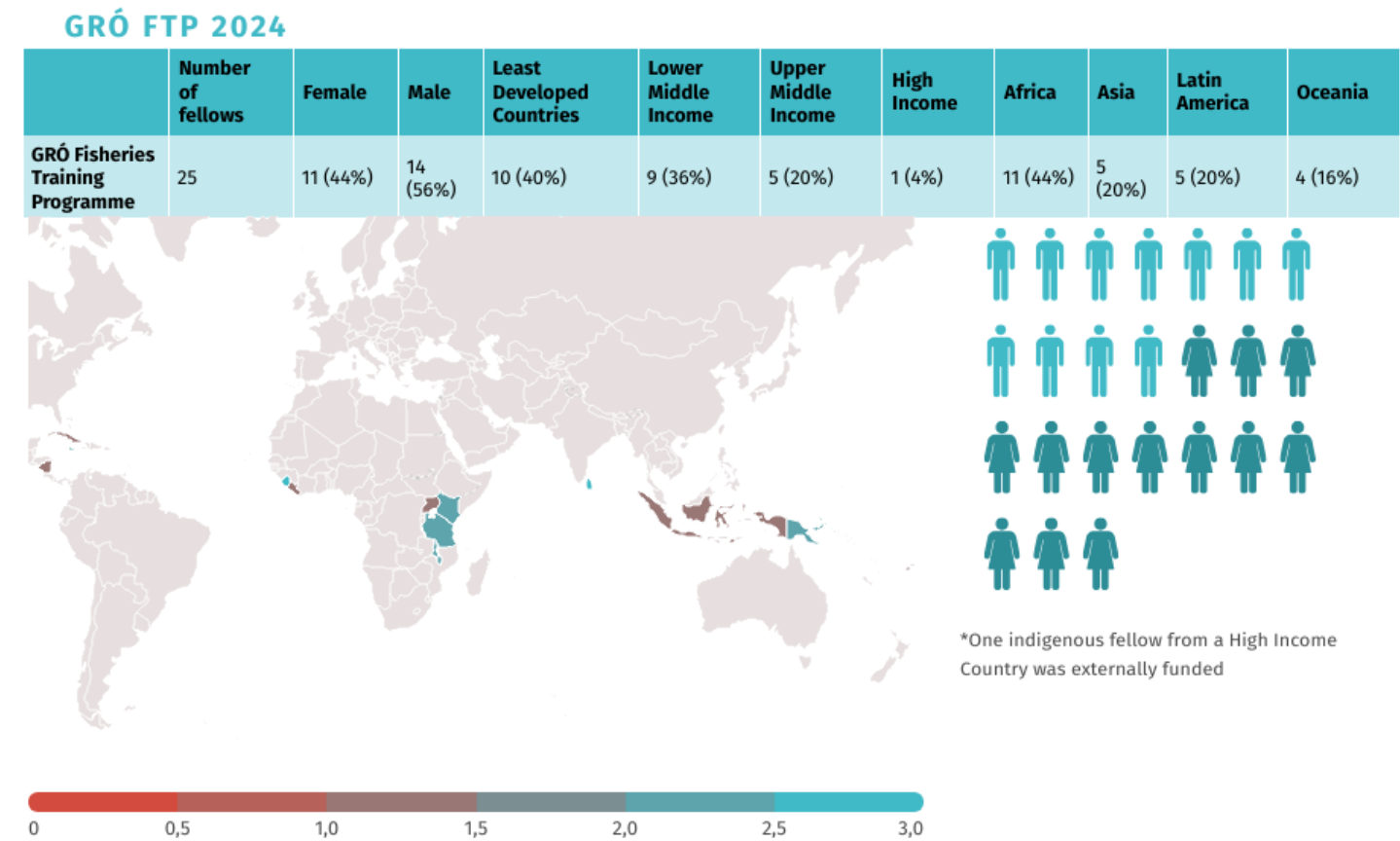


GRÓ FTP's 2023 cohort graduated in May 2024

³ Of the 25 fellows, one began the programme in 2022, but completed the final project and graduated in 2024.

In 2024, GRÓ FTP worked with Matis, which hosted the QM specialisation; the University of Akureyri, which hosted the FPM specialisation; and the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute, GRÓ FTP’s host institute, which ran the SAq and ARAM specialisations. Fellows benefit from GRÓ FTP’s partnerships with Icelandic academia, research institutions, and the fishing industry throughout their training.

With the graduation of the 25th cohort of GRÓ FTP in May 2024 a total of 488 fellows have successfully completed the training in Iceland. In recent years, increasing emphasis has been placed on fellows bringing their own data to the programme. Today, most fellows bring data from home to use in their final research project, ensuring that valuable information is returned home which impacts current and future fisheries policies in their respective countries and regions.



2. In-country and regional training

An integral part of GRÓ FTP activities over the years has been short courses and workshops, developed in cooperation with partner institutes abroad, former fellows, and Icelandic experts. These activities are undertaken upon request from partners and address special topics for targeted audiences and depend on available funding.

In 2024, no formal in-country training activities were conducted. However, remote support was provided to a study group from the regional workshop on Fisheries Assessment and Data Modelling held in Barbados in 2023.

3. Scholarships

GRÓ FTP has been offering scholarships towards Master’s and PhD studies since 2005. No new scholarships were awarded in 2024. GRÓ FTP provided ongoing scholarship support to two Master’s and five PhD students

in 2024. The support varied from full scholarships, as per agreements, to partial funding for recipients conducting research in their home countries. Two scholars completed their studies and graduated in 2024. Dr Olanrewaju Femi Olagunju, Nigerian PhD scholarship recipient, defended his thesis at the University of Iceland in December and Leanne Alicia Morris from Jamaica defended her MSc research at Hólar University in October.

4. Workshops and conferences

No workshops were conducted in 2024.

However, as part of its alumni initiative, GRÓ FTP supported 10 former fellows, three women and seven men, to attend the International Institute of Fisheries Economics and Trade (IIFED) conference in Penang, Malaysia, in July. The support went to fellows who were accepted to present in various side events. Several applications accepted by IIFED for poster sessions had to be declined support due to financial limitations.

5. Networking

In 2024, GRÓ FTP strengthened global partnerships through alumni events and targeted visits to six countries, reinforcing collaboration with key fisheries institutions, interviewing prospective candidates, and expanding support for former fellows.



Dr Olanrewaju Femi Olagunju with Professor Daði Már Kristófersson, his supervisor, a long-standing colleague of GRÓ FTP, and as of December 2024 Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs in Iceland.

VOICES OF ALUMNI

*"The conference provided a valuable platform for reconnecting with colleagues, some of whom I had not seen in over a decade. This opportunity to catch up and exchange ideas was immensely rewarding. Additionally, the **GRO FTP alumni session** was a highlight. We supported one another during various sessions and explored the potential for cross-continental collaborations. It was inspiring to see the high calibre of work being done by GRO/UNU-FTP alumni worldwide."*

- GRÓ FTP fellow -

In February, GRÓ FTP conducted visits to Tanzania and Uganda to interview candidates for the training programme and strengthen partnerships with fisheries institutions. In Tanzania, GRÓ FTP re-established ties with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries and the Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute (TAFIRI). In Uganda, discussions with Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) focused on aligning FTP support with regional fisheries priorities. The visit also included meetings with the Icelandic Embassy in Kampala and Makerere University where shortlisted candidates were interviewed.

In July, GRÓ FTP visited Indonesia, reaffirming collaboration with the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF). In addition to interviewing qualified candidates, discussions centred on strengthening the selection process and long-term capacity-building initiatives.

In October, GRÓ FTP engaged with regional fisheries organisations in the Caribbean and Central America. A visit to the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) in Belize City led to discussions on future collaboration, selection processes, and the potential for a regional needs assessment in 2025. At OSPESCA (Organisation for Fisheries and Aquaculture of Central America) headquarters in El Salvador, FTP met with new staff of the regional body and the new Director General of OSPESCA and explored a formal partnership and strategies for targeted recruitment. The mission finished in Cuba, where FTP re-established ties with the Ministry of Food (MINAL) and the Cuban Fisheries Research Institute (CIP), identifying priority candidates for upcoming training.



SAq fellows visit MOWI smolt station at Laxá 4 in the Faroe Islands

Partnership continued with FIRUM aquaculture research centre in the Faroe Islands with GRÓ FTP fellows from the Sustainable Aquaculture line visiting the islands for two weeks in February, accompanied by the head of line and the GRÓ FTP director. The Faroese government supports the GRÓ FTP through direct contributions to the Sustainable Aquaculture line of specialisation in the form of lectures, supervision, and travel to the Faroe Islands.

GRÓ FTP remains committed to fostering a strong, interconnected alumni network, ensuring that both current and former fellows continue to benefit from capacity-building efforts worldwide. GRÓ FTP continued to strengthen its alumni network through in-person and virtual events. In Uganda, an alumni gathering in Kampala organised by the GRÓ Centre brought together former fellows from all four GRÓ programmes. The GRÓ FTP director addressed the meeting and met with GRÓ FTP alumni gathering information on the impact of FTP training and future collaborations. Similar alumni events took place in El Salvador, Cuba, and Indonesia during the partnership visits, where alumni shared their research and professional advancement experiences.

Additionally, GRÓ FTP hosted an alumni event of ten former fellows during the previously mentioned IIFET conference in Penang, Malaysia, where fellows shared their research interests and professional activities. This conference support initiative, part of FTP's broader alumni support strategy, has been in place since 2012. A post-conference survey found these networking opportunities highly beneficial for professional growth and global collaboration.

6. Research and knowledge creation

VOICES OF ALUMNI

"Learning from leading experts: The program provided access to top experts in fisheries management and research, teaching us the latest techniques and approaches in the field."

- GRÓ FTP fellow -

All fellows undertake research-based final projects during the programme's research module. These projects are applied in nature, and most are based on data from the home countries of fellows. The results and main outcomes are presented in their final project reports which are published on, and disseminated through, the GRÓ FTP website, and through poster sessions at the graduation and other events in fellows' home countries.

Through a file storage system on the GRÓ FTP website all lecture material is available to current and former fellows. As an indication of dissemination, approximately 700 downloads were made from the file storage system from 17 May to 17 November when the six-month programme was not in operation.

Through the scholarship programme peer reviewed articles are published in international journals. In 2024, a total of 11 peer-reviewed articles were published in relation to the fellowship and scholarship programmes, six papers based on fellows' research projects were published in peer-reviewed journals, and five papers were published as part of the GRÓ FTP scholarship programme.

7. Innovative online content creation

GRÓ FTP did not create new training and education material for on-line courses in 2024. However, the website is used for content created for and during the six months training programme, which is accessible to current and former fellows. In 2024 a total of 4,820 downloads from the website of GRÓ FTP was recorded.

8. Staff of GRÓ FTP

In 2024 GRÓ FTP had 4.6 staff positions for the first 5 months, composed of Thor Asgeirsson, director, Julie Ingham, deputy director, Stefán Ulfarsson, specialist, David Tómas Davidsson, project manager, and Zaw Myo Win, operations manager. In June, Mr. David Tomas Davidsson left the team, and in July, Ms. Mary Frances Davidson returned from leave after serving as a consultant for UNESCO/IOC. In August, Ms. Davidson left her post at GRÓ FTP after 12 years of employment, which reduced the core staff to 3.6 positions for the remainder of the year. Current staff are all professionals with specific expertise and competencies. All members of the team are actively engaged in teaching, coaching, and supervising fellows during the six-month training and play an active role in the planning and implementation of in-country activities, in addition to administration and providing services to the fellows. The core staff plays a significant role in designing and implementing the 6-week introductory module.

GRÓ FTP is supported by a Studies Committee, comprising the heads of the specialisation lines and a representative from the Icelandic fishing industry. The main role of the studies committee is to ensure high-quality content coverage and supervision in the six-month programme and advise on the future development of GRÓ FTP.



GRÓ FTP's 2024-2025 cohort welcomed in November

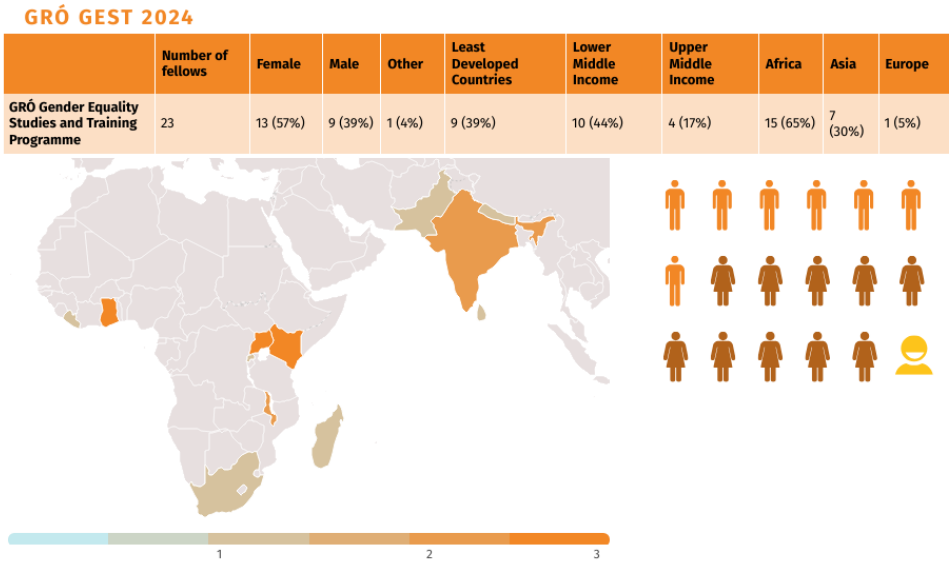
GRÓ GEST Summary Annual Report 2024



1. Postgraduate Training Programme

In 2024, the 16th cohort of GRÓ GEST fellows included 23 gender equality professionals from 14 countries in Africa, Asia and the West Balkans: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malawi, Nepal, Pakistan, Palestine, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Uganda, and for the first time Rwanda, Madagascar, and Liberia. Five fellows were supported through the Erasmus+ programme in collaboration with the University of Ghana, Makerere University in Uganda, the University of the Western Cape in South Africa, and the University of Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The cohort included gender equality practitioners from diverse backgrounds within government, activism, research, education, sciences, and more. The fellows engaged in a comprehensive curriculum covering gender equality issues such as climate change, gender-based violence, and migration, building the capacity to address these challenges through research and practical projects. Throughout the fellows’ stay in Iceland, they attended various guest lectures and visits to local organisations, as well as social gatherings and field visits in Iceland.

The 2024 cohort graduated in May, bringing the total number of GRÓ GEST alumni to 241. The Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Award was presented for outstanding final assignments in two categories: applied projects and research. Mihitha Basnayake’s *Towards Zero Period Poverty* received the award in the applied projects category. This initiative aims to create a low-cost, biodegradable sanitary napkin production facility in Sri Lanka, promoting menstrual health and sustainability. In the research category, Ramatu Issah’s *Intersecting Forces: Religion, Culture, and Gender Dynamics in Child Marriage* was recognized for its in-depth analysis of cultural and religious factors affecting child marriage in Ghana, offering practical recommendations to improve the lives of women and girls.



2. In-country and regional training

The year 2024 was an active year in terms of short courses, with six trainings implemented, reaching a total of 171 participants in partner countries.

From February until late November, Teaching Gender to Youth was implemented in three phases in Northern Uganda. The trainings were targeted at teachers in six primary and nursery schools in the Imvepi Refugee Settlement. The training courses are a result of a collaboration between GRÓ GEST and Pangea Educational Development, Uganda, where both the Director of Programmes, who led the implementation of the training, as well as one of the teacher trainers responsible for implementing the Teaching Gender to Youth trainings, are GEST alumnae. Both Pangea and GRÓ GEST consultants contributed to designing and implementing the trainings which were a great success, attended by 85 trainees.



GRÓ GEST fellows visited Alþingi, the Icelandic parliament.

Two short training courses on Gender and Climate Change were implemented in Mzimba and Chikwawa districts in Malawi in July and August 2024. The short courses were developed in collaboration with Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) which conducted the training with a team of experts from LUANAR and the Ministry for Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, including two GRÓ GEST alumnae. The objective of the trainings is to contribute to gender sensitive climate policies in Malawi through an increased awareness of the gender dimension of climate change. Participants in the trainings were 30 and 33 respectively, drawn from the gender and climate change sectors at district level in Malawi, including representatives from different sectors such as education, agriculture, health, fisheries, forestry, district council, civil society, private sector and the media.

In July, the GRÓ GEST programme contributed to the launch of the Men Engage Africa Training Institute (MATI) 2024. This initiative is aimed at advancing gender equality in Africa through innovative leadership development. It was a collaboration between Men Engage Africa Alliance, Sonke Gender Justice, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), and GRÓ GEST. This year's MATI involved 23 young gender equality professionals and was supported by GRÓ GEST's expertise in curriculum design and capacity-building and involved both an online and onsite training component. The online component ran throughout the month of July, followed by an in-person 5-day short course in Nairobi, Kenya. The online component utilised GRÓ GEST MOOCs on masculinities and conflict, which provided a critical resource for fostering the next generation of gender equality leaders. GRÓ GEST continues to play a pivotal role in empowering professionals to address global gender challenges, exemplifying its commitment to advancing equality through international partnerships and transformative education.

3. Scholarships

Two PhD scholarship recipients, a woman from Uganda and a man from Ethiopia, continue their studies and are well underway. Their PhD thesis defences are scheduled for 2025.

4. Workshops and Conferences

In March, GRÓ GEST organized a successful side event at the 68th session of the Commission on the Status of Women titled *Effective Climate Action: Community-Based Adaptation and Gender-Responsive Finance*. The event brought together experts and activists, including three GRÓ GEST alumnae: Stella Tereka, Kinita Shenoy, and Wevyn Muganda, to explore approaches to challenge structural gender inequality and injustice in the context of climate change. The discussion emphasized the need for integrating a gender lens in climate finance and decision-making, with a particular focus on amplifying the leadership of women and girls. Experts advocated for placing local communities and feminists at the heart of climate action, recognizing their expertise and leadership in crafting resilient, sustainable solutions. The event highlighted the urgency of advancing gender-responsive climate action and fostering collaboration to ensure inclusive and effective climate policies.

The GRÓ GEST programme was presented at a meeting of Nordic National Commissions and Permanent Delegations to UNESCO in Hveragerði, Iceland, in September.

GRÓ GEST participated at the RINGS (The International Research Association of Institutions of Advanced Gender Studies) conference in Delhi, India. The conference was on Mapping Technologies, Making Worlds: Facing and Interfacing Challenges. Dr Irma Erlingsdottir and Dr Giti Chandra represented GRÓ GEST at the conference where they both presented papers on gender and technology.

GRÓ GEST took part in a series of Roundtable discussions on DEIB organised by RIKK (Institute for Gender, Equality and Difference) and Women Tech Iceland. GRÓ GEST alumni attended the events that included Dr Thomas Brorsen Smidt and Dr Giti Chandra, GRÓ GEST faculty, and GRÓ GEST alumni and fellows Kehinde Kayode and Elizabeth Mang'eni, as speakers.

5. Networking

The GRÓ GEST family now consists of 241 alumni from 38 countries. The GRÓ GEST team seeks to engage with GEST alumni during visits to partner countries. This year, the GRÓ GEST team visited India and Kosovo. The alumni gathering in New Delhi organised by GRÓ GEST and hosted by the Embassy of Iceland in Delhi, brought together alumni from Sri Lanka, Nepal, and India. The event provided an opportunity for these alumni to discuss their work in gender equality and social justice, fostering collaboration and the exchange of ideas and experiences.

VOICES OF ALUMNI

"I have learned so many things from each of them that it's not possible to fit the answers here. Each fellow has helped me become a better person at work and life in general."

- GRÓ GEST fellow



GRÓ GEST's graduation in 2024

Dr Thomas Brorsen Smidt visited the University of Pristina in Kosovo to connect with local alumni and deliver a lecture at the Annual School of Gender and Sexuality. Kosovo, as a unique post-conflict setting, has benefited from GRÓ GEST's long-standing partnership with the University of Pristina, supported by the ERASMUS+ programme. This collaboration has contributed to increased capacities in Kosovo's educational and development sector that hosts many GRÓ GEST alumni.

The Erasmus+ grant scheme has been an important source of financing of fellows and visiting scholars for GRÓ GEST. Since 2016, GRÓ GEST

has participated in the Erasmus+ exchange scheme, and has received 48 fellows to the programme from 14 partner universities supported by the Erasmus+ student exchange grants, as well as participating in many staff exchanges to and from partner universities. Additionally, GEST spearheaded the production of two MOOCs, primarily funded by an Erasmus project grant, in collaboration with university partners both within and beyond Europe. At the *30 Years of European Cooperation Festival* on 8 May in Reykjavík, GRÓ GEST presented its Erasmus+ collaborations and was honoured with an award certificate recognising its contribution as an Erasmus+ project of excellence.

6. Research and knowledge creation

The fourth GRÓ GEST March 8 Alumni Fund grant was awarded in 2024 to Peter Katuramu, a GRÓ GEST 2018 alumnus, for his project *Making Every Voice of Women and Girls with Disabilities Heard in Sexual Reproductive Health Services*. Implemented in Wakiso District, Uganda, the six-month initiative empowers 50 women and girls with disabilities and 50 stakeholders, including healthcare providers and local leaders, to promote inclusive access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. Key activities include training sessions, advocacy workshops, and establishing a safe, accessible space at a local hospital.



GRÓ GEST fellows outside the University of Iceland

7. Innovative online content creation

In February 2024, GRÓ GEST launched its fourth massive open online course, this time on men, boys and masculinities. Since 2019, GRÓ GEST has developed Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on the edX® platform. The goal of GRÓ GEST's Free Online Courses in International Gender Studies is to provide aspiring development workers, young gender equality professionals, and policymakers around the world with a knowledge base they can use to change the world for the better. The course is a synergy of professionally edited video material in harmonious interplay with short texts, open discussion fora, interactive exercises, peer assessments, and other tools aimed at creating a natural learning flow. The course *Men, Boys, and Masculinities* offers insights into gender theory and the role of masculinities in various global contexts. It covers topics like education, media, and climate change, and examines how masculinity impacts social structure. By December 2024, the course had attracted over 1.100 participants from more than 120 countries.

In 2024, the GRÓ GEST Programme continued to make strides in its online education offerings, which continued to attract a broad and diverse audience from around the globe. A total of 3182 learners enrolled in the courses, demonstrating the strong demand for accessible, high-quality learning opportunities on critical topics such as intersectionality, violence, development, and masculinity. The diversity of the participants was a notable highlight of the year, with women comprising the majority at 73%, while men made up 21% and individuals identifying outside of this binary accounted for 6%. This demographic distribution underscores the programme's ability to engage underrepresented groups and foster inclusive online learning environments. The courses also saw

strong engagement with verified enrolments, a key measure of learner commitment. By the end of the year, 218 participants had chosen to pursue a verified certificate, demonstrating their dedication to deepening their knowledge and enhancing their qualifications. Among these, 123 learners successfully passed their courses, receiving a verified certificate from edX, reflecting the programme's effectiveness in delivering rigorous and impactful educational content

VOICES OF ALUMNI

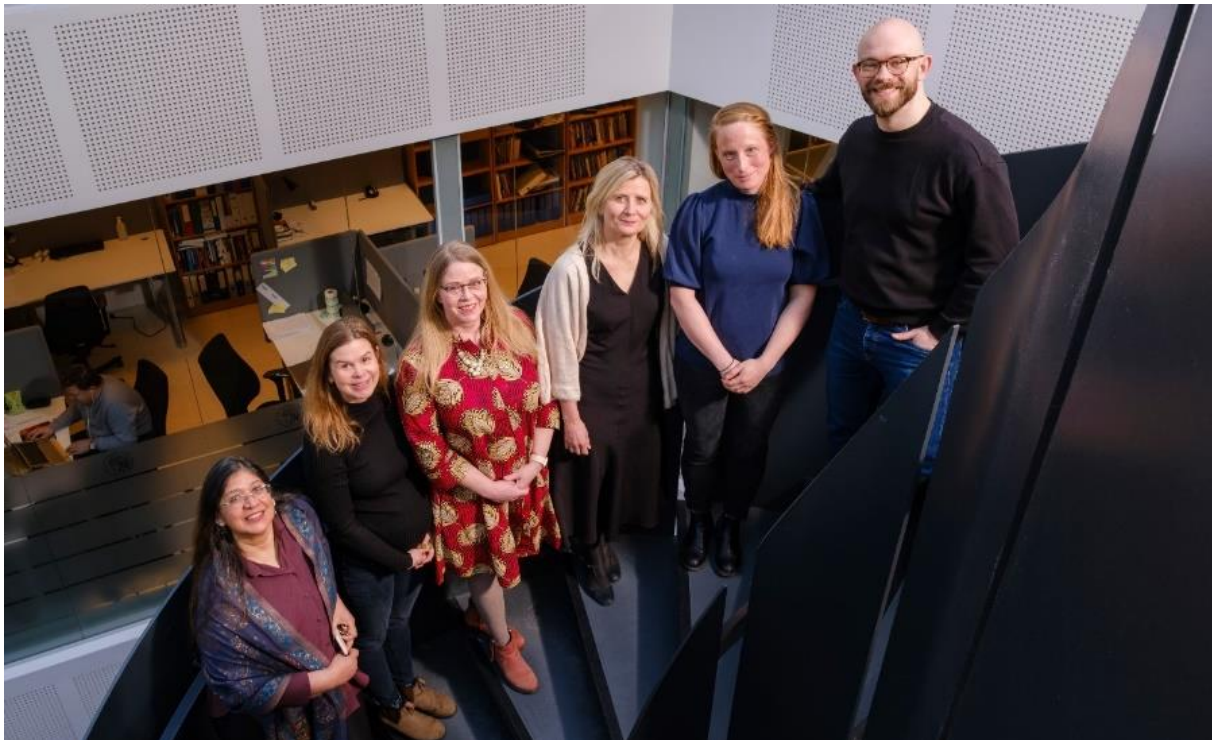
"The ability to engage with Lecturers from different parts of the world with loads of experience from different cultures and backgrounds. This shows that the programme is a diverse but much-needed balance of inclusion which drives home the contents of the programme even more."

- GRÓ GEST fellow

8. GRÓ GEST team in 2024

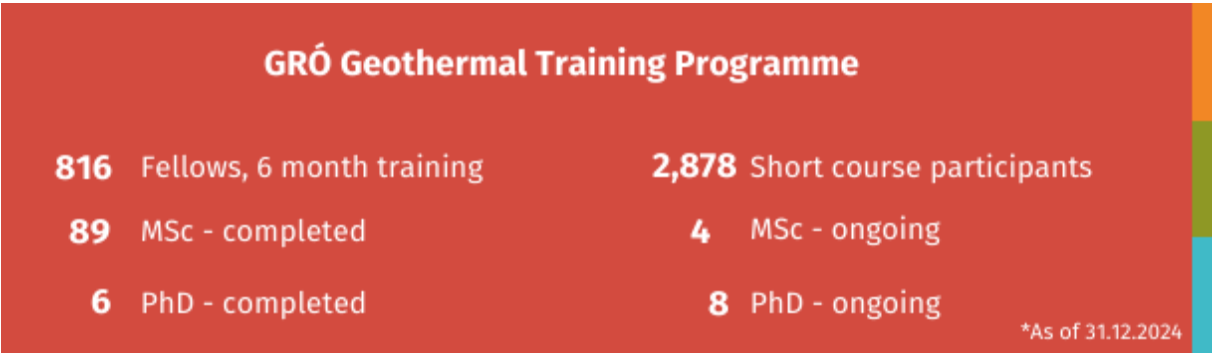
GRÓ GEST operates with a core team of experts. Dr Irma Erlingsdóttir is the programme's director supported with daily operations by Guðrún Eysteinsdóttir, operations manager, Anna Guðrún Aradóttir, Védís Ólafsdóttir (until September 2024) and Svanhildur Anja Ástþórsdóttir (from September 2024), project managers.

Dr Thomas Brorsen Smidt, project manager and academic coordinator, and Dr Giti Chandra, research specialist, are essential GEST team members, who are also involved in parallel research projects.



2024 GRÓ GEST team. From left: Dr Giti Chandra, Anna Guðrún Aradóttir, Guðrún Eysteinsdóttir, Dr Irma Erlingsdóttir, Védís Ólafsdóttir and Dr Thomas Brorsen Smidt. Missing is Svanhildur Anja Ástþórsdóttir.

GRÓ GTP Summary Annual Report 2024

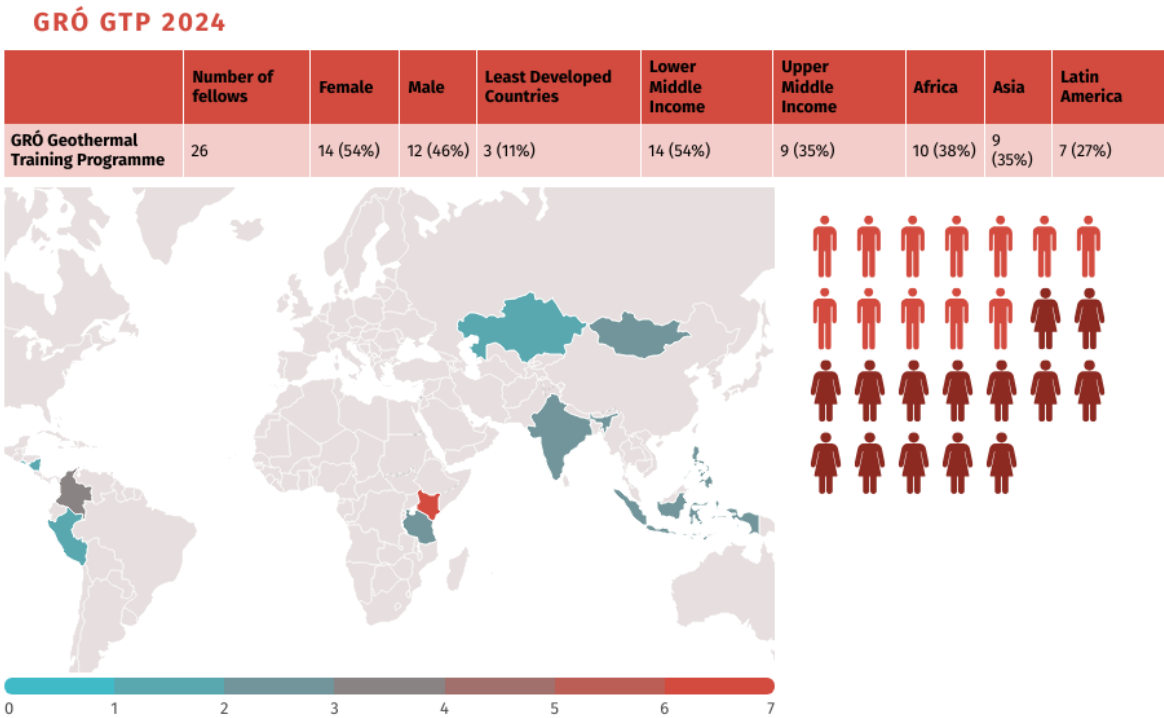


1. Postgraduate Training Programme

In 2024, the GRÓ Geothermal Training Programme conducted its 45th six-month training in Iceland with 26 participants from 13 countries. They were trained in: 1) environmental science (five fellows), 2) reservoir engineering and borehole geophysics (four fellows), 3) chemistry of thermal fluids (five fellows), 4) geothermal utilization (six fellows) as well as 5) project management and finances (six fellows). The programme ran from May 29th to November 14th.

Never before has the percentage of women in the six-month training been as high as in 2024, or 54%, which is well above GRÓ GTP’s overall average (25%). In 2024, five of the 26 fellows were financed by their employer: three from the power company KenGen in Kenya, one from GDC, Kenya and one from Maibarara Geothermal in the Philippines. By the end of 2024, 816 fellows from 67 nations had, in total, undergone the six-month training.

The eight-member Studies Board met twice in the first half of 2024, to discuss academic aspects, programme modifications, reading materials, scholarship selections, short courses offered and various other issues. The Director of GRÓ GTP coordinated closely with board members on planned training details, especially with the heads of the specialization lines offered.



2. In-country and regional training

GRÓ GTP's most significant in-country and regional training involves the annual SDG short courses (1 – 3 weeks) in Kenya (for Africa) and El Salvador (for Latin America and the Caribbean), operated in cooperation with local energy companies. At the end of 2024, 33 such courses had been held with over 1,700 participants benefitting from the trainings.

The course in El Salvador, in cooperation with LaGeo S.A. de C.V. was held from January 28 to February 11. It was a 2-week course on Geothermal Exploration, Drilling and Management with 32 participants from 15 countries in Central- and South America, as well as from the Caribbean. At the course a number of lecturers shared their knowledge among whom six were experts from ÍSOR, including Málfríður Ómarsdóttir from GRÓ GTP on-site. A few lecturers from ÍSOR, Carbfix, and Verkís presented online, including the director of GTP, Guðni Axelsson. Many of the lecturers were former GTP fellows but the participants also contributed with presentations on the status of geothermal development and prospects in their own countries and some presented the latest research in their own field as well.

Unfortunately, in 2024 the short course in Kenya was cancelled shortly before the planned initiation. However, discussions took place with the geothermal companies Kenya Electricity Generating Company PLC (KenGen) and the Geothermal Development Company (GDC) of Kenya on continuation of the short course in 2025, possibly with some adaptations.

GRÓ GTP supported the Diploma course for Central and South America organised by LaGeo in El Salvador. It was a 3,5-month training held in the autumn. Two specialists from Iceland gave presentations at the course.

A two-course training was held in China organized cooperatively by GRÓ GTP and China University of Geosciences (Wuhan) during November 18-23 and November 25-27. The first course focused on exploration, evaluation and management of geothermal resources, while the second was devoted to utilization of geothermal resources. The courses were attended by a total of 161 participants from institutions contributing to geothermal development in Shanxi. Instruction was given by Chinese GRÓ GTP alumni working for various institutions and companies in China, professors of China University of Geosciences, and GRÓ GTP and ÍSOR staff. This training exemplifies ideal cooperation between China and Iceland and hopefully the cooperation will continue in the future.



Participants, teachers, and organisers of the training in Shanxi.

A Geothermal Study Tour involving 17 participants working as greenhouse developers and experts in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Turkey, was carried out on the 3rd-6th December. The visit was organized for the World Bank and was centred on exploration, development and operation of geothermal plants, with a particular focus on greenhouses.

One online training course was held for the Ministry of Energy in Bolivia. Bolivia is planning to further develop its geothermal fields. Bolivia has already constructed a 5 MW pilot power plant in Laguna Colorada which provides electricity to the neighbouring towns.

Preparations for online training programmes taking place in 2025 took place over the course of the year. The courses will be an introduction to geothermal development, both high and low temperature utilisation, designed for politicians and decision makers, as well as introductory lectures for geoscientists and engineers that are interested in studying the sciences of geothermal exploration and utilisation.

3. Scholarships

Five GRÓ GTP alumni and postgraduate scholarship recipients graduated in 2024. Four completed their Master's degrees: Mayra Raquel Hernández Cabrera from El Salvador, Fred Ssemuyaba from Uganda, Daniel Wanga Odongo from Kenya, and Agata Rostran Largaespada from Nicaragua. Since 2000, 89 fellows have graduated with an MSc degree on a GTP Scholarship.



Mayra



Fred



Daniel



Agata



Makoye

One PhD student graduated in 2024. Makoye Mabula Didas from Tanzania defended his PhD thesis in Geophysics from University of Iceland. The title of his thesis was: *Regional thermal anomalies in Tanzania and improved geothermal conceptual models of the Ngozi and Rungwe prospects in SW Tanzania based on results from resistivity and potential field studies*. Didas became the sixth alumni to complete a PhD on a GTP Scholarship.

At the end of 2024, there were 5 MSc and 8 PhD alumni pursuing their studies at Icelandic Universities on a GRÓ GTP scholarship.

VOICES OF ALUMNI

"I feel like I improved so much professionally and grew so much. As a person from small geothermal development and where people don't believe that we can use it effectively, I feel so inspired with all the possibilities of geothermal energy and now I know more about the use in our geological settings. I will always support and suggest using geothermal energy in my company and country. Seeing is believing and Iceland makes you believe."

- GRÓ GTP fellow -

4. Workshops and conferences

GRÓ GTP staff participated and gave presentations at the following conferences: ArGEO in Tanzania, Taiyuan Energy Low Carbon Development Forum in China and Icelandic Geothermal Conference. Also, a presentation was given online at the 7th International Conference on Geothermal Energy: Shaping Innovations for a Sustainable Future, held in India.



GTP fellows visit Laugaland, where cucumber farmers use geothermal energy to heat greenhouses and grow cucumbers.

5. Networking

The GRÓ GTP, along with its alumni and current fellows; lecturers and supervisors; universities, institutes and companies in Iceland; as well as ministries, agencies, institutes and companies in the partner countries, constitutes an extensive, active and valuable network reaching the world over. There is extensive communication throughout this network, taking place through e-mail, online and face-to-face meetings, via social media as well as through direct visits to various countries.

In 2024, such direct visits were made to El Salvador in association with the short course there and to Tanzania linked to the ArGEO C10 conference, as well as a visit to the Taiyuan Energy Low Carbon Development Forum in China. All opportunities were used for discussions with collaborators as well as interviews with prospective future GRÓ GTP candidates. All visits were quite successful, both in terms of strengthening ties with GTP's collaborators and for selecting six-month candidates.

Another networking aspect involves having former fellows contribute to e.g. the six-month training and short courses. In 2024 current PhD- and MSc-fellows contributed to the six-month programme, as well as supervising final projects. The graduation celebration of the six-month training was also a networking opportunity for the large group of 16 PhD- and MSc-scholarship recipients to mingle and create contacts with the 26 fellows graduating.

VOICES OF ALUMNI

“Improved my skill set in geothermal and country to country knowledge sharing – Personally I have learnt way of life, other people’s culture and appreciate the differences we have as a people.”

- GRÓ GTP fellow -

6. Research and knowledge creation

The main research conducted, and knowledge created at the GRÓ GTP is the following: (a) research reports of six-month fellows, (b) theses of MSc- and PhD fellows, (c) peer-reviewed papers written by PhD-fellows, (d) international scientific papers published by former GTP fellows and GTP staff, in various journals as well as for conferences, (e) papers published by GTP in association with short courses, and (f) reading/reference material published specifically by GRÓ GTP.

The publication of the 26 research reports of the 2024 six-month training is underway, following a set procedure aimed at ensuring their quality. Their publication is expected in late 2025. Since 2021 these reports are only published online, for environmental and budgetary reasons. As customary, during the course of the six-month training all the fellows gave presentations on geothermal research or development in their home countries, as well as their research projects. These were open to the public, both on-site and online.

In 2024, 4 MSc-theses were published, as well as peer-reviewed papers published in international research journals, associated with GRÓ GTP supported PhD projects. A number of former fellows also submitted their research to the Icelandic Geothermal Conference.

In a survey to the fellows at the end of the six-month training they were asked to evaluate if they felt they had improved or acquired new knowledge after the training on a scale from 1-100. The average score was 94.

7. Advisory services and knowledge sharing

This role of the GRÓ GTP is firstly of a formal nature, such as projects solicited by various institutes, governments, etc. worldwide. Examples of this can be assignments performed for the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs or various international institutions. Such projects can also be of a more informal nature, e.g. through various types of communication, visits and reception of guests (including lectures for groups of variable sizes and nature visiting Iceland), as well as through participation in conferences and workshops. GRÓ GTP undertook various assignments in 2024 of this nature, as in previous years, e.g. hosting several short visits to GRÓ GTP in 2024, by delegations from different entities and countries.



GTP fellows visited Ásbyrgi during a trip through geothermal areas in the west and north of Iceland

Knowledge sharing is also constantly taking place between the fellows and their supervisors during classes and lectures and in informal conversations. The same can be said for the knowledge sharing that occurs between the fellows themselves during the training, as well as after their return, as they often stay in contact and seek advice on various technical and non-technical matters from each other.

8. Innovative online content creation

Online lectures are increasingly used at short courses and in the six-month training, often with former fellows contributing.

The presentation activities taking place during the six-month training and Master's lectures are most often broadcast online for the public to attend and get an insight into the diverse topics studied by the GTP fellows.

One online training course was held for 38 staff members of the Ministry of Energy in Bolivia.

9. GRÓ GTP Team in 2024

Dr Guðni Axelsson retired as the director of GRÓ GTP in July 2024, having served in the position since 1 January 2020. Guðni continued to work for the GTP part time, as a staff member, teacher, and supervisor, as well as being more involved in some reservoir projects at ÍSOR, until his formal retirement in June 2025. Bjarni Richter, Geothermal Expert from ÍSOR, with more than 25 years of experience in high and low temperature exploration and development both in Iceland and in other countries, took over as the new director of GRÓ GTP. Ingimar Haraldsson continued to serve as deputy director and Málfríður Ómarsdóttir as Project Manager. Finally, one summer employee was hired as part-time assistant.



GRÓ GTP fellows in Þórsmörk helping each other when the walking path had been flooded.

GRÓ LRT Summary Annual Report 2024

GRÓ Land Restoration Training Programme			
221	Fellows, 6 month training	197	Short course participants
2	MSc/MA - completed	2	MSc - ongoing
1	PhD - completed		
*As of 31.12.2024			

1. Postgraduate Training Programme

The GRÓ LRT six-month training programme ran from the beginning of March to end of August in 2024, closing with a graduation ceremony at Keldnaholt Campus on the 27th August. The 2024 cohort of fellows consisted of 23 experts (9 women and 14 men) from nine countries, all working on issues related to ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management in their home countries. Twenty-one fellows participated from GRÓ LRT's partner organisations in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Lesotho, Malawi, Uganda, and Ghana. For the first time, fellows also joined from GRÓ LRT's newest partner country, Kenya, representing the National Drought Management Authority and the Ministry of Water, Sanitation, and Irrigation. Furthermore, two fellows participated in the training through the UNESCO's Man and Biosphere (MAB) network, working for the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria and the Bia National Park & Biosphere Reserve in Ghana. Their participation is part of a GRÓ LRT and UNESCO-MAB cooperation (2022-2026), where GRÓ International Centre for Capacity Development sponsors annually GRÓ LRT fellowship for two young professionals working for institutions and organisations that are a part of UNESCO MAB's World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

The first half of the six-month training was divided into seven modules. The topics covered in the first six modules included: drivers of degradation; basic soil and erosion processes; interaction of climate change and land degradation; restoration of ecological functions; environmental governance and land management planning; evaluation of restoration projects; communication; and conflict management. Module seven focused on the interactions between climate change, ecosystem dynamics and biodiversity loss. The last training module (module eight) focused on the development and execution of individual research projects on a topic of the fellows' choice and under supervision of an expert(s). The fellows presented the results of their projects in an open seminar in the last week of training. Additionally, field excursions and fieldwork trips are an integral part of the six-month training programme.

In 2024, GRÓ LRT hosted two international guest lecturers. The first was Dr. Richard Thomas, Scientific Coordinator of the Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) Initiative, who delivered a two-day course on the economics of land dynamics. This marked the seventh time Dr. Thomas has provided training on this topic for fellows in the GRÓ LRT six-month training programme. The second guest lecturer was Dr. Toshpulot Rajabov, Director of the Institute of Agrobiotechnology and Food Security at Samarkand State



GRÓ LRT fellows in Hekluskógur

University. His training session focused on rangeland health, with a particular emphasis on the rangelands of Uzbekistan, their ecological characteristics, grazing history, current conditions, and management challenges. Dr. Rajabov was a GRÓ LRT fellow in the six-month training programme in 2009, making his return as an international guest lecturer a significant milestone—he is the first GRÓ LRT alumnus to come back as a lecturer.

In 2024, GRÓ LRT celebrated the GRÓ LRT Day and World Environment Day (June 5) by hosting an alumni lecture featuring Dr. Toshpulot Rajabov, as mentioned above. During his lecture, Dr. Rajabov shared his personal and professional journey since completing the six-month Land Restoration Training Programme in 2009. He also discussed the integration of a rangeland ecology framework in studies at the Institute of Agrobiotechnology and Food Security. The lecture was held at the Keldnaholt Campus for the GRÓ LRT cohort of 2024, but it was also recorded and shared on the GRÓ LRT website and Facebook page, allowing alumni around the world to access it.

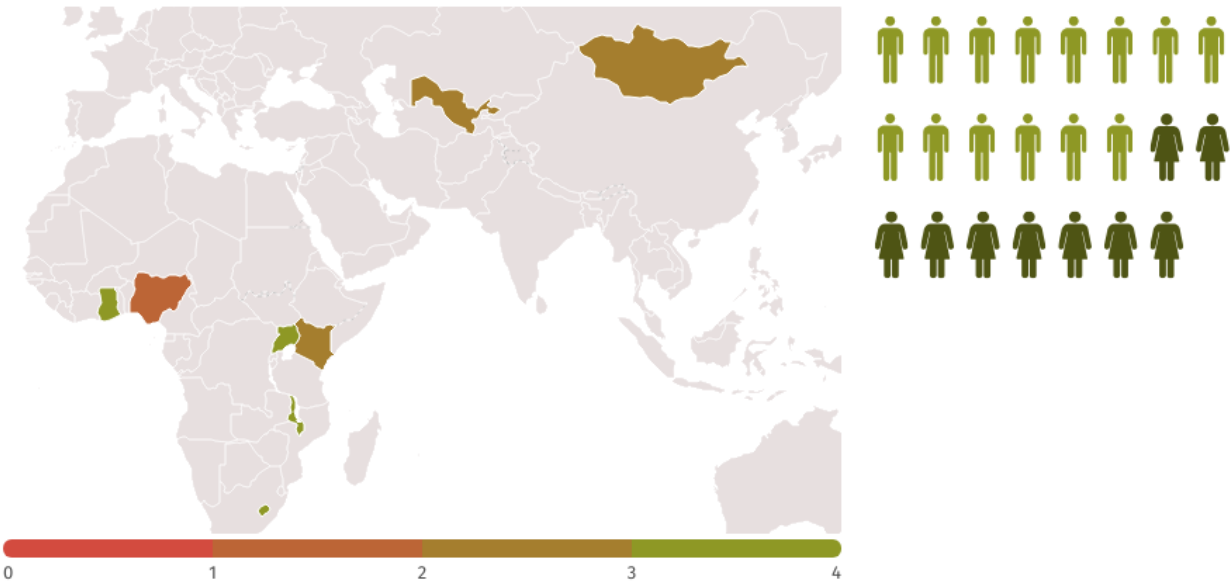
This was the third year that the six-month training was run as a postgraduate diploma course, eligible for 30 ECTS credits, meaning that fellows could receive a Postgraduate Diploma in Ecosystem Restoration and Sustainable Land Management (30 ECTS) from the Agricultural University of Iceland (AUI), in addition to the GRÓ LRT Certificate of Completion.

GRÓ LRT’s offices are at the Agricultural University of Iceland Keldnaholt Campus in Reykjavík. GRÓ LRT has a permanent staff of four and a network of 40 specialists from the Agricultural University of Iceland, Land & Forest Iceland (a new government agency with the merger of the Soil Conservation Service of Iceland and the Icelandic Forest Service in 2024), and other universities and government agencies who give lectures and provide project supervision in the GRÓ LRT training courses.

The GRÓ LRT’s training programme is academically governed by an Academic Committee. It is chaired by the GRÓ LRT Director and includes two members from the Agricultural University of Iceland, two from the Land and Forest of Iceland, and one from the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries. The Academic Committee met once in 2024 to review GRÓ LRT’s training activities of the year and to discuss the academic aspects of the 2024 six-month training. The GRÓ LRT director was also regularly in contact with different committee members to discuss programme development and aspects of planned training activities.

GRÓ LRT 2024

	Number of fellows	Female	Male	Least Developed Countries	Lower Middle Income	Africa	Asia
GRÓ Land Restoration Training Programme	23	9 (39%)	14 (61%)	10 (43%)	13 (57%)	17 (74%)	6 (26%)



2. In-country and regional training

GRÓ LRT, in collaboration with the Icelandic Red Cross, organized a two-day short course on community-based forest landscape restoration in Sierra Leone in 2024. This initiative builds on a Memorandum of Understanding between GRÓ LRT and the Icelandic Red Cross, which includes capacity building and collaboration on development projects focused on land restoration and environmental sustainability. For the past two years, the Sierra Leone Red Cross has been implementing the *Tree Planting and Care (TPC): Community-Based Forest Landscape Restoration for Environmental Sustainability* project. This initiative aims to restore degraded vegetation and landscapes in 52 communities across Sierra Leone, with support from the Icelandic Red Cross, the Finnish Red Cross, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The two-day course took place on November 20–21 in Freetown, bringing together 21 staff members and volunteers from the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society. The training covered key topics in sustainable land management, ecosystem functioning, and forest landscape restoration, with a focus on addressing land degradation. Participants developed skills in restoration planning and ecosystem restoration to strengthen environmental sustainability efforts. The training was designed and facilitated by Dr. Bryndís Marteinsdóttir and Dr. Þórunn W. Pétursdóttir, two GRÓ LRT experts with extensive experience as lecturers in the GRÓ LRT six-month training programme and members of the GRÓ LRT Academic Committee.

VOICES OF ALUMNI

"I was able to improve my professional skills during the GRÓ LRT six-month training. I enhanced my project management abilities and deepened my understanding of advanced data analysis techniques, which are crucial for my field. These skills have significantly boosted my efficiency and effectiveness in managing complex projects."

- GRÓ LRT fellow -



From the short course for staff members and volunteers of the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society.

3. Scholarships

Since 2017, GRÓ LRT has offered scholarships for postgraduate studies in Iceland to alumni of its six-month training programme. In 2024, two Master's students were studying at the Agricultural University of Iceland on GRÓ LRT scholarships, both pursuing degrees in Restoration Ecology and expected to graduate in 2025.

4. Workshops and conferences

Nothing to report.

5. Networking

GRÓ LRT is engaged in several inter-institutional agreements under the European Union's Erasmus+ Programme, enabling GRÓ LRT to expand or further strengthen its cooperation with universities in partner countries in Africa and Asia. A GRÓ LRT application to the Erasmus+ Programme in 2024 was approved, providing funding for further cooperation with Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) in Malawi. GRÓ LRT received two mobility visits in 2024 as part of GRÓ LRT's mobility projects with Samarkand State University in Uzbekistan and with the American University of Central Asia in Kyrgyzstan. The overall aim of all the GRÓ LRT's Erasmus+ mobility projects is curriculum development focusing on ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management.



Dr Toshpulot Rajabov from Samarkand State University, GRÓ LRT international guest lecturer of 2024 and GRÓ LRT fellow of 2009.

6. Research and knowledge creation

The main output categories of GRÓ LRT research and knowledge creation are: (a) research reports of fellows in the six-month training, (b) PhD and Master's theses of GRÓ LRT scholarship recipients, (c) peer-reviewed papers written by GRÓ LRT scholarship recipients, (d) scientific publications by former GRÓ LRT fellows.

The 23 fellows in the six-month training in 2024, developed and carried out individual research projects tailored to their academic and practical background and the needs of their home institutions. The research work culminated in a written report and an oral presentation. Qualified research reports are published on the GRÓ LRT website.

VOICES OF ALUMNI

"I strongly believe that the GRÓ LRT has improved my professional skills, which will be reflected in my future activities."

- GRÓ LRT fellow -

7. Advisory services and knowledge sharing

Two GRÓ LRT experts conducted a mid-term review of the Community-Based Forest Landscape Restoration for Environmental Sustainability project in Sierra Leone. Led by the Sierra Leone Red Cross and supported by the Icelandic Red Cross, the Finnish Red Cross, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the initiative aims to restore degraded vegetation and landscapes in 52 communities across the country. The review was conducted in conjunction with a two-day training course organized by GRÓ LRT and the Icelandic Red Cross for staff and volunteers of the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society, held in Freetown in November. GRÓ LRT's participation in the mid-term review aligns with the 2021 Memorandum of Understanding between GRÓ LRT and the Icelandic Red Cross, reinforcing their shared commitment to expertise exchange and capacity building in land restoration and environmental sustainability.

VOICES OF ALUMNI

"The GRÓ LRT has enhanced my skills as a professional. Now I have the knowledge and tools to solve a particular problem at my work and in my country"

- GRÓ LRT fellow -

8. Innovative online content creation

Nothing to report in 2024.

9. GRÓ LRT Team in 2024

At the start of 2024, the programme had four permanent staff members: Dr Sjöfn Vilhelmsdóttir, Director; Berglind Orradóttir, Deputy Director; Brita Berglund, Project Manager; and Ragnheiður Matthíasdóttir, Project Manager. However, the year brought several changes, transitions and challenges that affected the programme's activities beyond its core six-month training. In the early months, Berglind was on study leave before stepping in as Acting Director for six months while Sjöfn was on extended sick leave. In September, after 15 years with the programme, Berglind left GRÓ LRT to resume her position as an assistant professor with the Faculty of Environmental & Forest Sciences at the Agricultural University. At the same time, Ragnheiður also departed to join UNICEF's Country Programme in Sierra Leone.



GRÓ LRT fellows of 2024



Annex 2:

Success Stories and examples of impact

Following are a few examples of the outcomes of the four GRÓ Programmes from 2024. These success stories are not meant to be exhaustive of the results achieved, but rather a collection of different stories to show some concrete examples of how the GRÓ programmes have through their work contributed to advancing the SDGs in their partner countries. These stories also give examples of how the GRÓ training has given the fellows new perspectives, tools and knowledge that will help them tackle the challenges in their respective fields and to work on advancing the SDGs at home, as well as helping the individuals themselves grow and develop.

GRÓ FTP

“This program was excellent. The blend of hands-on training and classroom experience especially in the Fisheries Policy and Management line has been nothing short of amazing. It strikingly balances practical skills with theoretical knowledge, providing a rich and engaging learning environment. This comprehensive approach has greatly enhanced my understanding and proficiency. Most of all, it provided me with the opportunity to develop my personal skills.”

Quote from a 2024 fellow, taken from the anonymous final evaluation asking what stands out after participating in the GRÓ FTP programme.

Individual Success Stories from 2024

Throughout 2024, in addition to the many messages from alumni reporting the start of master's and doctoral studies, the following individual success stories were documented from former GRÓ FTP fellows:

Dr. Salaudeen Mutiat Motolani, a Nigerian fellow from 2013, has long served as a senior lecturer at Prince Abubakar Audu University, Kogi State, Nigeria. She has also worked for many years as a Chief Researcher with the Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research (under Federal Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy). In 2024, Dr. Motolani informed that she had been promoted to an assistant director at the Institute.



Online alumni meeting organised during a partnership building visit to OSPESCA 2024

In 2024, Dr. Kolitha Junadasa, Sri Lankan fellow from 2010, informed he was appointed to serve as advisor to the Fisheries Minister, based in the Ministry of Fisheries, Sri Lanka placing him in an excellent position to strengthen the relationship between GRÓ FTP and the Ministry of Fisheries, Sri Lanka.

Ms. Diana Elizabeth Barahona Hernández, a 2021 fellow from El Salvador, transitioned from her role at CENDESPESCA to a new position as Senior Technical Officer with OSPESCA, GRÓ FTP's regional partner in Central America.

GRÓ FTP frequently receives reports from alumni of research publications, however, it is especially welcome to record examples of continued research collaboration between fellows and their Icelandic supervisors after returning home. During 2024, two such examples were recorded:

In 2024, an important article on discarded fishing gear was published in *Reviews of Fisheries Biology and Fisheries*, with Drake Ssempijja, a 2016 fellow from Uganda, as lead author. Co-authored by Dr. Haraldur A. Einarsson (MFRI and FAO), Drake's former FTP research supervisor, and Pingguo He of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, the article highlights the urgent need for research on plastic pollution in the world's freshwater lakes. Drake is currently completing his PhD at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth under Dr. He's supervision.

Another significant publication appeared in *Ocean & Coastal Management* in 2024, authored by João Antonio F. Brito, a 2022 fellow from Cape Verde. Based on his research during the FTP programme, the article sheds new light on the status of the fisheries sector in Cape Verde and its contribution to national output and employment. João's supervisors, Thanh Viet Nguyen and Daði Már Kristófersson, co-authored the publication.

Success Reported in Surveys

As has been previously described in the section on GRÓ FTP's annual activities, ten alumni were supported to present their research at the 2024 IIFET international conference in Penang. During the conference the alumni group was joined by FTP expert, Mr. Stefán Úlfarsson, who facilitated a successful networking event. In a follow-up survey, GRÓ FTP received excellent feedback from all 10 Participating fellows. One participant commented:

*"The conference provided a valuable platform for reconnecting with colleagues, some of whom I had not seen in over a decade. This opportunity to catch up and exchange ideas was immensely rewarding. Additionally, the **GRO-FTP alumni session** was a highlight. We supported one another during various sessions and explored the potential for cross-continental collaborations. It was inspiring to see the high calibre of work being done by GRO/UNU-FTP alumni worldwide."*

In addition, GRÓ FTP received overwhelmingly positive feedback from former scholarship recipients in a targeted survey designed to gather their views on the support provided during their master's and doctoral studies in Iceland. All respondents reported being completely satisfied with the support they received, with five noting that it exceeded their expectations.

Satisfied Partners

GRÓ FTP regularly receives feedback from institutional partners, providing valuable insight into the impact GRÓ FTP alumni are having upon their return home. In 2024, the GRÓ FTP received a particularly noteworthy update from Mr. J. Cyrus Saygbe, Sr., Acting Director General of the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA) of Liberia. In his message, he highlighted the impressive progress of six recent Liberian FTP fellows — part of the 18 fellows from Liberia who have participated in the programme since 2008.

"Graduates from your training program are making significant contributions to the overall development and growth of NaFAA. For example, Mr. Isaac Johns remains a very valued and resourceful member of staff at our Fisheries Monitoring Centre, where he manages our Transshipment Programme. Ms. Doris Yahn recently completed her MSc from the World Maritime University and will soon take up an assignment with the regional fisheries body, the Fisheries Commission for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC), representing Liberia. Ms. Beatrice Newland is responsible for our Fish Sanitary Unit at the airport, while Victor Nah, provided technical support to the FAO on a fisheries project focussed on fish processing and handling, supported by the government of Japan. Mr. Glasgow Togba currently serves as Team Lead for a Technical Assistance Programme to NaFAA, funded by the EU. Mr. Patrick Davis was recently promoted to Associate Director for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) and is currently pursuing his MSc studies in Ghana."

GRÓ GEST

“There were numerous experiences to recount. From the privilege of meeting, learning from, and finding inspiration in leading scholars within the field of Gender Studies, to discovering a nurturing environment where I could fully embrace and uncover my authentic identity. This environment was enriched by a wealth of literature created by individuals like me, and it was directed toward an audience grappling with similar challenges and aspirations.

While I understand that many participants who have gone through this program would attest to its transformative impact on their careers, propelling them to elevate their professional and academic involvement in gender issues, I can confidently assert that my personal growth through this program goes beyond comparison”.

Quote from a 2024 fellow, taken from the anonymous final evaluation on what stands out from participating in the GRÓ GEST programme.

In regular follow-up with graduated fellows the following success stories were documented:

Tatiana Telles, 2021 fellow from Mexico has since graduation published her final project at GuIA's 2021 Edition, a joint initiative between the Center for Studies in Technology and Society (CETyS) at the University of San Andrés, Centro Latam Digital (CLD), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) by way of its fAIr LAC project. She has furthered her work on the intersection of gender, public policy and technology with projects regarding use of AI in education with the State Government of Guanajuato and USAID, Gender and Innovation with the State Government of Jalisco and is currently working with a team developing fair algorithms for crowd work. She was honoured by the Sinaloa State Government for her research on female politicians in the state and is currently working on a book chapter on that topic.



GRÓ GEST field trip focusing on Gender, Environment and Climate Change.

Mohamed Altamash Khan, 2022 fellow from India: The GEST programme helped opening doors and validating Altamash's work in the field of gender equality. For example, he got the opportunity to design a curriculum for a

gender studies course for undergraduate students and got invitations from across India to teach gender certificate courses.



GRÓ GEST alumni from India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal at an alumni event at the Icelandic Embassy in New Delhi in November.

An alumni survey conducted in 2024 for the cohorts from 2009 – 2022 had overall a good response rate (141 of 195 in total). Of those who answered the survey, 30% had received a promotion within the organisations they were working with before joining the GRÓ GEST programme. Others changed to more senior positions with other organisations. 98% said they gained professional skills and knowledge at the GEST programme, and 92% said that they had gained personal skills and knowledge from the programme. The following are selected quotes from alumni about the impact the programme had on them:

“In my organization (Ministry of Land and Environment), for years I was the Head of Gender and Environment Unit. Recognizing the importance of gender mainstreaming in the environment sector. I led a process of the development of the Sector's Gender Action Plan. Since 2020 I have been appointed as the National Gender and Climate Change Focal Point for Mozambique, under the UNFCCC and I am one the country negotiators.”

Rosália Marta Pedro (2011), Mozambique

“I have been invited to participate in several high-level conversations around promoting Gender Equality both locally and internationally. I have also been part of the development of several gender policy documents and I am leading on the development of a roadmap to foster national conditions to promote women entrepreneurship development and formalization in Nigeria. Additionally, I navigated several roles in Solar Sister Nigeria before I left. I came to Iceland as a Business Development Associate with Solar Sister and left Solar Sister as a Country Manager.”

Chinenye Ankewe (2018), Nigeria

“While it is not a Master's degree it was still considered an important certificate in the field of gender especially coming from Iceland.”

Fatima Wahaidy, (2010), Palestine

"I have attracted series of local and international organizations and have changed two jobs now with higher positions and better conditions services. I have been more included in key decision making in the organizations I have worked. And have been part of organizations Gender and inclusion task force. Part of safeguarding and has worked for and with key feminist organizations in the country."

Rosaline Marva Banya (2018), Sierra Leone

Below are quotations from the anonymous survey: *What experience from the GRÓ GEST Programme stands out as most positive?*

"Bringing different facilitators with various skills, backgrounds, experience. I also liked the visits we made in different organizations."

"There was constant feedback between GEST Staff and students and the team was responsive to concerns by students."

"After the interviews and selections, the team was very supportive and positive towards us the fellows, thereby ensuring that we got all the necessary support to be part of the scholarship and even when we arrived till the day we returned. I had so many challenges to get back home but the GEST staffs were with me through all the step of the way"

GRÓ GTP

Kenya is the biggest partner country of the GRÓ Geothermal Training Programme in terms of numbers of fellows graduated. Since 1982, 152 Kenyans have graduated from the programme, or 19% of the total GTP alumni. Today, geothermal energy accounts for 47% of electricity produced in Kenya. Installed capacity amounted to 944 MW at the end of 2021. The country has therefore outgrown Iceland in terms of electricity generated with geothermal resources, as the corresponding figure for Iceland was 756 MW.



GRÓ GTP fellows at a field trip at Hellisheiði Power Plant.

Upon return to India from the GRÓ GTP in 2024, Dr Sameer Kumar Tiwari was given a promotion. He attributed this achievement to his training at GTP where he said: "I am heartily thankful to all of you for your unconditional support and help during this training. I would like to apprise that I got merit promotion from Scientist C to D. It is a big achievement for me. And it happened because of training experience and GTP fellowship. I dedicate this

achievement to GTP.” With this promotion comes increased responsibilities and opportunities for him and his institute Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology to make a difference in developing geothermal resources in India.

Farah Omar Farah from Djibouti who attended the six-month training informed GTP in 2024 that he had been the Director General of Red Sea Drilling and CEO of Geothermia in his company. This is a very high position in East Africa leading him to the front lines of international cooperation and sharing of his knowledge gained.

Tufwane Mwangomba from Malawi who works at MERA - Malawi Energy Regulatory Authority and graduated on a MSc scholarship from GTP in 2016, was made Senior Licensing Officer, responsible for issuing all energy licences in Malawi.

The first PhD scholarship graduate at GTP, Dr Pacifica Ogola from Kenya became the Director of climate change at the State Department of Environment at the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in Kenya. At the last 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 28) she led the climate negotiation committee on behalf of Kenya.

The MSc graduate from 2022, Johannes Ochome from Kenya published a paper based on his Master’s thesis in a high impact journal with his supervisors in 2024. His supervisors were very impressed by his skills and ingenuity and the topic of his Master’s thesis: “Assessment of Public Energy Organizations’ Innovation Awareness and Readiness for Climate Action: A Case Study of Icelandic and Kenyan Energy Sectors” is a new and great input into the geothermal sector both in his home country as well as his host country Iceland.

Another MSc graduate from 2022, Angel Monroy Parada became a specialist advisor at the World Bank advising on geothermal development in all the Latin American regions for the different projects. He has experience working with international experts at high level decision making and is a valued member of the team.



GRÓ GTP fellows at the Blue Lagoon that is supplied with water from the Svartsengi Geothermal Power Plant.

GRÓ LRT

“The knowledge and skills I have gained during this experience have equipped me to set even higher standards for myself and aim for greater accomplishments. I am motivated to apply what I have learned, continue my professional growth, and contribute more effectively to my field. This journey has been transformative, and I look forward to the next steps with renewed enthusiasm and determination.”

“The GRÓ LRT training programme definitely contributed to improving my professional skills. As a teacher and researcher, it was quite useful to get new knowledge as well as skills for planning, writing and implementing projects (work) on an academic level. Also, I improve my critical thinking and evaluation skills which will be very useful for my work.”

In routine follow-ups with GRÓ LRT alumni, the following success stories were among the ones recorded:

Andrew Evans Opiolo, a fellow from Uganda in 2021, has moved from a position for the district government to a position as Senior Agricultural Inspector at the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF). He will contribute to supporting the control of crop pests and diseases for improved and sustainable food security and household incomes amongst farmers in Uganda.

Latif Iddrisu Nasare, a fellow in 2018 from Ghana, defended his doctoral dissertation in June 2024 at Department of Conservation Biology and Entomology, School of Biological Sciences, University of Cape Coast, Ghana. The title of his thesis is: Pollination Ecology of Shea (*Vitellaria paradoxa*) in the Guinea Savanna zone of Ghana. Dr Latif Iddrisu Nasare is a lecturer at the University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana.

In April 2024, Ganzorig Ulgiichimeg, a fellow from Mongolia in 2021, was promoted to the Head of the Division of Soil Research at the Institute of Geography and Geoecology, Mongolian Academy of Sciences.

Calvin Rapa, a fellow from Uganda in 2022, has been promoted within his district to a position of Town Clerk, a management position overseeing 32 technical staff. His primary responsibility is to foster collaborative partnerships with other towns and organizations, as well as to provide leadership in developing and implementing actions aimed at mitigating the effects of climate change in urban areas and achieving sustainable urban development.



GRÓ LRT fellows at Jökulsárlón during a field excursion in southeast Iceland

Shuhrat Valiyev, a 2024 fellow from Uzbekistan, was appointed to the position of Deputy Director for Scientific Affairs and International Cooperation at the Institute of Agrobiotechnology and Food Safety, at Samarkand State University in Uzbekistan, upon his return from the GRÓ LRT training.

Evelyn Mugume, a fellow from Uganda in 2014, finished her Master's degree in Natural Resources Management from Makerere University in 2019. Since then, she moved from Kasese District Local Government to Kasese Municipal Council/City, where she has been using her knowledge acquired in Iceland to embark on various project. She has also been promoted to Senior Environment Officer for the Kasese Municipal Council.



Annex 3:

Results 2024
GRÓ Results Framework 2023–2027

GRÓ Results Framework 2023-2027– Results 2024

Note: Results for other performance indicators than presented here are still being established or baseline still to be set.

Output N°1:

Increased capability of individuals and expertise of GRÓ partner organisations to design and implement programme activities in respective professional fields

Performance indicator	GEST	GTP	LRT	FTP	TOTAL	ACHIEVED
P1. Number of experts trained in the GRÓ 5-6-month training programmes	# of experts: 23 Women: 57% Men: 39% Non-binary: 4% LDC and LMIC: 82%	# of experts: 26 Women: 54% Men: 46% LDC and LMIC: 66%	# of experts: 23 Women: 39% Men: 61% LDC and LMIC: 100%	# of experts: 25 ⁴ Women: 44% Men: 56% LDC and LMIC: 76%	# of experts: 97 Women: 48% Men: 51% Non-binary: 1% LDC and LMIC: 80%	Number of experts trained (100): Target on track Gender ratio 40/60: Target met LDC and LMI +80%: Target met
P3. Number of graduates eligible for 30 ECTS credits/ Diploma degree at completion of 5–6-month training (ratio of enrolled fellows).	Graduation ratio 100%	N/A	Graduation ratio 100%	N/A	46/46 graduation ratio (100%)	Graduation ratio 9.5/10: Target met
P4. Number of short courses (5-7 days) in partner countries	6 weeks: 163 participants 2 x Malawi: 55 3 x Uganda: 85 1 x Kenya: 23 Women: 65/163=40%	6 weeks: 233 participants 2 x El Salvador: 32 2 x China: 161 1 x El Salvador (GRÓ GTP part. Geoth. Diploma Course (LaGeo) 1 x Turkey: 17 (178 men, 55(24%) women)	0,5 week 21 participants 1x Sierra Leone (with Icelandic Red Cross) (15 men, 6 women (29%))	No short courses	12,5 short courses 417 participants Women: 126 (30%) Men: 291 (70%)	Annual target: 10 weeks of on-site training: Target met Annual target: 207 participants (baseline +10%): Target met ⁵ Gender ratio 40/60: Target not met

⁴ One of the GRÓ FTP graduates in 2024 began the program in 2022 and completed the final project in 2024.

⁵ While GRÓ has not finalised the ongoing revision of the Results framework the baseline for this indicator has been established and is therefore included: Average annual #188 participants 2017-2023 (baseline).

GRÓ Results Framework 2023-2027 – Results 2024

Note: Results for other performance indicators than presented here are still being established or baseline still to be set.

Output N°1 – continued						
Increased capability of individuals and expertise of GRÓ partner organisations to design and implement programme activities in respective professional fields						
Performance indicator	GEST	GTP	LRT	FTP	TOTAL	ACHIEVED
P8. Number of online courses and number of participants in the online courses.	# of courses: 4 Participants: 3182 Gender & Intersectionality: 1018 Gender, Violence & Post-conflict States: 392 Gender & Development: 663 Men, Boys, & Masculinities (launched 2024): 1109	# of courses: 1 Participants: 38 Geothermal Energy <i>Ministry of Hydrocarbons and Energy in Bolivia</i>	# of courses: 3 Participants: 3168 <i>Business approach: 1942</i> <i>Business Model Innov: 1184</i> <i>Sheep in the land of fire and ice: 42</i>	N/A	# of courses: 8 Participants: 6388	A new course launched every other year on average Target met⁶ >600 new enrolments per year Target met
P10. Number of GRÓ graduate scholarships provided annually	No new scholarships	MSc: 1 PhD: 2 <i>(2 men and 1 woman)</i>	No new scholarships	No new scholarships	3 33% women (1) 67% men (2)	Target 20 annually, gender ratio 40/60: Target not met⁷

⁶ While GRÓ has not finalised the ongoing revision of the Results framework the target for this indicator has been established and is therefore included.

⁷ GRÓ has prioritised the 5-6-month training over the provision of new scholarships while funding to GRÓ has not increased.

GRÓ Results Framework 2023-2027 – Results 2024

Note: Results for other performance indicators than presented here are still being established or baseline still to be set.

Output N°2: Production and dissemination of new knowledge by GRÓ training participants and scholarship recipients						
Performance indicator	GEST	GTP	LRT	FTP	TOTAL	ACHIEVED
P1. Number of research outputs (<i>research project reports</i>) annually by GRÓ fellows.	23	26	23	25	97	Number of research outputs (100): Target on track⁸
P2. Number of Master's thesis published annually by GRÓ scholarship recipients (<i>research output</i>).	N/A	4	0	1	5	One thesis per MSc/MA scholarship recipient: Target met
P3. Number of PhD papers published annually by GRÓ scholarship recipients (<i>research outputs</i>).	1	1	N/A	1 PhD thesis completed 5 PhD papers published	8	Annual target: 4 publications: Target met⁹

⁸ Not all research papers have been published on GRÓ's website at time of publication of this report.

⁹ While GRÓ has not finalised the ongoing revision of the Results framework the baseline and target for this indicator have been established and are therefore included: Average annual #4 2017-2023 (baseline). Target: Baseline +10%.

GRÓ Results Framework 2023-2027 – Results 2024

Note: Results for other performance indicators than presented here are still being established or baseline still to be set.

Output N°3: Professional empowerment of GRÓ training participants and scholarship recipients is increased through GRÓ community building and networking
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Performance indicator	GEST	GTP	LRT	FTP	TOTAL	ACHIEVED
P1. Number of alumni events organised by GRÓ annually	# of alumni events: 1 1 alumni meeting in New Delhi + with online participation, for all S-Asian Alumni	0	0	# of alumni events: 4 1 Online alumni meeting (participation of selected alumni from OSPESCA member countries) In-person alumni events in Uganda and China Alumni event at IIFET conference in Penang, Malaysia	# of alumni events: 6 1 Joint alumni event was organised in Uganda by the alumni, the GRÓ Centre, the Icelandic Embassy and UNESCO	Target >10: Target on track
P2. Number of GRÓ funded alumni participating in regional and international conferences	# of alumni: 2 CSW68 2024	# of alumni: 1	0	# of alumni: 10 IIFET conference	Number of alumni: 13	Baseline: average annual # 38 Target: Baseline +10% (42) Target not met
P3. % of short courses involving alumni in teaching and organisation of short courses in partner countries.	83% (5/6)	83% (5/6)	0% (0/1)	N/A	77%	Target 2027 100% Target on track

GRÓ Results Framework 2023-2027

Impact: Progress towards the SDGs through capable individuals and organisations
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Performance indicator	Baseline (B)	Source and means of verification	Target (T)	Assumptions
P1. SDG N°5: targets		Official /UN documents	TBD	NA
P2. SDG N°7: targets		Official /UN documents	TBD	
P3. SDG N°14: targets		Official /UN documents	TBD	
P4. SDG N°15: targets		Official /UN documents	TBD	

Outcome: GRÓ fellows, trainees and respective organisations promote and implement changes needed to achieve SDGs relevant to their field of work

Performance indicator	Baseline (B)	Source and means of verification	Target (T)	Assumptions
P1. Management in partner organisations assess the training to be valuable for the organisation.	Under collection	Source: Coordinated survey of partner organisations by GRÓ 3 years after graduation. Means of verification: Survey feedback.	70% of survey respondents assess the training to be valuable for the organisation	Partner organisations recognise the new knowledge, skills and competencies acquired by GRÓ fellows and other GRÓ trainees. Partner organisations will encourage returning staff members to practice and spread what they have learnt in GRÓ supported trainings. The GRÓ fellows become leaders in their field of expertise. They use the increased capacity gained through the GRÓ training to promote sustainability within their sphere of influence in their organisations and home countries.
P2. Graduates have used the training to advance their contribution in their field/sector of work.	Under collection	Source: Coordinated status survey of fellows by GRÓ 3 years after graduation. Means of verification: Survey feedback.	70% of survey respondents report the training has advanced their contribution in their field/sector.	
P3. Graduates have used their training to share with colleagues and other experts in their respective field of expertise.	Under collection	Source: Coordinated status survey of fellows by GRÓ 3 years after graduation. Means of verification: Survey feedback.	70% of survey respondents report they have used the training to share with colleagues and other experts.	
P4. Graduates have advanced professionally (e.g. promotion or received scholarship for further studies).	Under collection	Source: Coordinated status survey of fellows by GRÓ 3 years after graduation. Means of verification: Survey feedback.	70% of survey respondents report they have advanced professionally.	

GRÓ Results Framework 2023-2027

Output N°1: Increased capability of individuals and expertise of GRÓ partner organisations to design and implement programme activities in respective professional fields				
Performance indicator	Baseline (B)	Source and means of verification	Target (T)	Assumptions
P1. Number of experts trained in the GRÓ 5-6-month training programmes	Annual # from 2017-2022 (by gender and income level of country)	Source: Graduation documents provided by GRÓ programmes. Means of verification: Graduations documents.	100 fellows (25 each programme) Gender ratio 40/60. LDC and LMI+80%	Candidates for GRÓ training activities have basic working knowledge, skills, and some experience in their fields but benefit from applied training to further improve their skills, knowledge, and leadership abilities. Partner organisations recognize the need for developing these capacities and competencies and are therefore willing to utilise GRÓ training opportunities for their staff members. Partner organisations are willing and able to work with the GRÓ Programmes to establish priorities for training. In order to deliver the expected outputs GRÓ needs to receive adequate funding for its activities.
P2. Quality of the 5–6-month training	(No coordinated measures available) Average from previous assessments.	Source: Coordinated self-assessment survey at the start and end of training on knowledge, skills, and mindset. Means of verification: Survey feedback.	>4 on a scale from 1 - 5	Coordinated measures will be implemented across GRÓ programmes.
P3. Number of graduates eligible for 30 ECTS credits/ Diploma degree at completion of 5–6-month training (ratio from enrolled fellows). Only applicable for GEST and LRT fellows.	Graduation ratio 9/10	Source and means of verification: Diploma certificates issued by University of Iceland and Agricultural University of Iceland.	Graduation ratio 9.5/10	

GRÓ Results Framework 2023-2027

Output N°1 (continued): Increased capability of individuals and expertise of GRÓ partner organisations to design and implement programme activities in respective professional fields				
Performance indicator	Baseline (B)	Source and means of verification	Target (T)	Assumptions
P4. Number of short courses (5-7 days) in partner countries	Annual # of weeks of on-site training from 2017-2022 # of participants in short courses (by gender)	Source and means of verification: Completion of training documents provided by course organisers (GRÓ programmes and partner organisation).	Annual target: 10 weeks of on-site training # of participants trained by year (by gender): baseline + 10% Gender ratio 40/60.	In order to deliver the expected outputs GRÓ needs to receive adequate funding for its activities.
P5. Quality of short course training	Average from previous assessments.	Source: Coordinated self-assessment survey at the end of training on knowledge and skills. Means of verification: Survey feedback.	>4 on a scale from 1 - 5 80% of course participants assess the course to be useful for enhancing skills and knowledge in the respective field.	Coordinated measures will be implemented across GRÓ programmes.
P6. Number of live streaming training courses	Annual # from 2017-2022	Source and means of verification: Completion of training documents provided by course organisers (GRÓ programmes and partner organisation).	Baseline + 10%	In order to deliver the expected outputs GRÓ needs to receive adequate funding for its activities.
P7. Quality live streaming training courses	(No coordinated measures available)	Source: Coordinated self-assessment survey at the end of training on knowledge and skills. Means of verification: Survey feedback.	>4 on a scale from 1 - 5	

GRÓ Results Framework 2023-2027

Output N°1 (continued): Increased capability of individuals and expertise of GRÓ partner organisations to design and implement programme activities in respective professional fields				
Performance indicator	Baseline (B)	Source and means of verification	Target (T)	Assumptions
P8. Number of online courses and number of participants in the online courses.	Annual # from 2017-2022	Source: Course software data. Means of verification: Survey feedback.	Baseline +10%	In order to deliver the expected outputs GRÓ needs to receive adequate funding for its activities.
P9. Quality of online training	(No coordinated measures available)	Source: Coordinated self-assessment survey at the start and end of training on knowledge and skills. Means of verification: Survey feedback.	>4 on a scale from 1 - 5	
P10. Number of GRÓ graduate studies scholarships provided annually	Annual # from 2017-2022: Master's and PhD (by gender)	Source and means of verification: Admission confirmation to Icelandic or partner universities provided by universities. Recipients' progress reports.	20 Gender ratio 40/60.	In order to deliver the expected outputs GRÓ needs to receive adequate funding for its activities.

Activities
1. GRÓ programmes run a 5–6-month training course annually in Iceland.
2. GRÓ programmes provide financial and technical support to develop and deliver short courses in partner countries.
3. GRÓ programmes develop and deliver online content and courses
4. GRÓ programmes offer scholarships to alumni to pursue graduate studies at Icelandic universities in their respective fields of study.

GRÓ Results Framework 2023-2027

Output N°2: Production and dissemination of new knowledge by GRÓ training participants and scholarship recipients				
Performance indicator	Baseline (B)	Source and means of verification	Target (T)	Assumptions
P1. Number of research outputs (<i>research project reports</i>) annually by GRÓ fellows	Annual # from 2017-2022	Source and means of verification: Research projects papers confirmed on GRÓ's website.	100 (25 each programme)	GRÓ training participants and scholarship recipients develop an understanding of the main issues in their fields. They learn about and develop innovative solutions applicable to issues in their home contexts to reduce poverty.
P2. Number of Master's thesis published annually by GRÓ scholarship recipients (<i>research output</i>).	Annual # from 2017-2022	Source: Published thesis at universities' websites Means of verification: Published Master's thesis.	One thesis per Master's scholarship recipient.	
P3. Number of PhD papers published annually by GRÓ scholarship recipients (<i>research outputs</i>).	Annual # from 2017-2022	Source and means of verification: Publication in research journals.	TBD	Knowledge, techniques, policies, and strategies can be adapted and applied in a variety of contexts.

Activities

1. Applied final projects are part of the training curriculum in the GRÓ 5–6-month training programmes.
2. GRÓ offers scholarships for postgraduate programmes in GRÓ's areas of work.

GRÓ Results Framework 2023-2027

Output N°3: Professional empowerment of GRÓ training participants and scholarship recipients is increased through GRÓ community building and networking				
Performance indicator	Baseline (B)	Source and means of verification	Target (T)	Assumptions
P1. Number of alumni events organised by GRÓ annually	Annual # from 2017-2022	<u>Source and means of verification:</u> Seminar documents.	≥10	Participants in GRÓ training activities, teachers and fellows alike, have valuable knowledge and experience and learn from one another during the training and follow-up activities. GRÓ alumni interact and collaborate within their home countries, regions and beyond. As such, GRÓ alumni networks serve as mechanisms for south/south cooperation. In order to deliver the expected outputs GRÓ needs to receive adequate funding for its activities.
P2. Number of GRÓ funded alumni participating in regional and international conferences	Average annual # from 2017-2022	<u>Source and means of verification:</u> conference documents and GRÓ programmes' documents.	Baseline # + 10%	In order to deliver the expected outputs GRÓ needs to receive adequate funding for its activities.
P3. % of short courses involving alumni in teaching and organisation of short courses in partner countries.	Annual # from 2017-2022	<u>Source and means of verification:</u> Course documents and verification from programme directors.	100%	

Activities

1. A GRÓ community is created across countries, regions, and the thematic fields of GRÓ by hosting alumni seminars and network events.
2. GRÓ alumni are supported to participate in international and regional conferences
3. GRÓ alumni are involved in teaching and organisation of short courses in partner countries.