



International Centre for Capacity
Development, Sustainability and
Societal Change
under the auspices of UNESCO

Annual Report 2020 and 2021

June 2022

Annual Report 2020 and 2021

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

Raudararstigur 25 – 105 Reykjavík, Iceland

grocentre.is

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Icelandic Summary

GRÓ er sjálfstæð miðstöð sem starfar undir merkjum UNESCO, Mennta-, vísinda- og menningarmálastofnunar Sameinuðu þjóðanna og sem tók til starfa, sem sérstök eining innan utanríkisráðuneytisins, 1. janúar 2020. GRÓ skólarnir fjórir, Jarðhitaskólinn, Sjávarútvegsskólinn, Landgræðsluskólinn og Jafnréttisskólinn, hafa starfað um áratugaskeið og frá upphafi verið ein af meginstöðum í alþjóðlegri þróunarsamvinnu Íslands. Allir vinna þeir að því að efla getu stofnana og einstaklinga í þróunarríkjunum á sviðum þar sem Ísland býr yfir sérþekkingu.

Í tengslum við stofnun GRÓ – Þekkingarmiðstöðvar þróunarsamvinnu var ráðist í gerð nýrra samninga við hýsistofnanir skólanna, þar sem skerpt var á markmiðum og umgjörð skólanna, sem og fjárveitingum til þeirra og eftirfylgni með þeim. Sjávarútvegsskólinn er hýstur hjá Hafrannsóknarstofnun, en þjónustusamningur var undirritaður 18. júní 2020. Jafnréttisskólinn er hýstur hjá Háskóla Íslands og var þjónustusamningur undirritaður 3. júlí 2020. Landgræðsluskólinn er hýstur hjá Landbúnaðarháskóla Íslands, samkvæmt þjónustusamningi sem var undirritaður 12. ágúst 2020. Íslenskar orkurannsóknir (ÍSOR) tóku við hýsingu Jarðhitaskólans, sem hafði verið hýstur hjá Orkustofnun frá árinu 1979, þann 8. febrúar 2021 þegar þjónustusamningur þar að lútandi var undirritaður. Í aðdraganda þess að GRÓ var sett á laggirnar voru fjárhagsúttektir gerðar á Jarðhitaskólanum (2018) og Jafnréttisskólanum, Landgræðsluskólanum og Sjávarútvegsskólanum (2019). Margvíslegar gagnlegar ábendingar komu fram í þessum úttektum sem unnið hefur verið að síðan, m.a. í gegnum gerð umræddra þjónustusamninga.

Í ársskýrslunni er gerð grein fyrir helsta starfi skólanna fjögurra, sem starfa undir GRÓ – Þekkingarmiðstöð þróunarsamvinnu, árin 2020 og 2021. Allir skólarnir fjórir störfuðu með nokkuð eðlilegum hætti árið 2021, en árið 2020 hafði Covid-19 heimsfaraldurinn veruleg áhrif á starfsemina.

Árið 2020 útskrifuðust 24 úr Sjávarútvegsskólanum og 20 úr Jafnréttisskólanum, en þeir nemendur voru komnir til landsins áður en heimsfaraldurinn skall á. Erfiðlega gekk að koma sumum nemendum Jafnréttisskólans aftur til síns heima eftir útskrift sökum heimsfaraldursins. Landgræðsluskólinn og Jarðhitaskólinn gátu ekki starfrækt fimm til sex mánaða þjálfunina það ár sökum heimsfaraldursins og frestuðu komu nemenda um eitt ár.

Árið 2021 tókst öllum skólunum að halda 5-6 mánaða námið hér á landi og tóku samtals á móti 90 nemendum. Jafnréttisskólinn flutti námið frá vorönn til haustannar og útskrifuðust 20 nemendur frá 15 löndum um miðjan desember. Þá hélt Jafnréttisskólinn vettvangsnámskeið í Malaví og netnámskeið á St. Lúsíu. Jarðhitaskólinn útskrifaði í nóvember sinn 42. hóp frá upphafi, 25 nemendur frá 14 löndum. Aldrei áður hefur hlutfall kvenna í útskriftarhópnum verið jafn hátt, eða 48%. Í apríl hélt Jarðhitaskólinn netnámskeið um jarðhita ætlað Afríkulöndum og í nóvember vettvangsnámskeið í Kenýa, í samstarfi við jarðhitafyrirtæki í landinu. Landgræðsluskólinn útskrifaði í september 17 nemendur frá 8 samstarfslöndum og tók á árinu þátt í námskeiðshaldi í Mongólíu. Sjávarútvegsskólinn tók á móti 28 nemendum, sínum stærsta hópi til þessa, í september. Að auki stunduðu við lok ársins 2021 samtals 14 doktorsnemar og 15 meistaranemar nám við íslenska háskóla með skólástyrk frá GRÓ Þekkingarmiðstöð þróunarsamvinnu.

Talsverðan sveigjanleika og útsjónarsemi þurfti til að tryggja að nemendur kæmst til landsins þrátt fyrir heimsfaraldurinn, bæði af hálfu starfsmanna GRÓ skólanna og hýsistofnanna, en einnig nemendanna sjálfra. Ferðatakmarkanir, lítið framboð á flugferðum og erfiðleikar við að útvega vegabréfsáritanir fyrir nemendur þar sem útgáfa áritana lá víða niðri, voru meðal áskoranna sem GRÓ skólarnir stóðu frammi fyrir í tengslum við heimsfaraldurinn.

Samtals höfðu 1.486 lokið 5-6 mánaða þjálfun í skólunum fjórum við árslok 2021. Þá höfðu 94 lokið meistaranámi og 18 doktorsnámi við íslenska háskóla með stuðningi GRÓ. Skólarnir hafa einnig haldið fjölmörg styttri námskeið í samstarfslöndum sínum sem rúmlega 3.000 manns hafa sótt.

Fjárveitingar til GRÓ árið 2020 voru tæplega 599 milljónir króna og árið 2021 710 milljónir króna. Fjárveitingar voru óvenju lágar árið 2020 vegna Covid-19 heimsfaraldursins. Áfram hefur verið unnið að því að hámarka samlegð og skilvirkni í starfi skólanna og tryggja þannig bestu nýtingu á íslensku þróunarsamvinnufé, sem og leita sóknartækifæra og möguleika á frekari eflingu á starfsemi þeirra sem hlýst með því að reka skólana undir einum hatti.

Bryndís Kjartansdóttir, sem hafði undirbúið stofnun GRÓ – Þekkingarmiðstöð þróunarsamvinnu veitti GRÓ forstöðu til 1. október 2020 þegar Friðrik Jónsson tók við starfinu. Friðrik var kjörinn formaður BHM í lok maí 2021 og tók Nína Björk Jónsdóttir í kjölfarið við stöðu forstöðumanns miðstöðvarinnar.

Stjórn GRÓ – Þekkingarmiðstöðvar þróunarsamvinnu var skipuð af utanríkis- og þróunarsamvinnuráðherra 14. febrúar 2020. Formaður stjórnar GRÓ er Jón Karl Ólafsson. Anna Elísabet Ólafsdóttir var fulltrúi Þróunarsamvinnunefndar til desember 2021 þegar Guðrún Margrét Guðmundsdóttir tók við. Ragnar Þorgeirsson er fulltrúi menningar- og viðskiptaráðuneytisins, Sæunn Stefánsdóttir, fulltrúi íslensku UNSCO nefndarinnar og Jean-Yves Le Saux, fulltrúi skrifstofu aðalframkvæmdastjóra UNESCO. Stjórn hélt 6 stjórnarfundir og tvo aukafundi árið 2020 og 6 fundir árið 2021. Þá var haldinn fundur með GRÓ skólunum, stjórn GRÓ, fráfaramandi og væntanlegum forstöðumanni 11. júní 2021 og tók GRÓ þátt í UNESCO deginum 3. september 2021.



Utanríkisráðherra Þórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir við útskrift Jafnréttisskóla GRÓ (Mynd: Kristinn Ingvarsson).

About GRÓ

The GRÓ International Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Societal Change was established on 1. January 2020 and operates under the auspices of UNESCO as a Category 2 Centre. It is the first multi-disciplinary Category 2 Centre at UNESCO.

Four training programmes are hosted by GRÓ. These are:

- The Geothermal Training Programme (GTP) hosted at Iceland Geosurvey that was established in 1979, working on increasing the use of renewable geothermal resources,
- The Fisheries Training Programme (FTP), established in 1997, hosted at the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute, working on the protection and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources.
- The Land Restoration Training Programme (LRT), hosted by the Agricultural University of Iceland, established in 2007, working on restoration and sustainable use of land.
- The Gender Studies and Training Programme (GEST), hosted by the University of Iceland, established in 2009, working on increasing gender equality, social justice and peace-building.

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 on the basis of 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 in the field of 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 many years. In addition to the core funding provided by the government of Iceland, external funding is obtained by GRÓ, mainly through counterpart contributions from partner institutions, grants and by participation in international projects.

This report covers the first two years of activities of the GRÓ Centre.

Summary of the activities of GRÓ in 2020-2021

At the end of 2021 a total of 1.486 fellows had finished the 5-6 month training programmes. Also 94 had finished a master 's degree and 18 a PhD at Icelandic universities on a GRÓ scholarship. The four programmes have also held many short courses in their partners countries that more than 3.000 people have attended.

The Covid-19 pandemic heavily impacted GRÓ's activities in 2020. Only the Fisheries Training Programme and the Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme graduated fellows that year, as the fellows had already arrived in Iceland when the pandemic started to heavily disrupt travel in the world. A total of 24 fellows graduated from the Fisheries Training Programme in 2020 and 20 from the Gender Equality and Studies Programme. The Land Restoration Training Programme and the Geothermal Training Programme had to postpone the arrival of their fellows for the respective 5-6 months programme until 2021. The Programmes used the time during Covid-19, when the workload was lower due to the postponement of the 5-6 month training, to produce online teaching material, work on developing the contents of the programmes and also some of the GRÓ staff went to work at the Icelandic MFA for a few months on other development cooperation matters.

In 2021 however, all GRÓ Training Programmes managed to run their 5-6 months training programmes and 90 fellows came to Iceland to attend the programmes.

The Land Restoration Training Programme graduated in September 17 fellows from 8 partner countries. The LRT also sponsored an online course in Mongolia where 25 local decision makers and environmental experts took part. The aim of the course, which was carried out and developed by three of GRÓ LRT's long-standing partner institutions in Mongolia, was to support sustainable management of ecosystems.

The Geothermal Training Programme graduated Its 42nd cohort in November, 25 fellows from 14 countries. The gender ratio has never before been as equal, with 48% of the participants being female. In April the GRÓ GTP held an online course on geothermal energy in Africa where 190 registered participants from 32 countries took part. In November a short course was held in Kenya, on exploration and development of geothermal resources, in cooperation with Kenyan energy companies, where 50 participants from 14 African countries participated.

Twenty fellows from 15 countries graduated in December from the Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme. GRÓ GEST also held a short course on gender and climate change in Malawi, where 23 districts officials from Mchinji district participated, and an online course on teaching gender to youth in St. Lucia where 50 professionals in St. Lucia took part.

The Fisheries Training Programme welcomed 28 fellows, the largest cohort yet, to Iceland in September.

In addition, there were in total, at the end of 2021, 14 PhD students and 15 master's students studying at Icelandic universities on a GRÓ scholarship.

The activity of each GRÓ Programme is described in detail for both 2020 and 2021 later in this report.

The GRÓ Governing Board

The Governing Board of GRÓ was appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development Cooperation on 14. February 2020. The Chairman of the board is

Jón Karl Ólafsson. Anna Elísabet Ólafsdóttir represented the Development Cooperation Committee until December 2021 when she asked to step down. Guðrún Margrét Guðmundsdóttir was appointed by the committee to take over from her. Ragnar Þorgeirsson represents the Ministry of Culture and Business Affairs, Sæunn Stefánsdóttir, represents the Icelandic National Commission for UNESCO and Jean-Yves Le Saux, Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning at UNESCO, is appointed by the Director General of UNESCO.

At the first meeting of the GRÓ Governing Board on 1 April 2020 the board adopted rules of procedures for the governing board. They stipulate that the board shall meet in regular session typically five times every calendar year.

The board had six meetings in 2020, on the following dates: 1 April, 7 May, 12 June, 28 August, 28 September and 30 October. Extraordinary meetings were also held on 9 October and 5 November. Six meetings were held in the year 2021: 12 February, 23 April and 14 May (one meeting), 20 September, 11 October, 29 November and 21 December. A meeting was also held with the GRÓ Governing board, the GRÓ programmes' Directors and the outgoing and incoming Directors General of GRÓ on 11 June 2021. Also, GRÓ participated in the UNESCO day on 3 September 2021.

Among the biggest issues the board discussed and worked on during the first two years of GRÓ's activity were the finalisation of services agreements with the four host institutions, following up the results from the financial audits of the programmes and efforts to find synergies for the programmes, creation of a GRÓ website and GRÓ logo, the impact of Covid-19 on the programmes, adopting a Theory of Change, Strategy and Vision for GRÓ, ways to increase cooperation with UNESCO and more.



The GRÓ Governing Board with Director General Nína Björk Jónsdóttir. From left: Sæunn Stefánsdóttir, Ragnar Þorgeirsson, Jón Karl Ólafsson, Guðrún Margrét Guðmundsdóttir and Nína Björk. Missing from the photo is Jean-Yves Le Saux.

The Director General of GRÓ

Bryndís Kjartansdóttir, who prepared the establishment of GRÓ on 1 January 2020 was the first Director-General of GRÓ. On 1 October 2020, she took over as Director General of the Directorate for Security and Defence at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Friðrik Jónsson took over the position. He was elected as President of the Icelandic Confederation of University Graduates at the end of May 2021, following which Nína Björk Jónsdóttir took over as Director General of GRÓ.

Host institutions

In preparation of the establishment of GRÓ financial audits were undertaken for all the Programmes; for the GTP in 2018 and for FTP, LRT and GEST in 2019. These audits have been used to create synergies and maximise efficiency between the programmes. New service agreements were concluded with host institutions in 2020 and 2021, that are in effect until the end of 2023. The agreements were signed on the following dates:

- 18 June 2020 agreement with the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute on hosting the Fisheries Training Programme (FTP)
- 3 July 2020 agreement with the University of Iceland on hosting the Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme (GEST).
- 12 August 2020 agreement with the Agricultural University of Iceland on hosting the Land Restoration Training Programme (LRT).
- 8 February 2021 agreement with Iceland GeoSurvey on hosting the Geothermal Training Programme (GTP).

The Chairman of the board of GRÓ and the Director General had meetings with all host institutions in November and December 2021. The meetings were attended by the heads of the hosts institutions and their financial directors.

Website and branding

A new website, www.grocentre.is, was developed for the GRÓ centre with a specific domain for each of the four training programmes. The website promotes the visibility of the work and projects undertaken by GRÓ and provides a more holistic overview of the work of all four programmes and the impact in GRÓ's partner countries.

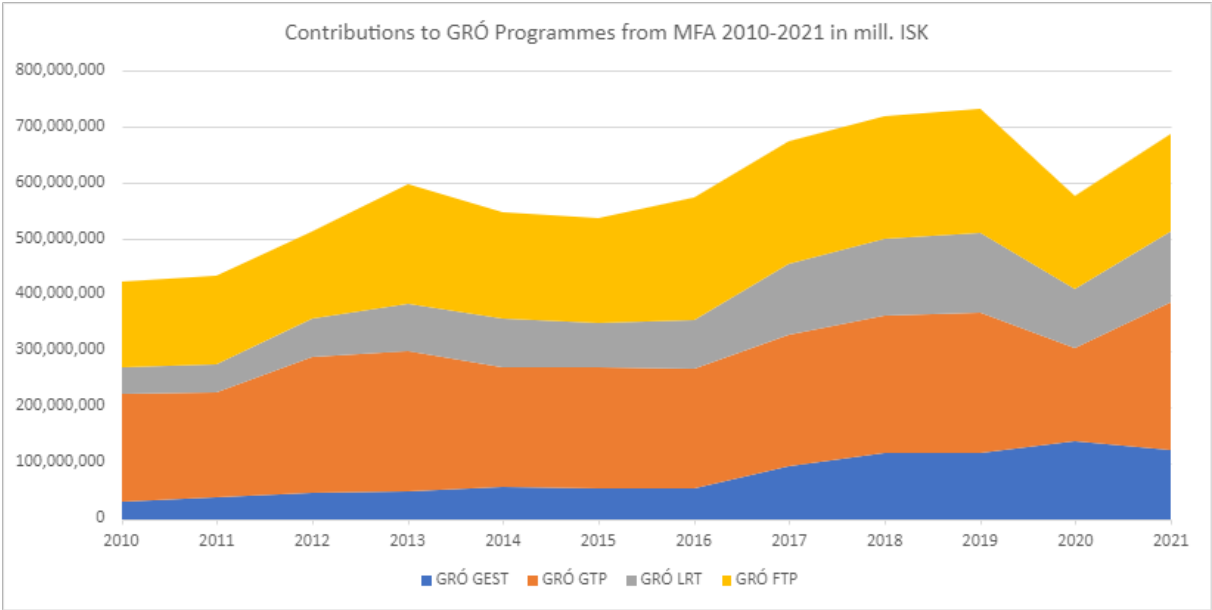
Also, considerable work went into creating a brand for the GRÓ Centre and the four training programmes. This work will need to continue in 2022, following changes in the guidelines for Category 2 Centre 's use of UNESCO's logo.

Financing

Financial contributions to the GRÓ Centre from the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs were 599 million ISK in 2020 and 710 million ISK in 2021. The contribution in 2020 was unusually low due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Work has continued to maximise synergies and efficiencies in GRÓ's work, that can be found by harmonising some administrative and practical aspects of the four programmes, as they are run separately today. Further work will continue in 2022 when a financial audit is foreseen to

take place. More detailed information on the finances of GRÓ is found in a specific chapter in this report.



Cooperation with UNESCO

In February 2020 the Director-General of GRÓ, Chairman of the Governing Board of GRÓ and the four Programme Directors, visited UNESCO headquarters to learn about UNESCO, inform UNESCO staff and delegations of GRÓ, and explore concrete cooperation possibilities between GRÓ and UNESCO. Several meetings were held in this regard. Shortly afterwards the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted work and efforts to explore potential for increasing cooperation.

In October 2021, the Director-General of GRÓ and the Directors of GRÓ LRT and GRÓ GEST travelled to Paris to present GRÓ to a selected group of Permanent Delegates to UNESCO and UNESCO staff. Two events were hosted at the residence of the Icelandic Permanent Delegate to UNESCO, focusing on GRÓ and the two programmes. Several meetings were held with UNESCO staff to explore avenues for increased cooperation. The Director General of GRÓ met with Jean Yves Le Saux, Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning, who represents UNESCO on the GRÓ Governing Board. The Director of GRÓ LRT met with representatives of SC (Science) including the Man and the Biosphere Programme, and the GRÓ GEST director had various meetings, including with CI (Communication and Information) and CLT (Culture) at UNESCO.

Following these meetings, the LRT invited two fellows from UNESCO’s Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme that are faced with drought and land degradation to attend the six-month training in 2022. GRÓ GEST and UNESCO’s Division for Gender Equality will create a six-week MOOC (Massive Online Open Course) on Men, Boys and Masculinities. GRÓ GEST is also in discussion with CI at UNESCO (Communication and Information) on the creation of learning material in teaching gender to youth and to work with CI (Communication and Information) on Gender and Media both with regards to women journalists and on how to use media for teaching and informing about gender issues. There are also discussions ongoing concerning women and the Arts with UNESCO/CLT (Culture).

In November 2021 the Director General of GRÓ contacted the UNESCO Nairobi Regional Office for Eastern Africa to explore possible cooperation with GRÓ. The Nairobi regional office covers thirteen countries in Eastern Africa, where all four GRÓ programmes have been active. Around 30% of GRÓ alumni come from the region covered by the regional office. A Teams meeting took place on the 22. November with the director of the Nairobi office, to present the ideas of cooperation. The Regional Office expressed an interest in the work of GRÓ and it was decided to continue the conversation.

Impacts of Covid-19

The first two years after the establishment of GRÓ have been heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. This time has been used to formalise rules and procedures for GRÓ's work, finalise services agreements with host institutions, improve financial accountability, create a joint GRÓ identity and platform and start to work on the future vision of GRÓ. The pandemic heavily impacted the GRÓ programmes in 2020. All the GRÓ programmes managed to receive fellows in 2021 and do much of the work they normally do despite all the travel restrictions, sanitation requirements, and many other challenges posed by the pandemic. This is due to great efforts and flexibility of the staff of the GRÓ Programmes and the fellows themselves, as is explained further in the report, and has provided GRÓ with many lessons learned on how to work in uncertain circumstances and in a changing environment.



GRÓ FTP fellows at a fish auction market.



Fellows getting COVID tests in Akureyri during a field trip to northern Iceland.

Annex 1: Summary of main activities of GRÓ Programmes in 2020

GRÓ FTP Summary Annual Report 2020

1. Post-graduate training

At the end of February, 24 fellows graduated from the GRÓ FTP, including 12 women and 12 men, from four lines of specialisation: 7 in fisheries policy and management, 6 in quality management, 6 in sustainable aquaculture, and 5 in stock assessment. The group was the first cohort to graduate from the GRÓ Centre.

Due to Covid-19 it was not possible to invite the next group of fellows to participate in the six-month programme in 2020. This intake was delayed for one calendar year.



The last group of FTP fellows to graduate before Covid-19 suspension of programme pictured with Kristján Þór Júlíusson, Minister of Fisheries and Agriculture, at graduation in February 2020.

2. In-country and regional training

Due to Covid-19 no training took place in 2020 in partner countries.

3. Scholarships

Since 2005, the GRÓ FTP has offered scholarships for post-graduate studies in Iceland to former fellows of the six-month training. In total 13 scholarships were awarded in 2020, 7 for doctoral studies. The number of scholarships offered each year varies, as does the number of recipients in Iceland at any given moment. This is particularly true for the doctoral candidates, who all spend some of their study time in their home countries conducting research with their home organisations.

4. Workshops and conferences

Due to Covid-19 GRÓ FTP did not participate in workshops or conferences.

5. Networking

No specific networking events took place.

6. Research and knowledge creation

In June, a PhD scholarship recipient from Uganda, graduated from the University of Iceland.

GRÓ FTP has worked on the implementation of the two SDG 14 voluntary pledges that the FTP pledged in 2017 (then on behalf of the UNU) at the high-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Pledge: Research and capacity development to support livelihood and food security and safety in African Coastal Communities.

Pledge: Research and capacity development supporting SDG 14 and sustainable fishing harvest and blue growth in SIDS.

GRÓ FTP presented the latter pledge at the Large Ocean Nation (LON) forum in Malta October 2017. SIDS delegates at the forum were invited to nominate candidates for six-month postgraduate fellowship in Iceland. Subsequently, nine fellowships have been awarded to specialists from SIDS countries. At the Malta forum GRÓ FTP also undertook to sponsor a workshop at a second LON forum, planned for August 2020 in the Faroe Islands. Unfortunately, both the LON forum and the preparatory workshop had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

7. Advisory Services and Knowledge Sharing

FarFish – Horizon 2020

FarFish is an EU Horizon 2020 funded research and innovation project that aimed to provide knowledge, tools and methods to support responsible, sustainable and profitable EU fisheries outside European waters, compatible with Maximum Sustainable Yield. To achieve this, FarFish developed practical, achievable and cost-effective fisheries management tools and advice which can be applied immediately. The project was launched in June 2017. Within FarFish, the GRÓ FTP leads the work package relating to Capacity Building and Dissemination (WP7). In 2020, three fellows completed the six-month training through the FarFish project. They were fisheries professionals from Cabo Verde (2) and Senegal (1). A partnership building trip was also taken to Seychelles, where more candidates were interviewed for the training activities in FarFish, and the progress to date was discussed.

8. Innovative online content creation

The GRÓ FTP released a video series exploring Sustainable Development Goal 14. There are ten targets within SDG 14, five of which deal with fisheries and how humans can use the living aquatic resources to build the future we want. The videos were published on YouTube and are open to the public. GRÓ FTP's SDG 14 video series draws upon the FTP's more than 20 years of experience working with fisheries in developing countries. Through conversations with experts, the SDG 14 fisheries targets are dissected. Building on research projects developed by FTP fellows some of the major issues facing the development of fisheries across the world today are explored, and what might be done to meet the ambitious targets of SDG 14. These videos are designed to be a useful teaching tool for a diversity of audiences, including the UNESCO IOC Ocean Teacher Global Academy online learning platform, incoming GRÓ FTP fellows and candidates, supplementary materials for short courses, and any university or training organization interested in exploring the field of fisheries.

Defining and defending small scale fisheries. SDG target 14b aims to provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets. About 2/3 of all fish caught for human consumption comes from small-scale fisheries. 90% of the people in fisheries are in the small-scale sector. The concept of small-scale fisheries is explained, how it has changed over time, and can be applied today.

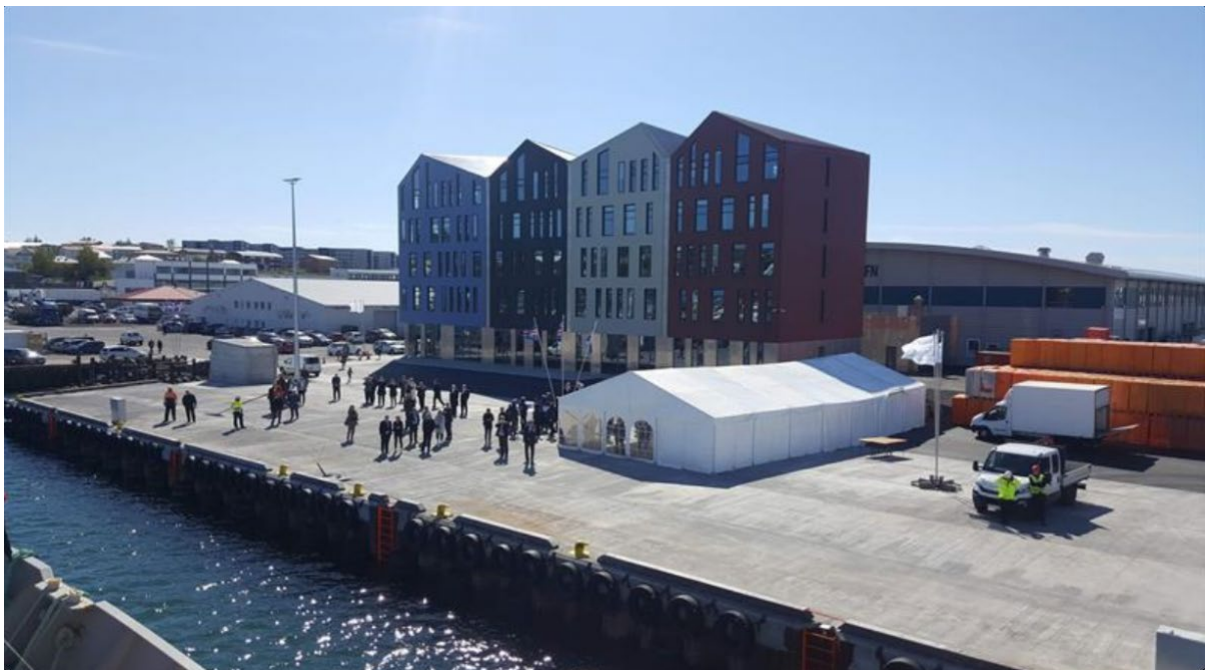
Data for sustainable fisheries management. SDG target 14.4 seeks to implement science-based management plans to restore fish stocks to maximum sustainable yield. A generation ago, 90% of the fish stocks we harvested came from sustainably sourced stocks, today the number is closer to 66%. A fundamental fisheries equation is explained on how this problem can be solved.

Small projects for big impact in fisheries. SDG target 14.4 aims to effectively regulate harvesting, end overfishing, illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and to end destructive fishing practices. Examples are given of how small incentives can lead to real changes on the ground.

Preserving the value of fish. SDG 14.7 aims, by 2030, to increase the economic benefits to small island developing states, and least developed countries, from sustainable use of marine resources. Worldwide, about 10% of people rely on fisheries as a source of food and income. Unfortunately, in many places today, the way fish is handled turns what should be a health food, into a health hazard. The video describes how precious marine resources can be maximised.

9. Impact of COVID and lessons learned

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, much of the established operation of the GRÓ FTP was delayed in 2020. In lieu of the FTP's regular activities, the focus of the FTP this year moved towards improving the quality and processes behind the work, as well as building new ideas for growth and innovative projects. The FTP expects that this work will help to strengthen the FTP over the coming years.



GRÓ-FTP moves with the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute from Reykjavík to a new location in Hafnarfjörður.

GRÓ GEST Summary Annual Report 2020

1. Post-graduate training programme

The Gender Equality Studies and Training programme (GEST) operated its full 30 ECTS diploma. Programme modules were the following: Theories and Concepts of Gender; Gender and Development: Tools and Strategies; Gender, Violence and Security; Gender, Labour and Migration; Gender, Environment and Climate Change; and the Final Assignment.

In 2020 the programme began January 9 and ended on May 22, with twenty fellows, fourteen women and six men, from eleven countries, graduating with a Post-Graduate diploma in International Gender Studies from the University of Iceland. For the first time there were fellows from Cameroon, Russia (Arctic affairs in Iceland grant), and Sri Lanka.

GEST endeavours not only to admit a diverse group of fellows to the programme each year, but also to invite a diverse group of specialists to participate. In 2020 the GRÓ GEST programme had lecturers in modules who are nationals and residents in South Africa, Ghana, and India, as well as from Iceland, continental Europe and the Americas. The lecturers and supervisors also represent a large spectrum of fields of study and specializations, from the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, medicine, business, law, economics, fine arts, and more.



President of Iceland Dr. Guðni Th. Jóhannesson and First Lady Eliza Reid with the GRÓ GEST cohort of 2020 (Photo: Kristinn Ingvarsson).

2. In-country and regional training

In 2020, in-country short courses were postponed due to COVID-19.

3. Scholarships

Two former GEST fellows were admitted to studies at the University of Iceland in 2020 as part of the first full three-year, PhD fellowships offered by GRÓ GEST. The recipients are a woman from Uganda and a man from Ethiopia.

4. Workshops and conferences / Platforms for knowledge exchange and dialogue

- **GRÓ GEST/RIKK Lecture Series.** For the spring 2020, the GEST RIKK joint lecture series was devoted to the topic Gender and Climate Change. The first three lectures were held at the National Museum of Iceland in January and February 2020. With the disruption of COVID-19 further lectures were postponed to autumn 2020 and moved to an online platform.
- **GE-HEI - Gender Equality in Higher Education Institutions Webinar.** GEST and RIKK collaborated with the Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies (CIEG) of the Institute of Social and Political Sciences (ISCSP) at the University of Lisbon on the project GE-HEI - Gender Equality in Higher Education Institutions. The GE-HEI project hosted a webinar in November.
- **Online Seminar on Women Peace and Security for 20 years.** In partnership with the Nordic Women Mediators Network (NWM) and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Iceland, GEST organized an online seminar in three sessions on 26 November 2020, addressing the progress made within the Women, Peace and Security Agenda since the signing of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in 2000.
- **#MeToo: Thinking Ahead – Online Symposium.** To celebrate the launch of The Routledge Handbook of the Politics of the #MeToo Movement (see 4.3.1.) GEST held an online symposium on 3 December 2020.
- **The GEST Podcast.** The GEST Podcast was launched in January 2020. In the podcast GEST staff engage in conversation with fellows and international experts affiliated with the GEST programme.

5. Networking

- **Alumni Seminar.** GEST hosted its Alumni Seminar on December 18 online. The Seminar was well attended by Alumni and GEST lecturers and staff, and six GEST alumni presented their findings from research into the gendered impact of COVID-19 in different national contexts. Their research reports were subsequently published online on GEST's website in 2021.
- **GRÓ GEST - Makerere University MOU.** A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the University of Iceland and Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, was signed in February 2020. The MoU covers activities such as exchange of students and faculty, research and publishing collaboration, organizing of symposiums, short courses, conferences, and more. Among activities are a lecture given in 2020 to students at the School of Women and Gender Studies by the GRÓ GEST Director.
- **Erasmus+.** GRÓ GEST has initiated several inter-institutional agreements under the European Union's Erasmus+ scholarship and exchange programme. This has enabled GRÓ GEST to expand its connections to include post-conflict Balkan countries Kosovo, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro, in addition to providing enhanced opportunities in Africa and the Middle East. In 2020 four students participated in the GRÓ GEST programme as joint Erasmus+/GRÓ GEST fellows and two staff exchanges took place, supported by Erasmus+. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic several intended staff exchanges had to be postponed.

6. Research and knowledge creation

Nothing to report in 2020.

7. Advisory services and knowledge sharing

Nothing to report in 2020.

8. Innovative online content creation

- **MOOCs.** Since 2020, GEST has been working on building a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) catalogue on gender and international development via the edX platform. Joining edX was a step for GEST to improve the quality and outreach of transnational knowledge transmission and to reach gender equality practitioners and professionals anywhere in the world, with special focus on advertising the courses in developing countries. In May 2020, GEST launched its first online course, on Gender and Intersectionality. MOOCs make first class higher education readily accessible to large numbers of people who would otherwise often not be able to further their educations, including many in the developing world. The edX platform is in essence free to the user, although a provision is made for those who wish to pursue a documented and verified study path to pay a low fee for such verification. From its launch until February 2022, over 9.000 people from more than 170 countries enrolled in the course. In the most popular run of the course, from June 2020 – June 2021, 58% of enrolled learners were from developing countries. The course has a 5/5 star rating on Class Central where it ranks #3 in the topics of Sociology and Gender Studies.

9. Impacts of COVID and lessons learned:

The year 2020 was a memorable year. It started off like any other GEST semester with the welcoming of a new cohort in early January. In March, the University of Iceland was forced to close down due to COVID-19 restrictions and overnight, lectures were transferred to remote teaching. Yet, despite the adversity, the GEST fellows responded to an exceptional situation with professionalism and perseverance; in no other year did a higher number of student final assignments receive an honorary mention. After the graduation ceremony in late May, the GEST team had the difficult task of bringing the fellows back home. By the end of July, two months after the programme's conclusion, it had been mostly accomplished; only two students from Nigeria – where all international airports remained closed until mid-September – had to stay in Iceland until autumn.



The 2020 cohort joined in the classroom by Icelandic author and activist Andri Snær Magnason.

GRÓ GTP Summary Annual Report 2020

1. Post-graduate training programmes

The six-month training in Iceland is the core activity of GRÓ GTP and 718 fellows from 63 countries had received such training up to the end of 2019. At the beginning of the year 25 individuals from 14 countries were invited to the six-month training, planned to start in late April. This was later postponed until early July because of COVID-19 complications and eventually cancelled altogether.

The eight-member studies board met twice during 2020, to discuss academic aspects of the six-month training, modification of the six-month program, preparation of reading material and various other issues. The Director of GRÓ GTP was additionally in contact with different board-members to discuss details of the planned training.

In 2020 staff and supervisors reviewed/edited project reports of the 2019 six-month fellows for publication (annual yearbook and website), see item 6 below.



MSc and PhD fellows visiting their former landlord on his farm in east Iceland 2020.

2. In-country and regional training

The most significant in-country and regional training has involved regular short courses (1 – 3 weeks in length) in Kenya (for Africa) and El Salvador (for Latin America and the Caribbean), operated in cooperation with local energy companies involved in geothermal development. Up to the end of 2019, 28 such courses had been held and close to 1500 individuals had benefitted from this type of training. Unfortunately, both short courses had to be cancelled in 2020 because of COVID-19 complications.

Other significant in-country and regional training GRÓ GTP is associated with, includes the Geothermal Diploma Course, operated in El Salvador, and the short courses described under item 4. below. Unfortunately, the Diploma Course had to be cancelled in 2020 because of COVID-19 complications. In addition, GTP has been involved in an advisory role in a Geothermal Centre of Excellence for Africa being set up in Kenya and a newly formed Sino-Icelandic Geothermal Training Program in China (managed by Sinopec). No activity was associated with either in 2020, the latter operated for the first time in late 2019, with input from GTP.

3. Scholarships

The GTP was able to grant 5 scholarships for MSc-studies and 1 for PhD-studies, at universities in Iceland, in 2020, despite COVID complications. This brought the total number of such scholarships offered since 1999 up to 92. The MSc-scholarship recipients were from Ethiopia, Kenya, Indonesia (2), and El Salvador, with 2 of them women. The new PhD-student in 2020 is a woman from India, who had already finished MSc-studies, with GTP support.

In 2020 three graduated with a MSc-degree, fellows from Ethiopia, Kenya and India, bringing the total of graduated scholarship recipients to 73.

4. Workshops and conferences

GRÓ GTP organized a pre-congress short course at the 2020 ARGeo C8 conference, as done previously. It was held online (see item 8 below) in November 2020. The conference was organized by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the African Rift Geothermal Facility (ARGeo), the first to be organized completely online. The short course was devoted to direct application of low- to medium-enthalpy geothermal resources, for two days, and consisted of lectures by 6 Icelandic and 4 Kenyan experts and associated discussions. The short course was financed by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Iceland.

Participation by GRÓ GTP staff in other workshops and conferences was limited to online participation on a few occasions in 2020.

5. Networking

The GRÓ GTP along with its former and current fellows; lecturers and supervisors; universities, institutes and companies in Iceland; as well as ministries, agencies, institutes and companies in cooperating countries, constitute an extensive, active and valuable network reaching the world over. There's extensive communication throughout this network, such as through e-mail, online and face-to-face meetings, through social media like Facebook, Twitter, etc. as well as through direct visits to various countries. The new affiliation with UNESCO provides a new, interesting, and hopefully beneficial networking angle.

6. Research and knowledge creation

The main research conducted, and knowledge created, in the network mentioned above, is represented by 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 in various journals as well as for conferences, (e) papers published by GTP in association with short courses (see 4. above), and (f) reading/reference material published specifically by GRÓ GTP.

During 2020 the research reports of the 24 six-month fellows of 2019 were published after comprehensive/multiple editing (see item 1 above). In addition, 3 MSc-theses were published, as well as a few papers associated with GTP-supported PhD projects. Finally, some reading/reference material was created in cooperation with the GRÓ GTP Studies Board, pertaining to the main aspects of geothermal research presented during the six-month training. This material awaits further work in 2021, leading to eventual publication by GRÓ GTP.

7. Advisory services and knowledge sharing

This is firstly of a formal nature, such as solicited by various institutes, governments, etc. worldwide. A 2020 example of this is comprehensive work performed by two GTP-staff, in relation to planning of development cooperation to African countries, for the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the autumn, which was possible because of different workload in 2020. This is also of a more informal nature, e.g. through various types of communication, visits and

reception of guests, as well through participation in conferences and workshops. Guest-reception includes lectures for groups of variable size and nature visiting Iceland, often given by the Director of GTP or other staff members. Participation in conferences and workshops was more limited during 2020, than in a normal year.

8. Innovative online content creation

Interest in using online possibilities in the training activities of GRÓ GTP has been increasing in recent years. With the onslaught of COVID, this became an immediate possibility and challenge. Plans were, therefore, set up for online short courses planned and conducted by GRÓ GTP, using lecturers from the Icelandic pool of experts as well as former fellow with considerable and relevant knowhow. The first such course was actually held in April 2021, but before that GTP organized an online pre-congress short course at the 2020 ARGeo C8 conference (see item 4 above).

9. Impacts of COVID and lessons learned

The impact of COVID was quite dramatic, as was the rule for most human activity in 2020. The six-months training had to be postponed, mainly due to difficulties in acquiring visas and travelling, restrictions in home-countries and restrictions on travelling to Iceland and staying there. In addition, regular short courses in Kenya and El Salvador as well as the Geothermal Diploma Course in El Salvador were suspended.



MSc and PhD fellows on an easter trip to celebrate release of lockdown in 2020.

GRÓ LRT Summary Annual Report 2020

1. Post-graduate training programmes

In 2020, the post-graduate six-month training programme, scheduled to start on 16 March with 20 participants, had to be postponed and later rescheduled for March 2021 due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The candidates to take part in the 2020 training were invited to participate in the six-month training in 2021.

The GRÓ LRT Academic Committee met twice in 2020 to discuss the academic aspect of the six-month training and programme adjustments following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The GRÓ LRT director was also in contact with different committee members to discuss further programme developments and the development of new video teaching material.

2. In-country and regional training

In 2020, three in-country training courses were planned, in Mongolia in May, Uganda in October, and Ethiopia in November. The short courses in Uganda and Ethiopia were organised and partially funded under Erasmus+ partnership agreements between GRÓ LRT and its partners in respective countries. All three planned in-country training courses had to be cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Scholarships

Since 2017, GRÓ LRT has offered scholarships for post-graduate studies in Iceland to former fellows of the six-month training. Two graduate students were studying at Icelandic universities on GRÓ LRT scholarships in 2020. A PhD student from Mongolia studying at the Faculty of Environmental and Forest Sciences at Agricultural University of Iceland, and an MA student from Ghana studying Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Iceland.

4. Workshops and conferences

All GRÓ LRT staff travel to take part in international workshops and conferences was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

GRÓ LRT deputy director participated in UNESCO's Biodiversity Day expert panel, organised as a virtual event to celebrate the International Day for Biological Diversity in 2020. In the expert panel, participants addressed and discussed the topic: "What are the possible ways/tools to regenerate ecosystems and restore our links to the living?"

5. Networking

Regular visits to GRÓ LRT partner institutions in Africa and Asia were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Meetings with partners institutions and interviews with candidates for the six-month training were moved into the virtual space.



Beatrice Dossah from Ghana studied at the University of Iceland on a GRÓ LRT Scholarship in 2019-2021. She graduated with an MA in Environment and Natural Resources from the University of Iceland in June 2021.

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.

No research reports were produced or published in 2020 as the six-month training was cancelled due to COVID-19. The PhD scholarship recipient presented a poster, with preliminary results from her PhD research, at the Fourth Conference of the Nordic Society Oikos 2020. There were several scientific publications by former GRÓ LRT fellows in 2020: a TEDx talk on the importance of sustainable management of grazing lands in Mongolia; submission of a PhD thesis, and publication of a paper in the journal *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics*.

7. Advisory services and knowledge sharing

In 2020, GRÓ LRT advised the Mongolian University of Life Sciences (MULS) on the development of a new curriculum for undergraduate studies in ecological restoration at MULS.

One of the GRÓ LRT permanent staff was seconded to the Directorate of International Cooperation at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Reykjavik, from September 2020 to January 2021, to work on new projects in the field of ecosystem restoration in the Ministry's development cooperation portfolio.

8. Innovative online content creation

In the beginning of 2020, the open online course *Sheep in the Land of Fire and Ice* was listed as one of the top 30 Class Central Best Online Courses of 2019. The course was co-developed by GRÓ LRT and the Agricultural University of Iceland. The course covers topics related to the sustainability of sheep grazing in Iceland and explores how history, socioeconomic factors and environmental conditions have influenced the management of grazing resources.

In the summer of 2020, GRÓ LRT worked with a cinematographer filming landscape in Iceland: areas of degraded land, restoration sites, agricultural fields, and wetlands. The footages have been edited to be used as video teaching materials in the GRÓ LRT programme.

9. Impacts of COVID and lessons learned

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on GRÓ LRT in 2020. First, the annual six-month training scheduled to start in mid-March 2020, was rescheduled for March 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The postponement of the training was done at the last minute following an announcement from the Icelandic authorities, on 13 of March, stipulating firm restrictions of people gathering and the temporary closing of universities in Iceland (including the Agricultural University of Iceland where GRÓ LRT is hosted). Secondly, three in-country short courses were cancelled, and all staff international travel was suspended, meaning that there were no visits to partner institutions in Africa and Asia in 2020.

Annex 2: Summary of main activities of GRÓ Programmes in 2021

GRÓ FTP Summary Annual Report 2021

1. Post-graduate training

The 2021 cohort of fellows was the largest the GRÓ FTP has hosted, with 28 fishery professionals from 17 countries. The group included 18 fellows from Africa, 12 from LDCs, and 4 from SIDS countries. The gender ratio in the group was equal, with 14 females and 14 males. Amongst the 28 fellows, 11 studied *Fisheries Policy and Management* (University of Akureyri), 7 the *Aquatic Resource Assessment and Monitoring* (Marine and Freshwater Research Institute), 6 the *Quality Management of Food Handling and Processing* (Matis) and 4 *Sustainable Aquaculture* (Hólar).



The 2021 cohort on a field trip in Northern Iceland.

2. In-country and regional training

Due to travel restrictions brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, none of the planned in-country short courses GRÓ FTP had anticipated holding in 2021 went forward as planned. Two of these in-country trainings are still pending, and one was held remotely with participation on site from GRÓ FTP fellows.

Data-Limited Methods for Fisheries Stock Assessment

The FarFish in-country short course was delivered as a hybrid online/in person workshop September 29th-October 1st 2021. The course was broken into two sections, commencing with an open seminar on Data Limited Methods, and followed by a closed workshop on the use of the FarFish DLM Tool. A total of 50 participants attended the open seminar, and nine (9) attendees took part in the closed workshop that followed. The timing of the course, delivery methods, and target audience were modified in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Scholarships

GRÓ FTP has since 2005 provided scholarships to fellows for post-graduate studies in Iceland to enhance academic and research capacity in partner countries. To date the FTP has provided funding for 35 scholarships for postgraduate studies at Icelandic Universities, 14 for master's

and 16 for doctoral studies. Five former fellows have received scholarships for both MSc and PhD studies.

PhD scholarship recipients in 2021 are from Nigeria, Uganda, Liberia, Cabo Verde, Indonesia and VietNam (2 men, 4 women).

MSc scholarship recipients in 2021 are from Namibia and Jamaica (2 women).

4. Workshops and Conferences

Ultimately, the GRÓ FTP did not participate in any workshops or conferences in 2021 due to the pandemic. The FTP had expected to participate in the Large Ocean Nations conference hosted in the Faroe Islands, and a study tour in Latin America as part of the partnership built with the regional fisheries organization OSPESCA, but both were cancelled.

5. Networking

In the 24 years since the GRÓ FTP was founded, 441 fellows have participated in the 6-month training programme in Iceland and returned home to more than 65 countries. It has long been an FTP goal to better connect with the alumni by developing an alumni network to facilitate communication between former fellows. In 2021, several ideas were developed as to how GRÓ FTP might better connect with alumni, though no commitments were made.

6. Research and Knowledge Creation

All research projects of the Fisheries Training Programme fellows are available on the website groftp.is. The new format of the website makes the projects searchable, not only by topic or country, but also by keyword. The hope is that this will help to elevate the searchability and relevance of the work produced by the fellows for others conducting work in the field of fisheries. Three MSc scholarship recipients graduated in 2021, hailing from Guyana, Ghana, and Angola. A new PhD scholarship was awarded to a former fellow from Nigeria.

7. Advisory services and Knowledge Sharing

FarFish – Horizon 2020

FarFish is an EU Horizon 2020 funded research and innovation project that aimed to provide knowledge, tools and methods to support responsible, sustainable and profitable EU fisheries outside European waters, compatible with Maximum Sustainable Yield. The project was launched in June, 2017 and completed in November, 2021, after being granted a force majeure extension of 6 months due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Within FarFish, the GRÓ FTP lead the work package relating to Capacity Building and Dissemination (WP7). The overall objectives of WP7 relate to the project's objective to provide education, training and dissemination to stakeholders within the value chains of EU fisheries in international- and Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPA¹) waters, and to improve their professional skills and regional networks. In addition to leading the work package, the GRÓ FTP conducted training needs assessments in the case study countries (Seychelles, Cabo Verde, Senegal, and Mauritania) and hosted 5 fellows from the case study countries for the post-graduate training in Iceland. GRÓ FTP also hosted a short course relating to data limited methods in fisheries stock assessment in connection with the FarFish Project.

NORAD-contracted evaluation of the EAF Nansen Programme

At the invitation of NIRAS, the GRÓ FTP joined a team to bid on a project initiated by NORAD to conduct an evaluation of the EAF Nansen programme. The team was awarded the project

¹ Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements are the EU's negotiated access agreements which allow EU vessels to fish in the waters of other countries

in May 2021, and the project is expected to take approximately one year. The main purpose of the evaluation is to acquire information about the performance of the EAF-Nansen cooperation and any associated fisheries management assistance at the regional and national level and draw lessons for future implementation of the programme.

8. Innovative online content creation

The SDG videos made in 2020 were published in 2021.

9. Impact of COVID and lessons learned

The pandemic presented challenges for the logistics and administration of the Post-graduate training. While most of the incoming fellows were vaccinated, some were not and needed to quarantine for the first week. Fortunately, it was possible to stream the first week of courses via online platforms, so everyone could follow the lectures, even if they were in isolation at the time. The FTP is also extremely pleased that the companies they partner with were able to accept the group for site visits this year. Given the circumstances, the programme had anticipated many of the companies would not be able to welcome the group due to Covid-19 concerns. Fortunately, this was not the case, and several of the companies that are typically visited gladly and generously opened their doors to the group.



On a field trip in Húsavík.

GRÓ GEST Summary Annual Report 2021

1. Post-graduate training programme

The Gender Equality Studies and Training programme (GEST) operated its full 30 ECTS diploma programme. Programme modules were the following: Theories and Concepts of Gender; Gender and Development: Tools and Strategies; Gender, Violence and Security; Gender, Labour and Migration; Gender, Environment and Climate Change; and the Final Assignment.

In 2021 the programme began on August 11 and twenty fellows, 19 women and one man from fifteen countries, graduated on December 10. For the first time there were fellows from China, Egypt, Mexico, Mongolia, Namibia and Nepal.

GEST's teaching staff in 2021, i.e. module lecturers and final assignment supervisors, were nationals and residents of Uganda, Ghana, India, Lebanon, Denmark, Austria, the United Kingdom, United States of America and Iceland.



GRÓ GEST graduates of 2021 (Photo: Kristinn Ingvarsson).

2. In-country and regional training

Teaching Gender to Youth, in St. Lucia, 12 – 13 July. The short course was held online in collaboration with Girls of a Feather in St. Lucia for 50 professionals, teachers and employees of NGOs.

Gender and Climate Change, held in Mchinji district in Malawi from 25 November to 3 December. The short course was a pilot course in Malawi, based on a successful short course by the same name previously implemented in Uganda and developed for Malawi through a collaboration between GRÓ GEST and Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) that was ongoing from 2019 despite some delays and difficulties caused by COVID. The training was facilitated by a team of experts from LUANAR and participants were 23 district officials in different sections of government in Mchinji district.

3. Scholarships

The two former GEST fellows that began their formal PhD candidacy in 2020 at the University of Iceland, supported by GRÓ GEST PhD Fellowships, started their studies in spring semester 2021. These are the first full three-year, PhD fellowships offered by GRÓ GEST. Both doctoral fellows' progress has been according to schedule. The recipients are a woman from Uganda and a man from Ethiopia.

4. Workshops and conferences / Platforms for knowledge exchange and dialogue

GRÓ GEST/RIKK Conversation Series. In Spring 2021 GRÓ GEST hosted a conversation series entirely online, in lieu of the usual lecture series. The topic of the series was #MeToo:

Thinking Forward, where authors from the Routledge Handbook of the Politics of the #MeToo Movement and other GEST collaborators engaged in a dialogue.

IDEAS – Inclusive Educational Anti-Discrimination Alternatives. GRÓ GEST joined this two-year project, funded by the EU through the Erasmus+ programme. The project aims to conceptualize and record 35 podcasts making feminist knowledge accessible and contributing to the empowerment of multiple marginalized groups, especially women. GRÓ GEST contributes to the project by sharing its knowledge of podcasting. A workshop with the project partners in Athens, Greece focused on script writing for podcasting and how to make feminist knowledge and women's empowerment accessible through mono-sensory media.

Public Lecture. GEST and RIKK co-sponsored an open lecture given by Nigerian author and feminist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in Reykjavík on 10 September.

The Imagine Forum. As in previous years, GEST joined hands, along with the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Institute for Sustainability Studies, with Höfði Reykjavík Peace Centre in hosting its annual conference, which was held on 8 October under the title of "Building Trust for Sustainable Peace".

PGI Workshop and Seminar. The seminar *Protection, Gender and Inclusion* took place on 21-22 October and was hosted by GRÓ GEST in partnership with the Icelandic Red Cross. The seminar consisted of a full day Webinar on the first day and three face-to-face workshops that took place at the University of Iceland on the second day. The 2021 GRÓ GEST cohort participated in both the seminar and workshop days.

Nordic Women Mediators Annual Meeting side event. GRÓ GEST is the operational partner in Iceland for the Nordic Women Mediators network, and as such organised the 2021 NWM Annual Meeting, that was held in Reykjavík in November, in cooperation with the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs. As a side event to the meeting, in partnership with Folke Bernadotte Academy in Sweden and Crisis Management Initiative in Finland, GRÓ GEST hosted the one-day workshop "Inclusive Mediation to Sustain Peace". It was attended by NWM members, Icelandic specialists and the GRÓ GEST cohort of 2021.

Decolonisation of Nordic Higher Education. GRÓ GEST co-organised an intra-Nordic workshop: *Decolonizing Nordic Higher Education*, in Stockholm in October. The workshop was funded by ReNEW, a research hub established to enhance cooperation and to develop new quality research on the Nordic region within a global context.

5. Networking

Red Cross of Iceland. GRÓ GEST's Memorandum of Understanding with the Red Cross of Iceland (RKÍ), originally signed in 2018, was renewed in early 2021. This collaboration has provided connections to the Malawian Red Cross through the programme participation of a Red Cross of Malawi nominated fellow (with co-funding from RKÍ) in 2020; the opportunity for 2021 fellows to participate in the PGI seminar and workshops; and professional Results Based Management training within the diploma programme for cohorts in 2019, 2020 and 2021 by a RKÍ trainer.

UNESCO. In 2021, GRÓ GEST and UNESCO's Division for Gender Equality took the first steps towards developing a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) with the working title "*Masculinities in Motion: Building peaceful and gender equal societies through Education, Communication and Information, Culture and the Sciences*".

ERASMUS+. In 2021, one student participated in the diploma programme with the support of an Erasmus+ exchange scholarship, and one guest lecturer visited GRÓ GEST on a staff

exchange. Another planned student exchange, from Kabul University in Afghanistan, was regrettably cancelled due to circumstances caused both by Covid and the situation in Afghanistan. Due to the pandemic, staff exchanges that were postponed in 2020 could also not take place in 2021.

6. Research and knowledge creation

GGEO-2. 2021 saw the conclusion of a collaboration hosted by GRÓ GEST, funded by UN Women and UNDP and initiated in 2020, intended to evaluate the prospects for producing a successor to the Global Gender and Environment Outlook, GGEO, from 2016. Originally intended to take the form of an on-site knowledge sharing meeting in Iceland, the project was adapted to the realities of a COVID-stricken world and ultimately, participants produced research into the subject without travelling. Research reports were written and gathered and will be used to inform the continuation of GGEO-2.

ICE-QUEEN. GRÓ GEST co-hosts the RANNIS-funded three-year research project *Queer Refugees in Queer Utopias: Inclusions and Exclusions*, led by a GEST project manager on a part-time basis. The aim of the project is to generate knowledge on the social experiences of SOGIE refugees in Iceland, with an international focus towards Italy and Greece.

Decolonising Curriculum. GRÓ GEST co-hosts the RANNÍS-funded research project *Decolonizing curriculum*, led by a GEST research specialist.

7. Advisory services and knowledge sharing

University Centre Westfjords. GEST taught in a course in the master's programme in Coastal Communities and Regional Development, at the University Centre Westfjords in April.

GTP – Energy and Gender. GEST taught a session on Energy and Gender for the fellows of GRÓ Geothermal Training Programme in June 2021.

8. Innovative online content creation

MOOCs. In collaboration with experts from the London School of Economics, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), University of Cape Town and the University of Oslo, GRÓ GEST began developing two transnational online courses on gender, development, and post-conflict states. This project was funded by ERASMUS+. Curriculum development and recording for the first of these two courses, *Gender, Violence and Post-Conflict States*, was completed in 2021. Curriculum development for the second of these, *Critical Approaches to Gender and Development*, was well underway by the end of the year.

9. Impacts of COVID and lessons learned

The selection process for the 2021 GRÓ GEST programme was finalised in September 2020. At the beginning of the autumn semester in 2020, operations at the University of Iceland were relatively normal. Shortly after, however, there was a significant upsurge in COVID-19 cases, causing a near complete lockdown of activities at the university and in the country at large. In light of these developments and difficulties posed by COVID-19 to travel it was decided to postpone the start of the GEST diploma programme from January until August 2021. Prospective spring 2021 fellows were invited to join the programme in August 2021 and a majority accepted the offer. This meant that in the academic year of 2021–2022, two cohorts joined the GRÓ GEST programme, the first starting in August 2021 and the second in January 2022.

Administrative tasks surrounding fellows' travel, primarily the procurement of travel visas, became significantly more difficult (and expensive) due to Covid's effects all around the world. This was true both for tasks performed by GRÓ GEST staff and by the fellows themselves,

several of whom went to extraordinary lengths to be able to participate in the programme. The situation resulted in several students arriving late in Iceland, i.e. not until after the programme began. Furthermore, in August 2021 a full third of the cohort, as well as one visiting lecturer, required quarantine in Iceland upon arrival, due to not being fully vaccinated before their travels. This impacted the beginning of the programme, as several were not able to be done with quarantine until after instruction had begun.



Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Jón Atli Benediktsson, Rector of the University of Iceland, with the recipients of the Vigdís Finnbogadóttir award at the GRÓ GEST graduation ceremony in 2021, Pamela Chavarría Machado and Daria Burnasheva (Photo: Kristinn Ingvarsson).

GRÓ GTP Summary Annual Report 2021

1. Post-graduate training programmes

The six-month training in Iceland is the core activity of GRÓ GTP. In 2020 the six-month training had to be postponed for the first time, due to COVID-19. In 2021, full emphasis was placed on conducting the training and the 25 individuals from 14 countries, who had already been invited in 2020, were invited again. Only 3 of these had to be replaced, because of changes in personal circumstances. Five lines of specialization were on offer this time; 1) geothermal geology, 2) geophysical exploration, 3) chemistry of thermal fluids, 4) drilling engineering and 5) utilization. The program opened on June 1st and was closed on November 19th. One new country, Columbia, was added to GTP's six-month training roster. The gender ratio has never before been as equal, with 12 women in the group of 25 fellows. An important and regular part of the six-month training has been a week-long visit by an international guest-lecturer. This was not the case in 2021 – instead the fellows were invited to take part in the quintennial World Geothermal Congress, WGC2020+1, both a pre-congress short course as well as the conference itself.

The eight-member studies board met twice during 2020, to discuss academic aspects of the six-months training, modification of the six-month program, preparation of reading material and various other issues. The Director of GTP was additionally in regular contact with different board-members to discuss details of the planned training.



Geophysics group with their teacher Gylfi Hersir at the Geldingadalir eruption site.

2. In-country and regional training

The most significant in-country and regional training has involved regular short courses (1 – 3 weeks in length) in Kenya (for Africa) and El Salvador (for Latin America and the Caribbean), operated in cooperation with local energy companies involved in geothermal development. Unfortunately, the El Salvador short course had to be cancelled for the second time in 2021, because of COVID complications. The one in Kenya was, however, successfully conducted through the cooperation of GRÓ GTP plus KenGen and GDC of Kenya. The course was titled “*Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Short Course V on Exploration and Development of Geothermal Resources*” and was conducted between November 14th and December 4th, with 50 participants from 14 African countries. Most of the instructors were from Kenya, while 3 Icelandic geoscientists (all female) contributed significantly, and successful attempts were made employing pre-recorded lectures by Icelandic experts. Up to the end of 2021, 29 such

courses had been held and more than 1500 individuals had benefitted from this type of training. (See also item 8. below)

Other significant in-country and regional training, GRÓ GTP is associated with, includes the Geothermal Diploma Course, operated in El Salvador, and the short courses described under 4. below. Unfortunately, the Diploma Course had to be cancelled in both 2020 and 2021, because of COVID-19 complications. In addition, GTP has been involved in an advisory role in a Geothermal Centre of Excellence for Africa being set up in Kenya and a newly formed Sino-Icelandic Geothermal Training Program in China (managed by Sinopec). As in 2020, no activity was associated with either in 2021 due to the pandemic.

3. Scholarships

The GTP was able to grant 4 scholarships for MSc-studies and 2 for PhD-studies, at universities in Iceland, in 2021. This brought the total number of such scholarships offered since 1999 up to 98. The MSc-scholarship recipients were from Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and the Philippines, with 1 of them being female. The new PhD-students in 2021 are a woman from Djibouti and a man from Bolivia, the latter had previously finished MSc-studies in Iceland, with GTP support.

In 2021 five fellows graduated with a MSc-degree, and one successfully defended a PhD-project, bringing the total of graduated scholarship recipients to 79. The graduates are from Ecuador, Bolivia, Ethiopia, Tanzania and DR Congo.

4. Workshops and conferences

The first GRÓ GTP online course was held April 20 and 21, 2021, aimed at Africa. It was about 4 hours long each day, with 10-minute contributions from 31 Icelandic experts, GTP staff members as well as former and present fellows, along with fruitful online discussions. About 190 registered participants from 32 countries took part.

Another online activity GRÓ GTP was involved in was a Virtual Forum and Tour on Geothermal Direct Use in September, organized by the ESMAP program of the World Bank. The GTP organized and managed 12 presentations focusing on all aspects of the subject, again from Icelandic experts, GTP staff as well as former and present fellows. This contribution was financed specifically by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Iceland.

GRÓ GTP staff actively participated in WGC2020+1 (see item 5 below). This included involvement in a pre-congress short course and several presentations with associated conference-papers. Participation in other workshops and conferences in 2021 was limited to online participation.

5. Networking

The GRÓ GTP along with its former and current fellows; lecturers and supervisors; universities, institutes and companies in Iceland; as well as ministries, agencies, institutes and companies in cooperating countries, constitute an extensive, active and valuable network reaching the world over. There's extensive communication throughout this network, such as through e-mail, online and face-to-face meetings, through social media like Facebook, Twitter, etc. as well as through direct visits to various countries. Such direct visits were limited to the visit of GTP's Deputy Director to Kenya, in association with the short course described under item 2 above, and a visit by top-level officials from GDC in Kenya to Iceland in late October, including extensive interaction with GTP.

Considerable networking was also associated with WGC2020+1 (World Geothermal Congress, which was to be held in Reykjavík in the spring of 2020 but was postponed to 2021

as well as being turned into a hybrid event, partly on-line over a period of 5 months and partly on-site in October 2021), yet on a smaller scale than anticipated prior to COVID (see item 6 below). GRÓ GTP had grand plans for supporting the attendance of former fellows at WGC2020, with hopes of supporting up to 180 fellows. But COVID interfered severely there, and only 28 were able to attend in person, while a considerably larger group attended online. Former fellows were the authors (first authors or co-authors) of more than 400 papers (~20%) presented at the conference and the staff of GRÓ GTP was associated with 20 papers in addition.

The recent affiliation with UNESCO provides a new, interesting, and hopefully beneficial networking angle, even though COVID slowed the advancement down in 2021.



GTP Fellows reunion at the World Geothermal Congress in Iceland in 2021.

6. Research and knowledge creation

The main research conducted, and knowledge created, in the network mentioned above, is represented by 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 in various journals as well as for conferences, (e) papers published by GTP in association with short courses (see 4. above), and (f) reading/reference material published specifically by GRÓ GTP.

No six-month fellow reports were published in 2021, as the 2020 six-month training was postponed. The 25 reports of the 2021 six-month fellows were all duly submitted, and their editing and publication process started. Their publication is expected during the middle of 2022. A decision has been made to publish these only online, for environmental reasons, as well as improved internet access worldwide, for downloading the reports. All the six-months fellows of 2021 gave short presentations on two occasions, as is normally the custom. Firstly, on geothermal research or development in their home countries and, secondly, on their research projects. These were open to the public, but also available online, for the first time, thus reaching a much larger audience.

In 2021, 5 MSc-theses were published, as well as a few papers associated with GTP-supported PhD projects. Finally, the development of reading/reference material was created in

cooperation with the GRÓ GTP Studies Board, pertaining to the main aspects of geothermal research presented during the six-months training. This material awaits further work in 2022, leading to eventual publication by GRÓ GTP.

7. Advisory services and knowledge sharing

This is firstly of a formal nature, such as solicited by various institutes, governments, etc. worldwide. Examples can be work performed for the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs or various international institutions. This is also of a more informal nature, e.g. through various types of communication, visits and reception of guests (including lectures for groups of variable size and nature visiting Iceland), as well as through participation in conferences and workshops. The latter was more limited during 2021, than in a normal year. A highly significant contribution to knowledge sharing was through the WGC2020+1, mentioned in item 5. above.

8. Innovative online content creation

Interest in using online possibilities in the training activities of GTP has been increasing in recent years. With the onslaught of COVID, this became an immediate possibility and challenge. Plans were, therefore, set up for online short courses planned and conducted by GRÓ GTP, using lecturers from the Icelandic pool of experts as well as former fellows with considerable and relevant knowhow. The first such course was held in April 2021, aimed at Africa (see item 4 above). Later in 2021 GRÓ GTP was involved in online activity organized by the ESMAP program of the World Bank (see also item 4 above).

9. Impacts of COVID and lessons learned

The impact of COVID was considerably less than in 2020. All regular activities of GRÓ GTP were carried out in 2021, with travelling perhaps most seriously affected. Most of the fellows had to spend an initial period in Iceland in quarantine and a few arrived late in Iceland, due to delays in acquiring their visas. All the fellows thus affected could follow lectures and take part in the training online, however. The Geothermal Diploma Course in El Salvador as well as the short course in that country, were suspended for the second year due to COVID.

GRÓ LRT Summary Annual Report 2021

1. Post-graduate training programmes

In 2021, the six-month training programme started on 9 April, almost a month later than usually because of programme adjustments due COVID-19. The cohort of fellows in 2021 consisted of 17 experts (eight women and nine men) from eight countries, all working on issues related to ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management in their home countries. The first days of the 2021 training were organised as online sessions as the fellows had to undergo a 5-day quarantine upon arrival in Iceland. By the second week, the programme was run as a face-to-face learning course, with classroom sessions, field visits and seminars.

As in previous years, the first half of the six-month training was divided in six modules and organized according to a project cycle framework. The topics covered 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. Most of the lecturers and trainers in this year's training were faculty members of the Agricultural University of Iceland and specialists from Soil Conservation Service of Iceland. Module seven in the six-month training curriculum is organised around special topics that can vary from one year to another and include international guest lecturer(s). Module seven was cancelled in the 2021 training because of the programme adjustments due COVID-19. The programme's last 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 six-month training.

The graduation ceremony was held at Keldnaholt Campus on 27 September. The graduating cohort of 2021 was the first group of fellows to participate in the six-month training after the Land Restoration Training Programme became part of GRÓ International Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Societal Change in 2020.

The GRÓ LRT Academic Committee met twice in 2021. First in the beginning of the year to discuss the academic aspects of the 2021 training, and then again in the beginning of December to review the programme curriculum. The GRÓ LRT director was also often in contact with different committee members to discuss programme developments and aspects of planned training activities.



GRÓ LRT graduates of 2021.

2. In-country and regional training

The GRÓ LRT in-country training courses in Mongolia and Uganda were cancelled again in 2021 as the uncertainty generated by the COVID-19 outbreak continued. Yet, a short course in Ethiopia was set for the end of 2021, only to be postponed because of the security situation in the country. The course organisers agreed on changing the course format to a hybrid learning course to be held in March 2022, where GRÓ LRT's input will be in the form of online lectures.

GRÓ LRT was, however, able to co-sponsor a two-day course held in Mongolia on 12-13 November 2021. The training course was organised for local decision makers and environmental experts with the aim of supporting sustainable management of ecosystems in Mongolia. The course was developed and carried out by three of GRÓ LRT's long-standing partner institutions in the country: The Mongolian University of Life Sciences (MULS), the National Federation of Pasture User Groups of Herders (NFPUG), and the Information and Research Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment (IRIMHE). The number of participants in the course was 25.

3. Scholarships

Since 2017, GRÓ LRT has offered scholarships for post-graduate studies in Iceland to former fellows of the six-month training. Four graduate students were studying at Icelandic universities on GRÓ LRT scholarships in 2021. Three of them were studying at the Agricultural University of Iceland: a PhD student from Mongolia and two master's students from Ethiopia. The fourth one was a master's student from Ghana that graduated in June with an MA degree in Environment and Natural Resources Studies from University of Iceland.

4. Workshops and conferences

All GRÓ LRT staff travel to take part in international workshops and conferences was suspended in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, GRÓ LRT staff participated in the 9th World Conference on Ecological Restoration, organised as a virtual event in June 2021.

5. Networking

Regular visits to GRÓ LRT partner institutions in Africa and Asia were suspended in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Meetings with partners institutions and interviews with candidates for the six-month training were moved into the virtual space.

In the beginning of 2021, GRÓ LRT was approved as an official Supporting Partner of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030, but the Decade was officially launched at the World Environment Day on 5 June 2021. As a Supporting Partner, GRÓ LRT helps promote and amplify the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and continues to promote ecological restoration through its channels, networks, and targeted capacity-building activities.

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 17 fellows in the six-month training in 2021, 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

One GRÓ LRT MA scholarship recipient from Ghana graduated in 2021 and a GRÓ LRT scholarship from Mongolia, published her first peer-reviewed paper as part of her PhD studies. Three former GRÓ LRT fellows submitted and defended their PhD thesis in 2021, and one former fellow published a paper in the journal *Agroforestry Systems*. Additionally, GRÓ LRT became an advisory participant in a Rannís funded research project: Restoration of birch woodlands in the 21st century—challenges, approaches, and benefits (2021-2024).

7. Advisory services and knowledge sharing

In 2021, GRÓ LRT and the Icelandic Red Cross signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to establish a strategic collaboration between the two parties. The MoU expresses an interest in sharing of expertise, capacity training and collaborating in Red Cross development projects focusing on land restoration and environmental sustainability.

8. Innovative online content creation

GRÓ LRT published its first promo video in 2021. The video was published on GRÓ LRT's social media platforms: website, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

9. Impacts of COVID and lessons learned

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect the running of GRÓ LRT in 2021, though its impact was not as significant as in 2020. There were challenges regarding the processing of visa applications and in securing flights for the candidates travelling to Iceland to participate in the six-month training. One of the candidates had to cancel his participation in training at a late stage because of international travel restrictions in his home-country. The six-month training in 2021 started almost a month later than usually because of programme adjustments due COVID-19 and the overall time of the training programme was cut by two weeks. This meant some training sessions had to be held on weekends and public holidays, and one of the programme's eight modules was cancelled. Additionally, the GRÓ LRT in-country training courses in Mongolia and Uganda as well as visits to partner institutions were suspended again in 2021 because of COVID-19. Meetings with partners institutions and interviews with candidates for the 2022 six-month training were moved into the virtual space.



GRÓ LRT 2021 fellow Barkhas Badam from Mongolia at experimental plots at Hvanneyri.

Annex 3: Finance

1. 2020

The activities of GRÓ were heavily affected during 2020 on account of the COVID-19 pandemic, as is reflected in the financial reports for the year. Three of the four programmes had to cancel the arrival of fellows by one year. Actual costs were therefore lower than what was budgeted for the year. The only program that could receive fellows in 2020 encountered extra costs relating to travel as fellows had difficulty travelling back home after the conclusion of the training. During the year, GRÓ worked with the host institutions on developing budget templates and on harmonizing cost items among all programs. This entailed an in-depth discussion on different budget items, allowing for better comparison between programmes and aligning budgets for all programs. In addition to this, funds are now disbursed for each quarter, in line with the need anchored in a financial report for funds spent in the previous quarter.

The overview for actual cost against the budget for 2020 is set forth in the following table.

GRÓ Centre	2020	
	Budget	Actual cost
Geothermal Training Programme	261.231.500	167.601.564
Fisheries Training Programme	231.102.000	166.221.000
Land Restoration Training Programme	149.229.750	105.000.000
Gender Equality Studies & Training Programme	123.698.750	137.993.563
Running of the Centre	27.000.000	22.041.854
Total	792.262.000	598.857.981

Deviation from budget

-24%

2. 2021

Despite the various challenges posed by COVID-19, GRÓ managed to continue its operations in 2021. All four programmes were able to receive fellows to the 5-6 months training course. Furthermore, short courses in partner countries could again be conducted, although some activity had to be postponed or cancelled. As presented in the table below, the overall spending was 90% of the budgeted cost, where the Fisheries Training Programme underspent. The year bore mark of Covid, yet without a major effect on financial outcomes.

GRÓ Centre for capacity development	2021	
	Budget	Actual cost
Geothermal Training Programme	261.231.500	263.816.161
Fisheries Training Programme	231.102.000	173.400.000
Land Restoration Training Programme	149.229.750	126.000.000
Gender Equality Studies & Training Programme	123.698.750	123.600.000
Running of the Centre	27.000.000	23.011.764
Total	792.262.000	709.827.925

Deviation from budget

-10,4%



GRÓ LRT fellows doing field work in May 2021.

Annex 4: Success stories

Following are a few examples of the outcomes of the four GRÓ Programmes from the years 2020-2021. 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 individuals that have gone through the training new perspectives, tools and knowledge that will help them to tackle the challenges in their respective fields and to work on advancing the SDGs at home, as well as benefitting the individuals for personal growth and development.

Examples of activity of alumni in 2020 and 2021

A Kenyan male, who attended the 6-month GTP training in Iceland a few years back, was promoted to Acting Geothermal Development Director at KenGen, the main geothermal energy company in Kenya, in 2021. This is one of the highest positions in the company. Prior to that, after he returned from Iceland, he held the position of Resource Development and Infrastructure Development Manager at the company. Geothermal development in Kenya has actually been exceedingly strong during this century and the installed electrical capacity is now 865 MWe, mainly developed and installed by KenGen in the Olkaria geothermal field. GTP has been instrumental in training numerous KenGen employees in the past decades.

The following is a good example of how GRÓ can contribute also beyond the specific field for each programme: An Asian female GRÓ scholarship recipient came to know about women's shelters that assist women suffering from domestic abuse during her time in Iceland, as a long-time sufferer herself. Upon return to her home country she advocated for a similar solution being adopted in her region and has worked on other human rights issues after her return. She has also volunteered in setting up an Energy and Gender course at her local university. Looking at her specific field of expertise, geothermal, this fellow has pushed for the first geothermal electricity project in her country. She also co-founded her own geothermal company. This woman has said her time at GRÓ has sculpted her into an independent and confident leader, enabling her to share and use the knowledge and learnings gained in Iceland to improve lives of women.

A Nigerian GRÓ GEST 2018 fellow headed the project *Business Booster Programme for 100 Rural Women Energy Entrepreneurs* which was actualized through Solar Sister Nigeria. The project trained and supported 100 women entrepreneurs who in turn reached over 7000 users in 30 rural communities in Nigeria with clean energy; woman-owned clean energy businesses in the target areas grew by 50% on average and have continued to grow, participating entrepreneurs scaled up their product portfolios and most community members upgraded to solar home systems, and the project saw the recruitment of at least ten new women entrepreneurs. This project was funded by the first ever *GRÓ GEST Alumni Fund Project Grant*.

A GRÓ GEST 2019 fellow from Malawi, organized and moderated a webinar, engaging experts from across Africa in a discussion on the role of men in ending gender-based violence, to kickstart the celebration of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence. Panellists were six other GRÓ GEST 2019 cohort alumni from three countries and GRÓ GEST lecturers also gave addresses.

Examples of fellows gaining new opportunities, advancing in their careers or embarking on new academic pursuits

A GRÓ FTP female fellow from Asia was in 2021 offered the position of a full-time lecturer at a University in her country. She says, *“I am happy to inform you that I have been selected for the position of permanent Lecturer at the interview. The experience that I gained through the UNESCO-GRO FTP was effective for me to uplift my career.”*

Another GRÓ FTP female fellow from Asia who finished a PhD on a scholarship from GRÓ informed in 2021 she had been offered a position working on fisheries in her region with the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO). She says, *“I want to share this news with you as you are one of the key persons who directed my career path in the field of fisheries science by offering me FTP fellowships to pursue the fisheries training programme and PhD in Iceland.”*

A male GTP scholarship recipient in geothermal geochemistry became, after returning home, the head of a pilot power plant project at his institute.

A female African GRÓ GEST fellow was promoted to the position of director of a unit in a government ministry in charge of construction of bridges, where she incorporates lessons learned at the GEST programme about gender, climate change and sustainability in her work.

A male GRÓ FTP fellow from the Caribbean was awarded a prestigious scholarship that aims to promote cooperation for sustainable development in the world. He will build on the research he did during his time in Iceland that aims to reduce cost of production and ultimately make shrimp farming in his country more efficient and sustainable.

An African GRÓ GTP MSc female fellow received a scholarship to pursue her PhD in geology at a European university, aiming to be a leader within her field. There are very few females within the geothermal sector in her country.

Examples of personal growth experienced by fellows

GRÓ provides a unique opportunity for fellows to meet and mingle with people from all over the world. Such interactions change people and build bridges across traditions, religions, race, gender, and expertise. Friendships have formed between fellows from across the world and many are forever lasting. Most fellows agree that the training in Iceland is not only about their field of expertise. They say that entering a society with a different culture, perspectives and experiences, provides a different outlook on life.

An African Female says in a survey conducted after the training at GRÓ: *“The swimming pools were a new revelation for me. Having to get naked in front of strangers, AND people you know, was a terrible thought. But I wanted to experience the geothermal possibilities of swimming pools. Even in winter people swim in Iceland. So, I had to force myself. I am glad that I did because it wasn’t a big issue at all once you are in there. Nobody is noticing you. You start to realize that your body is no different than anyone else’s and you get more confident about your own body. I think everybody should be made to dress naked from childhood like the Icelanders do. It would probably help people with body issues to gain more confidence, as it seems the Icelandic people have. They are very confident people. Also, many Africans are afraid of water and suffer from a phobia. Learning how to swim and rescue yourself from drowning is priceless. I will teach my children after I go home and finally be able to take them to the beach without fear”.*

A female head of a geothermal project says she sees incredible changes in the female staff after they return from GTP-training in Iceland. They become more self-assured, confident, and partake more actively in the projects at hand, whereas before they were more inactive

bystanders. The effects on their personal lives are also significant as they are more active and outspoken in all aspects of their lives. This comes from a new perspective and exposures to other mindsets and cultures. She describes them as closed roses that suddenly get water and start opening up.

A group of Ugandan GRÓ GEST fellows sent an email to the programme where they wrote: *"We continue to use our experiences and knowledge gained in our stay in Iceland on the GRÓ GEST Programme ... We are forever grateful to the GRÓ GEST Team, Lecturers, Instructors, University of Iceland, the Government of Iceland and UNESCO for positively impacting our lives."* One of them had implemented a project at Makerere University addressing sexual harassment at the university. Another had published two children's books about climate change, inspired by her participation in the GRÓ GEST programme. A third had set up a blog designed to highlight the plight of girls with disabilities while advocating for gender and disability inclusion. The fourth fellow had enrolled in a Master's programme and published several opinion pieces for a newspaper on human rights and trafficking and the fifth had started an independent gender advisory firm.

Excerpts from Student/Fellows' evaluation of the six-month training programme:

"My supervisors were great and quick to review my report on time. ... I learned a lot from the generation of the report and how to develop it to a much more professional level than I knew before. I really liked the support for the topic of my research since it was unknown to my supervisors. It is good to learn that even if you are not an expert on the subject, one can carry [it] out ..."

"It is very difficult to find words, simply I would like to appreciate your everything, keep it up!!!"

"Generally, the training was very important to my career, I would recommend [it] to anyone interested."

"My supervisor walked with me the entire journey."

"I learnt a lot from the training and my stay in Iceland has been an enriching experience."

"The training is one of the best that I have attend[ed]."

"Many times, we have failed as experts by treating all land degradation problems like the same. Now I have learnt in the GRÓ LRT training to assess different drivers of degradation and to employ proper measures for each type of degradation."

"Learning from the Icelandic restoration experiences (the toolbox, the bad choices, persistence, patience, mindset, government support, the planning, a central unit helping restoration (SCSI)) has been the greatest highlight for me."

"To have learned more about sustainable land management [SLM] is the most useful for my work back home. This is because I directly involve and train farmers on SLM in role as an agricultural officer and in planning because the results of my GRÓ LRT study will certainly form a basis for the proportionate allocation of resources for SLM in my district."

"In the GRÓ LRT six-month training, I have gained a lot of skills and knowledge I never imagined I would have. My whole perspective about the environment has changed now because of this program. It has built my career in an amazing way and I am going to impart this newfound knowledge to my colleagues and form a formidable team regarding land restoration."

“Participating in the GRÓ LRT training has improved my professional skills. I want to pursue my studies on the topic and implement the outcomes. I will also teach communities in a personal capacity, because I believe in the importance of this information for public knowledge.”

“In the GRÓ LRT training, I have learned a lot about professionalism, personal conduct, and societal relations. I believe I am a better person than before. I have used my time well in the programme, to gather as much information as I need for my personal development. I have learned so much from the programme and other fellows”