

External Evaluation of GRÓ International Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainability and Societal Change

Evaluation Survey of the GRÓ Alumni
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1. INTRODUCTION

This survey report outlines the results of the online survey conducted with former fellows of the postgraduate training programme in Iceland. The online survey targeted all former fellows of the programmes Gender Equality Studies Training (GEST), Land Restoration Training (LRT), Fisheries Training Programme (FTP), and Geothermal Training Programme (GTP) between the years 1979 to 2023. The evaluation team administered this survey as part of the “External Evaluation of GRÓ International Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainability and Societal Change” on behalf of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Iceland. The survey evaluated fellows’ perspective on the training programme in terms of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, sustainability and impact.

Content and structure of the survey

The survey was designed in close collaboration with the MFA and the four training programmes to ensure alignment with previous evaluation designs and GRÓ’s results framework. It included the following sections:

Informed consent: fellows were explicitly informed about the survey’s purpose and asked if they would like to participate in the data collection.

Basic information: this section included questions on basic characteristics such as graduation year, technical programme, and gender.

Capacity and expertise in the technical field: this section focused on the programmes’ perceived quality and coherence and assessed transferred skills.

Production and dissemination of knowledge: this section included questions on the type of knowledge outputs produced by the fellows and how these were disseminated.

Community building and networking: this section focused on the fellows’ networking activities and the type of exchange they engage in after programme graduation.

Activities and projects in the technical field: this section included questions on individual career advancement as well as contributions to the technical field and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The mixed methods survey combined quantitative and qualitative question types to gather comprehensive data. Most of the questions were quantitative in the form of **multiple-choice questions** and **5-point Likert scales** to capture fellows’ perspectives in an aggregable way. Some **open-ended questions** were included to obtain in-depth **qualitative insights**, allowing for a richer understanding of the respondents’ experiences and opinions. The answer categories for the quantitative questions were developed jointly by the evaluation team and the four technical programmes. Several fellows then pre-tested these to ensure relevance, clarity, and accuracy; this pretesting phase was crucial in refining the survey instrument to enhance its validity and reliability.

Online survey design

The online survey was composed and administered using **LimeSurvey**, a high-quality, open-source survey tool known for its flexibility and robust features. To ensure the survey was user friendly, accessible, and conducive to achieving a high response rate, several key aspects were considered during the survey design and implementation phases:

- **Anonymity:** The survey was designed to be completely anonymous, ensuring that respondents felt comfortable providing candid feedback. This approach was crucial for maintaining data privacy and encouraging honest responses.
- **Response management:** Fellows' contact information was securely uploaded to LimeSurvey to enable the use of personalized bulk email invitations. Additionally, LimeSurvey's automated features facilitated tracking bounced emails, monitoring response rates, and sending reminders to fellows who had not yet responded.
- **Validation rules:** These rules ensured that respondents' entries complied with the required formats, reducing the likelihood of data entry errors, and improving the reliability of the collected data.
- **Conditional logic:** The survey utilized conditional logic to ensure that questions were relevant to each respondent based on their previous answers. This dynamic approach made the survey more engaging and minimized respondent burden.

Survey targeting and administration

The survey aimed to reach all 1,696 former fellows of the postgraduate programmes conducted in Iceland completed the training between 1979 and 2023. The directors of the FTP, GEST, GTP, and LRT programmes provided the evaluation team with contact information for 1,505 fellows. In some instances, multiple email addresses were provided for individual fellows. Before the official survey launch, the programme directors informed the fellows about the upcoming survey and its purpose, encouraging their participation. The survey was administered online through LimeSurvey and was open for responses for four weeks from May 21st to June 17th. To maximize participation and ensure data quality, several strategies were implemented:

- **Presurvey communication:** Fellows were informed about the survey in advance to foster engagement.
- **Periodic reminders:** Automated reminders were sent to non-respondents throughout the survey period.
- **Bounce tracking system:** The validity of email addresses was monitored, and invalid addresses were identified using a bounce tracking system.
- **Alternate contact:** Fellows who could not be reached through their primary email address received survey invitations to their secondary or tertiary email addresses, if available.

Out of the 1,505 fellows for whom contact information was provided, 123 could not be reached due to invalid contact details. Consequently, the survey was successfully sent to 1,382 fellows with valid contact information, achieving an 81% contact rate for all former fellows¹.

Data privacy and security

The evaluation team implemented several measures to ensure full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The following steps were taken:

¹ The bounce tracking system indicated delivery failures for 123 fellows. Based on this, it is assumed that in total 1,382 fellows received the survey invite through a valid email address. It might be that the bounce tracking system did not detect all delivery failures such that fewer fellows successfully received the survey link.

- **Survey data policy:** All information about data privacy and security was comprehensively outlined in a survey data policy included in the online survey. This policy ensured that participants were fully informed about how their data would be handled.
- **Informed consent:** Fellows were thoroughly informed about the purpose of the survey, the data being collected, and how it would be used. Explicit consent was obtained from each fellow before they participated in the survey. Only those who provided informed consent were able to proceed with the survey.
- **Anonymity:** The survey was conducted anonymously to minimize the collection of personal data. The online survey tool, LimeSurvey, was configured to ensure that submitted responses could not be traced back to individual fellows, further protecting their anonymity.
- **Data security:** The contact details used to track the response rate were stored securely and separately from the survey responses to prevent any potential identification of participants. All data was encrypted during transmission and stored on secure servers located in Germany to prevent unauthorized access.
- **Right to withdraw:** Fellows had the right to interrupt the survey at any time before submission without any consequences. They could also opt-out from receiving further survey reminders via email.
- **Data access and deletion:** Fellows were informed that due to the anonymity of responses, it would not be possible for them to access or delete their data after submission.

Data processing and analysis

The survey data was downloaded from LimeSurvey in Excel format and subsequently cleaned and analysed using Stata and Excel with a rigorous and systematic approach to data handling. During data cleaning, the data was reviewed to identify and correct any inconsistencies or errors. Moreover, instances of missing data were addressed appropriately to maintain the integrity of the analysis. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics, such as mean and percentages, to identify common trends and patterns among the responses. The qualitative data from open-ended questions underwent a thematic content analysis. This method involved the identification of recurring themes and patterns. The insights from the qualitative analysis were integrated with the quantitative findings **to offer a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the survey results.**

1.2 SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Survey responses and representation

Of the 1,382 fellows with valid contact information, 936 submitted survey responses. Among these, 431 out of 471 fellows who graduated within the evaluation period of 2018-2023 participated in the survey. **The overall response rate for fellows within this evaluation period is 91.9%.** Table 63 presents the number of postgraduate programme fellows, the number of survey respondents, the calculated required sample size², and the response rate per technical programme for the evaluation period of 2018-2023. The survey **sample is well balanced and representative** for the evaluation period. The required sample size to ensure statistically significant results has been achieved for each technical programme. The percentage of survey respondents by programme are aligned with the actual distribution of fellows across the technical programmes, and the response rates are notably high.

² The required sample sizes were calculated based on the total number of fellow (N) per technical programme between 2018-2023 using a confidence level of 95%, statistical power of 80% and a two-sided t-test for comparing means of two groups. The minimum effect that can be significantly measured is a difference of 0.25 in the mean of the 5-point Likert scales assuming a maximum standard deviation of 1.

Table 1: Postgraduate fellows and survey respondents 2018-2023

TECHNICAL PROGRAMME	FELLOWS 2018-2023		REQUIRED SAMPLE SIZE	SURVEY RESPONDENTS		RESPONSE RATE
	Number	%	Number	Number	%	%
FTP	121	25.5%	56	127	29.5%	105.8% ³
GEST	133	28.3%	63	104	24.1%	78.8%
GTP	120	25.5%	67	120	27.8%	100%
LRT	97	20.6%	63	80	18.6%	82.5%
Total	471	100%	249	431	100%	91.9%

The survey sample seems equally well balanced for all fellows of the postgraduate programme, including those who attended outside of the evaluation period. The share of survey respondents per technical programme aligns with the actual distribution of fellows across the four programmes. Table 64 shows that the overall response rate is at 55.2%, and thus lower than the response rate for fellows within the evaluation period. Specifically, the response rate is below 50% for GTP and FTP fellows, but the fact that these programmes began in 1979 and 1997, respectively, may explain their lower response rates compared to GEST and LRT fellows.

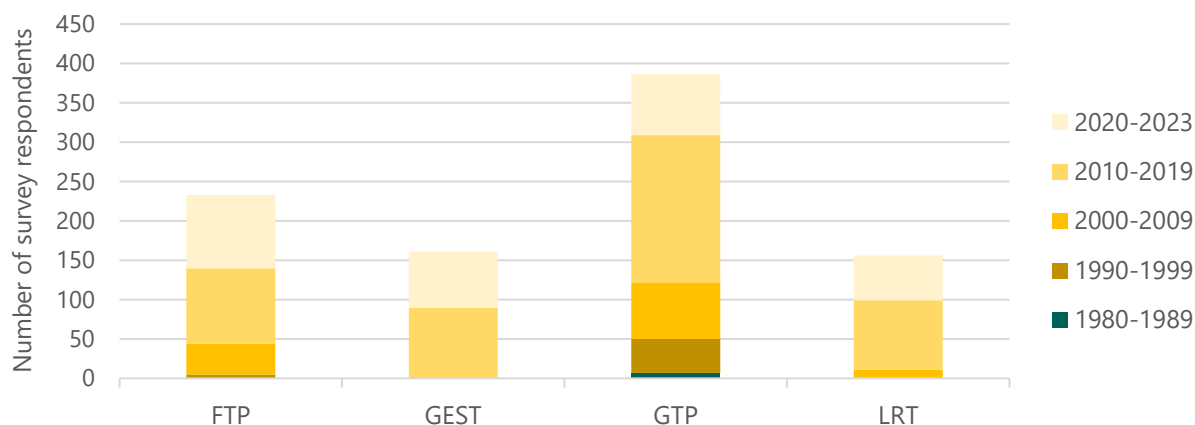
Table 2: Postgraduate fellows and survey respondents 1979-2023

TECHNICAL PROGRAMME	FELLOWS 1979-2023		SURVEY RESPONDENTS		RESPONSE RATE
	Number	%	Number	%	%
FTP	489	28.8%	233	24.9%	47.7%
GEST	218	12.9%	161	17.2%	73.9%
GTP	790	46.6%	386	41.2%	48.8%
LRT	198	11.7%	156	16.7%	78.4%
Total	1,698	100%	936	100%	55.2%

The distribution of survey respondents by graduation period also corresponds to the establishment year of the programmes. Figure 66 indicates that most survey respondents graduated between 2010-2019, after LRT and GEST were established in 2007 and 2009, respectively. It also shows that the survey successfully reached GTP fellows who graduated more than 30 years ago and FTP fellows who graduated more than 20 years ago.

³ A small number of FTP fellows, who graduated in 2024 have accidentally participated in the survey and indicated that they graduated in 2023. Due to the anonymity of the responses, we cannot exclude these fellows. This is why the response rate is larger than 100%.

Figure 1: Survey respondents by graduation period and year



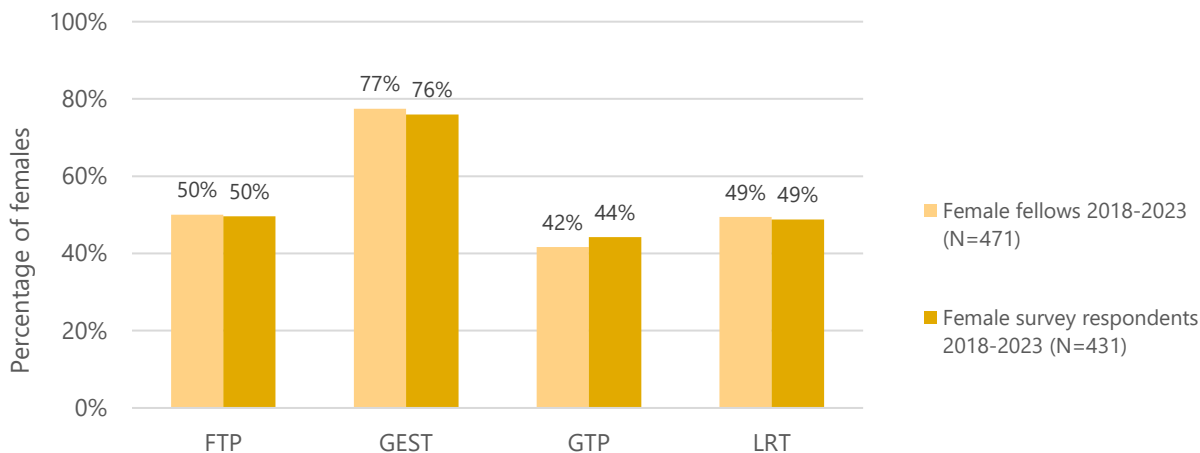
While the survey sample appears balanced in terms of technical programmes and graduation years, and the response rate is notably high for the evaluation reference period and relatively high for fellows who graduated before 2018, it is important to acknowledge the **potential for survey participation bias**. Specifically, fellows with a very positive perception of the programme and/or those actively engaged in networking activities may be more inclined to respond to the survey compared to those with less favourable views. This bias is likely less severe for the 2018-2023 cohorts due to the high response rate, but it may be more pertinent for older cohorts. Furthermore, the survey results reflect only the individual perceptions of the fellows regarding programme quality, their personal achievements, and their contributions to sustainable development, and do not capture the perspectives of partner institutions. Since fellows completed the survey independently, all questions were subject to their individual understanding and interpretation.

Gender

Of the 431 respondents within the evaluation period, 54.3% identify as female, 45.5% as male and 0.3% as non-binary. Figure 67 compares the percentages of females among all fellows in this period to the percentages of female survey respondents. Overall, the **survey sample is well balanced in terms of gender** as the ratio of female participation between programme enrolment and survey responses are balanced. The figure also illustrates that the share of female fellows is highest for GEST (77.4%) and lowest for GTP (41.7%). The 2017 “Evaluation of UNU Programmes in Iceland” indicated that only around 20% of GTP fellows and 40% of LRT fellows up until 2017 were female⁴. These figures indicate an **increase of 20 percentage points in female GTP fellows** and **10 percentage points in female LRT fellows** within the past six years.

⁴ See “Evaluation of UNU Programmes in Iceland”, September 2017, NIRAS indevelop, Annex 4, p. 37.

Figure 2: Percentage of all female fellows and percentage of female survey respondents per programme



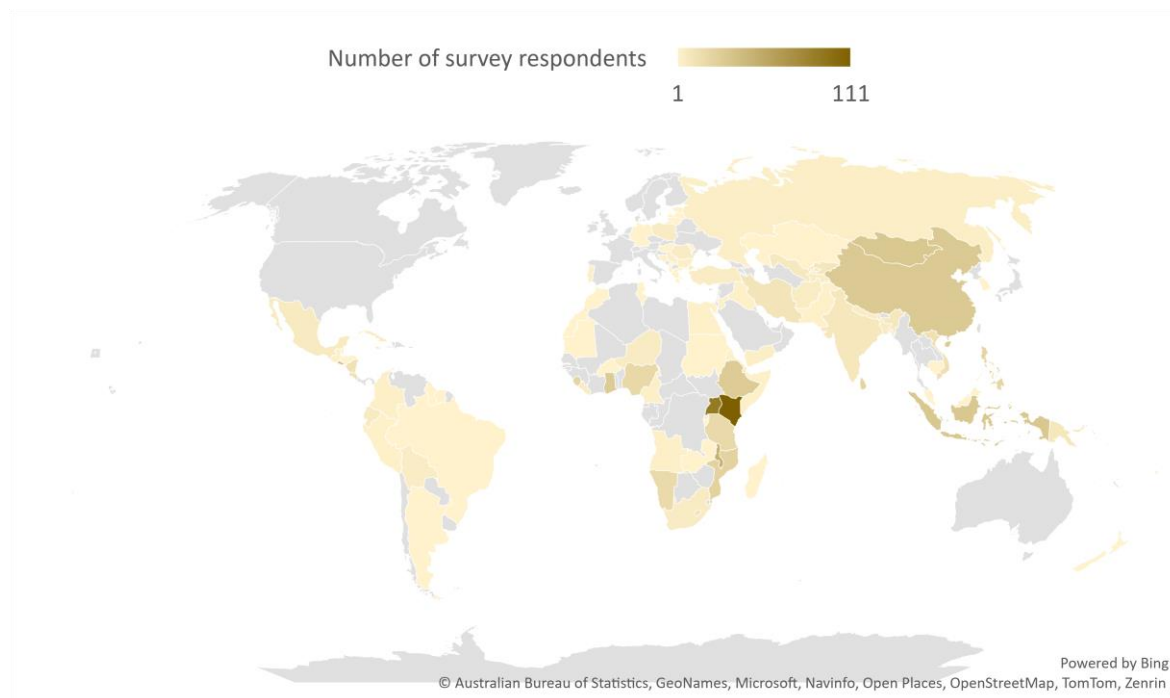
Geographical distribution

Fellows from 107 different countries have responded to the survey. Overall, **most survey participants are from African countries (52.7%)** followed by Asia (26.3%) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) (14.8%). This trend is consistent across all four programmes. The share of survey respondents from African countries is specifically high among LRT (67.9%) and GEST (65.6%) fellows while the share of respondents from LAC countries is higher for GTP (24.0%).

Figure 68 illustrates the number of survey respondents by country. **Most survey respondents resided in Kenya (11.9%)** before they participated in the postgraduate training programme in Iceland, **followed by Uganda (9.8%)**, Malawi (5.4%), and El Salvador (4.0%). The geographical distribution of survey participants reflects the actual distribution of fellows’ origins. The most prominent countries of residence before training participation by the technical programme are:

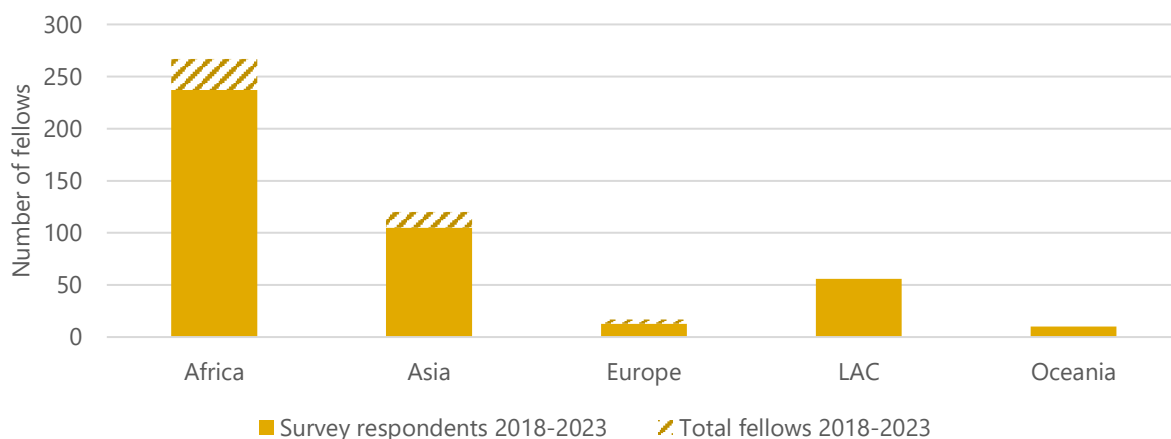
- **FTP:** Sierra Leone (8.7%), Uganda (6.9%), Kenya (5.6%), and Sri Lanka (5.6%)
- **GEST:** Uganda (19.4%), Malawi (14.4%), Mozambique (10.6%), and Palestine (7.5%)
- **GTP:** Kenya (24.3%), El Salvador (9.1%), China (6.8%), and Indonesia (5.7%)
- **LRT:** Uganda (21.2%), Mongolia (17.3%), Ghana (12.8%), and Malawi (10.3%)

Figure 3: Number of survey respondents 1979-2023 by country of residence before participation



On the distribution of survey respondents per region, figure 69 illustrates the number of total fellows per region and the number of survey respondents per region for the evaluation period of 2018-2023. For each geographic region, between 76.5% (Europe) and 100% (LAC and Oceania) of all fellows responded to the survey. This indicates that all geographic areas are adequately represented in the survey sample for this evaluation period.

Figure 4: Total fellows and survey respondents between 2018-2023 by region



1.3 EFFECTIVENESS IN TERMS OF OUTPUTS

Through its different activities, the GRÓ International Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainability and Societal Change **aims to produce output level results in three different output areas**: 1. Increased capability of individuals and expertise of GRÓ partner organisations to design and implement programme activities in respective professional fields; 2. Production and dissemination of new knowledge by GRÓ training participants and scholarship recipients; 3. Professional empowerment of GRÓ training participants and scholarship recipients is increased through GRÓ community building and networking. As the postgraduate level training programme conducted in Iceland is one of the key activities contributing to the achievement of the three output level results, it is critical to assess these

Output 1	Increased capability of individuals and expertise of GRÓ partner organisations to design and implement programme activities in respective professional fields
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Usefulness of training components •Quality and coherence of the programme •Improvement of (technical) skills 	
Output 2	Production and dissemination of new knowledge by GRÓ training participants and scholarship recipients
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Produced research and knowledge outputs •Dissemination channels used •Participation in regional and international conferences 	
Output 3	Professional empowerment of GRÓ training participants and scholarship recipients is increased through GRÓ community building and networking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Engagement in community building and networking •Type of networking activities •Networking benefits 	

based on the fellows’ experiences with the postgraduate training programme. Specifically, the survey enables an assessment of the following aspects with concern to each output area:

1.3.1 OUTPUT 1: INCREASED CAPABILITY OF INDIVIDUALS

The GRÓ International Centre aims to increase individual capacities in the technical fields. The survey results indicate that the postgraduate level training programme offered by the **GRÓ International Centre is very effective in increasing the capability of individuals in the technical fields**. Overall, the programme components are perceived very positively by the fellows. Survey participants report large

improvements in relevant (technical) skills thanks to the training participation. The output level assumption that “candidates for GRÓ training activities have basic working knowledge, skills, and some experience in their fields but benefit from applied training to further improve their skills, knowledge, and leadership abilities” is confirmed. The survey results find that:

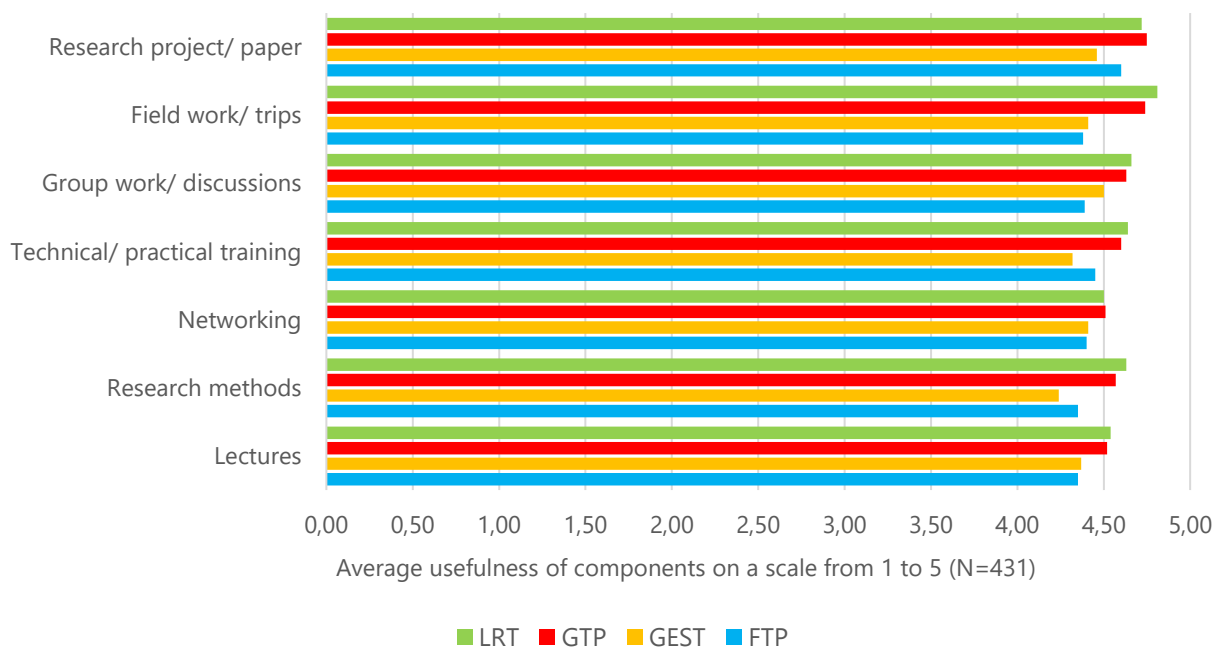
- More than **90% of all 2018-2023 fellows rated the components as very or extremely useful** (4 or 5 on the 5-point Likert scale), while GTP and LRT fellows of 2018-2023 rated the usefulness of the components higher than GEST and FTP fellows.
- The survey participants rated **the quality and coherence very highly** (>4.5 on the 5-point Likert scale). There is no statistically significant difference in quality and coherence between programmes and between cohorts.
- More than **75% of all survey respondents experienced substantial or large skills improvements** (4 or 5 on the 5-point Likert scale). LRT fellows rated their skills improvement higher than FTP fellows and 2018-2023 GTP fellows rated their skills improvement higher than previous GTP cohorts.
- Fellows appreciate the high level of expertise of the lecturers, the integration of theoretical and practical training, and the relevance of the curriculum. In the future, more advanced technical training, practical experiences, and global issues such as climate change could be integrated into the programmes according to the fellows’ feedback.

Assessment of the training components

One of the goals of the postgraduate training programme is to improve individuals’ skills. A prerequisite for increasing individual’s capabilities in their respective technical fields is the usefulness and quality of the training programme and its components. Survey respondents rated the usefulness of seven different components of the training on a scale from 1 (not useful) to 5 (extremely useful). Figure 68 demonstrates the average rating of the usefulness of each component per technical programme for fellows from the evaluation reference period. Overall, more than **90% of all 2018-2023 fellows rated the components as very (4/5 on the scale) or extremely useful (5/5 on the scale)**, indicating that the training content meets fellows’ needs. The **research project/paper is considered the most useful component** across all technical programmes, followed by fieldwork/trips and group work/discussions. The lectures are rated least useful, although the rating is still high (very useful). Some similarities and differences in the data arise when compared to the findings from the 2017 “Evaluation of UNU Programmes in Iceland”. Fellows who graduated before 2017 did also rate the usefulness of the research project and the fieldwork the highest of all components, but they rated the usefulness of the group work/discussions lower. Also, cohorts before 2017 perceived lectures more useful and group work/discussions less useful than recent graduates.

Comparing the average rating between fellows of different programmes, figure 70 shows that, on average, **GTP and LRT fellows of 2018-2023 rated the usefulness of all components higher than GEST and FTP fellows** to a statistically significant degree (0.20 to 0.25 scale points on average). Fellows also had the opportunity to name additional useful components of their training. Overall, the fellows mentioned that the **academic and research support** (e.g. access to libraries and research supervision) was useful and that **practical skills training** (e.g. presentation and communication skills workshop) was helpful.

Figure 5: Average usefulness of programme components per technical programme by fellows 2018-2023



The survey respondents also had the opportunity to list up to three **subjects, topics, or components they felt were missing** in their training. Across all training programmes, fellows who graduated between 2018-2023 were interested in more **advanced technical training** in areas such as statistical analysis and specialized software related to their technical field. Moreover, a desire for more **fieldwork and practical experiences** to enhance real world application was underscored. In addition, fellows expressed an interest in covering more **global cross-cutting issues** such as climate change and sustainability.

Looking at programme specific topics, the 2018-2023 fellows mentioned the following topics they would like to see integrated in the future:

FTP

- **Advanced Statistical Training:** more comprehensive training in statistics, including specific tools like R and Python for data analysis and statistical modelling.
- **Aquaculture Specific Studies:** more in-depth coverage of topics related to aquaculture, including economics, policy management, environmental interactions, and engineering aspects.
- **Policy and Management Training:** more structured learning on policy development processes, including international laws such as the Law of the Sea, and management strategies in both fisheries and aquaculture.
- **Safety and Environmental Concerns:** training on safety measures to avoid accidents at sea and broader environmental issues like plastic pollution monitoring and the impact of climate change on marine environments.

GEST

- **Expanded Coverage on intersectional and diverse perspectives:** broader discussions on intersectionality, including specific topics like LGBTQI+ awareness, neurodivergence, disability, and incorporating various cultural perspectives such as African feminism and South Asian contexts.
- **Advanced Research and Analytical Skills:** enhanced training in research methods, data analysis, and gender mainstreaming, with a specific focus on applying these skills in gender analysis practices.
- **Policy Development and Analysis:** more in-depth training in policy analysis, advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and designing policies around gender inclusion.
- **Specialized Topics in Gender Studies:** more diverse and specialized topics such as gender and technology, gender responsive financing, and gender in the context of climate change and health.

GTP

- **Advanced Technical Training:** more extensive training in specialized software usage, numerical modelling, and practical sessions involving geophysical data processing.
- **Financial and Project Management:** deeper insights into financial models, economic aspects of geothermal projects (CAPEX & OPEX), and project management, including claim negotiation and simulation.
- **Regulatory and Environmental Understanding:** more content on environmental regulations, social risk mitigation for geothermal projects, and environmental social governance in the geothermal sector.
- **Interdisciplinary and Soft Skills:** cross cultural orientation, leadership, public speaking, and other soft skills to enhance personal development and team management capabilities.

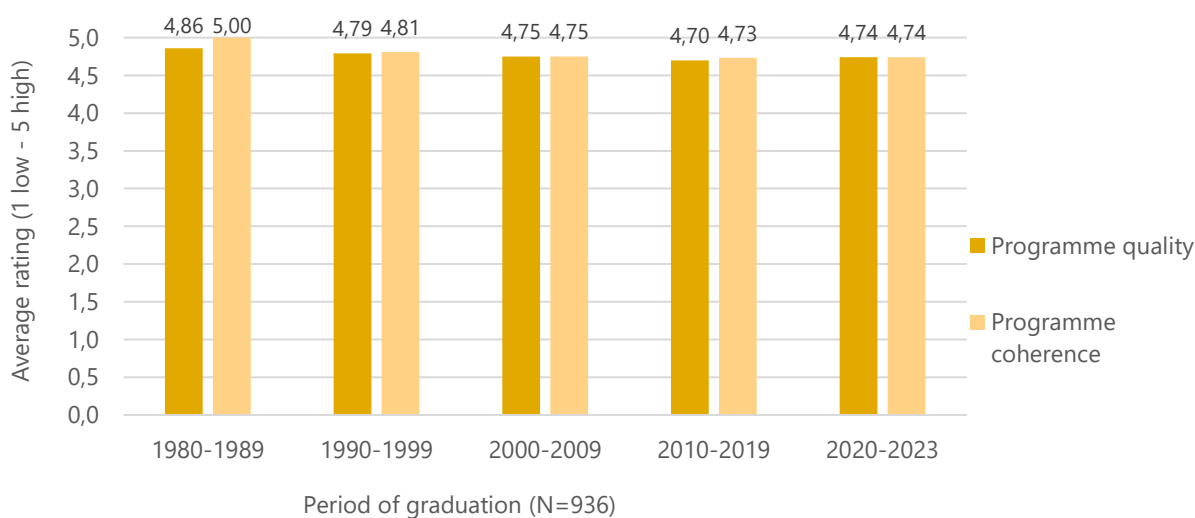
LRT

- **Advanced GIS and Remote Sensing Training:** more comprehensive and practical GIS and remote sensing training, emphasizing hands on application and extended time for these topics.
- **Climate Change and Environmental Studies:** climate change, including its relationship with gender and agriculture, as well as specialized topics like climate finance and adaptation strategies.
- **Economic and Policy Understanding:** more content on the economics of land degradation, environmental economics, public policy, and risk management related to land restoration.
- **Specialized Environmental Topic:** incorporating more specific subjects such as wetlands, soil microbiology, carbon trade, and environmental impact assessment.

Programme quality and coherence

Survey participants rated the postgraduate programme’s quality and coherence on a scale from 1 (low quality/very incoherent) to 5 (high quality/very coherent). As figure 71 shows, **survey participants on average rated the quality (4.72/5) and the coherence (4.74) very high**. There is no statistical difference between fellows of different graduation periods, which indicates that the programmes sustained high quality and coherence over time. Moreover, there is no statistically significant difference of ratings between fellows of the different technical programmes, which indicates that the quality and coherence are equally highly perceived across different programmes.

Figure 6: Average rating of programme quality and coherence by graduation period



Survey participants highlighted that all programmes **effectively integrated theoretical and practical learning** into curriculum to help them both understand complex concepts and apply them in real world settings. Moreover, the **interrelated modules** in all programmes were also noted by respondents for providing a comprehensive learning experience. Fellows also appreciated the high **level of expertise**

among the lecturers and the relevance of the curriculum to current industry practices and global challenges.

Skills improvement

One of the goals of the postgraduate training programme is to improve individuals’ skills to implement programmes and projects within their technical field. The survey participants rated to what extent the postgraduate programme has improved their skills in 15 different relevant areas on a scale from 1 (no improvement) to 5 (large improvement). Around **75% of all 2018-2023 survey respondents experienced substantial (4/4 on the scale) or large (5/5 of the scale) improvements across all skill areas**, which indicates that the programme is successful in improving individuals’ skills.

Figure 72 depicts the average skills improvement for the 15 skill areas for fellows who graduated within the evaluation period. Fellows report that their **personal development skills have improved most** because of their training participation, followed by research skills, technical skills, and intercultural skills. In contrast, IT/ software, environment and climate affairs, and policy analysis skills improved the least. The area of environment and climate affairs, which is a cross-cutting issue in Iceland’s evaluation policy, does not seem to be very relevant, as around 25% of the fellows indicated it was “not applicable” to their skill development. The observed tendencies in skills improvements are similar to previous cohorts when compared with the 2017 “Evaluation of UNU Programmes in Iceland”⁵. Until 2017, fellows reported their strongest improvements in technical skills followed by personal development, while the smallest improvement was reported for policy analysis skills and IT skills. The comparison indicates that the topic of personal development might be more the focus of recent cohorts.

Figure 7: Average skills improvement per skill area of fellows between 2018-2023

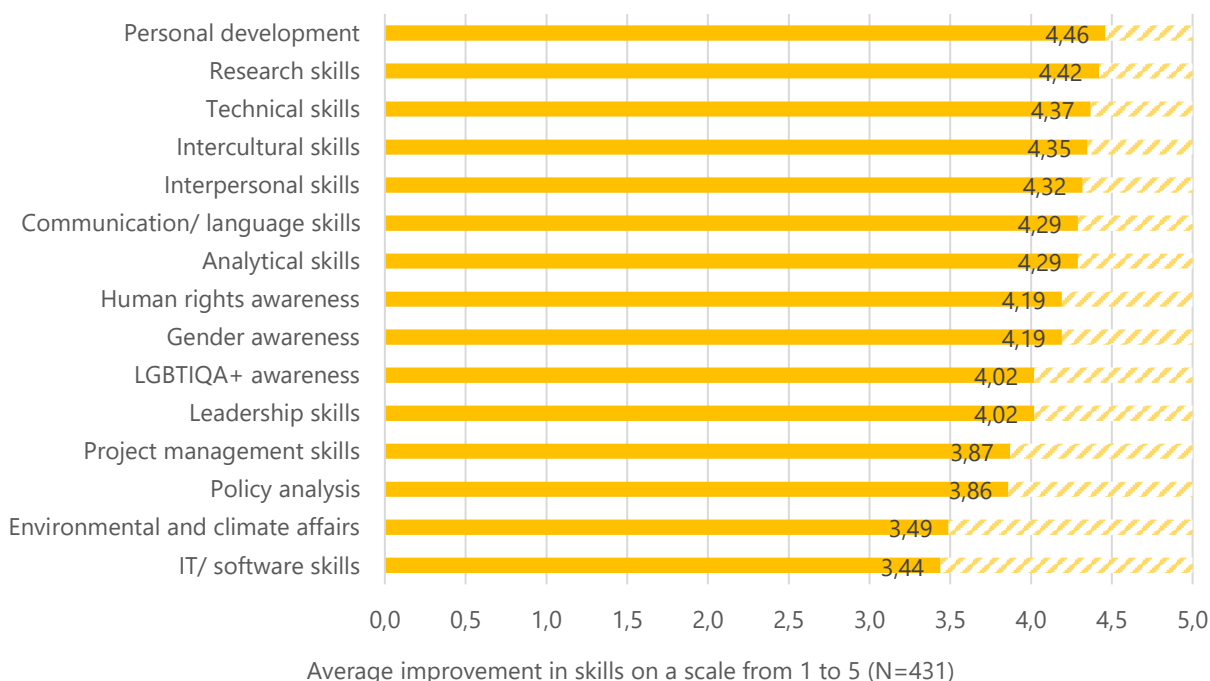


Figure 73 lists the three skills in which the fellows from 2018-2023 reported the largest average improvement per technical programme. It shows that personal development is among the top three skills that improved most, while research skills have also highly improved for all programmes except GEST, where topic related skills such as gender and LGBTIQA+ awareness have improved more. In addition, survey respondents had the opportunity to name additional skills which improved as a result

⁵ See “Evaluation of UNU Programmes in Iceland”, September 2017, NIRAS indevelop, Annex 4, p. 42.

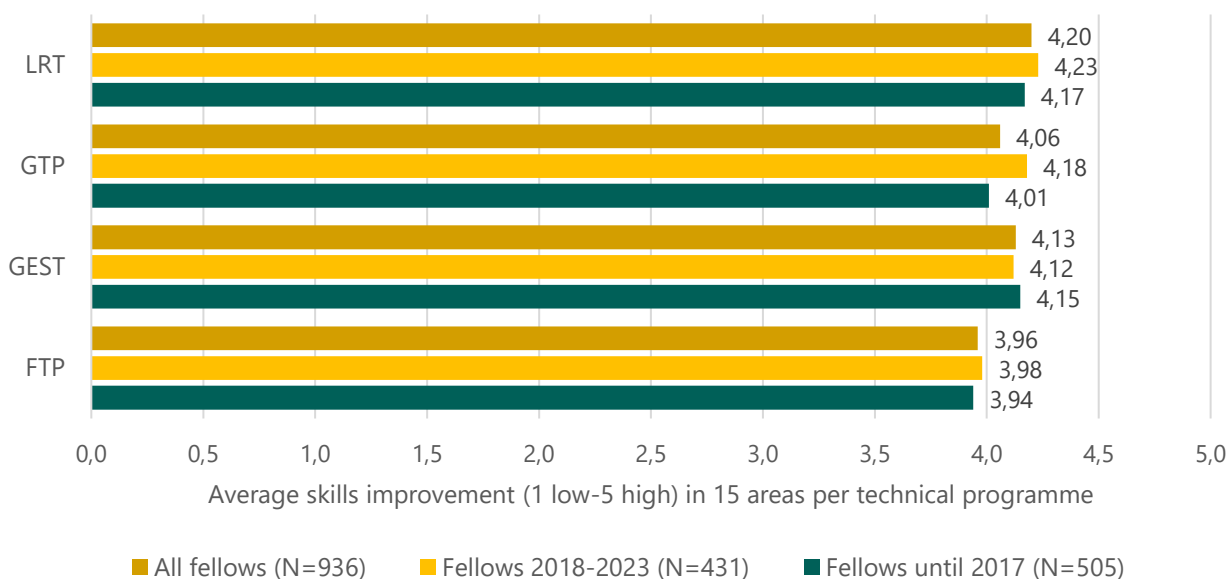
of the programme. Many fellows mentioned that their ability to **apply research findings to practical scenarios** improved and that they improved their **financial and resource management** skills as well as **presentation and public speaking** skills. Fellows also mentioned improvements in specific technical skills.

Figure 8: Top three improved skills per technical programme for 2018-2023 fellows

FTP	GEST	GTP	LRT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research skills • Personal development • Technical skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender awareness • Personal development • LGBTIQA+ awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research skills • Personal development • Technical skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research skills • Human rights • Personal development

Figure 74 shows how fellows rated their average skills improvement (on a scale of 1 to 5) across 15 different skill areas. The ratings are displayed for all fellows grouped by their respective technical programme and disaggregated by time of graduation for comparison across programme and time. Looking at the average ratings of skills improvement, LRT fellows rated their skills improvement higher compared to fellows from other programmes. Specifically, the difference in average skills improvement between LRT fellows and FTP fellows is statistically significant. This means that, on average, **LRT fellows rated their skills improvement 0.23 points higher on the 1 to 5 scale than FTP fellows**. The different time periods also saw statistically significant differences in outcomes for GTP fellows as **GTP fellows who graduated between 2018-2023 rated their skills improvement 0.17 points higher on average compared to GTP fellows who graduated before 2018**.

Figure 9: Average rating of skills improvement across 15 different areas by cohort and programme



1.3.2 OUTPUT 2: KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION

The GRÓ International Centre aims to contribute to knowledge production and dissemination through their fellows. The survey results indicate that the **fellows of the postgraduate training programme actively contribute to the production and dissemination of knowledge in their technical fields**. They produce a wide variety of research and knowledge outputs, including master’s theses, conference papers, blog posts, and podcasts. Their engagement spans both academic knowledge production (such as journal articles) and applied knowledge production (such as developing institutional gender guidelines), with variations across technical programmes. The output level assumption that “GRÓ training participants and scholarship recipients undertake applied research that is relevant to addressing challenges in their home countries” seems to hold validity. Fellows are active in knowledge production

in their technical field, and they **disseminate it to colleagues, local communities, and policymakers showing the research is relevant and applicable**. The survey results indicate that:

- The most common knowledge outputs are **final research papers** (93.5%), **master's theses linked to the programme** (59.2%) and conference papers and proceedings (22.5%). The produced knowledge is mainly disseminated through **presentations to colleagues** (69.1%), followed by presentations at GRÓ events (59.5%) and presentations to supervisors (51.6%). On average, **fellows use more than three different channels to disseminate their knowledge**.
- **FTP** fellows produce more **policy reports** on average.
- **GEST** fellows are less likely to produce conference papers, but they produce more unconventional knowledge products, such as podcasts, compared to other fellows. **GEST** fellows use fewer types of dissemination channels but are more active in presenting their knowledge to **professional networks and local communities**.
- On average, **GTP** fellows are more likely to produce conference papers compared to other fellows. They engage more in **presentations at GRÓ events and conferences** on average than fellows from other programmes. **GTP** fellows also use **more types of dissemination channels than other fellows**.
- **LRT** fellows produce more **journal articles and PhD dissertations** on their topic than other programme. Moreover, they are more likely to present their findings to colleagues, publish on the GRÓ website, and present to local communities.
- **18.2% of the survey participants have been supported by GRÓ/UNU to participate in regional and international conferences**. The share of fellows who received support to participate in conferences is **highest among GTP and FTP fellows**. **GTP** fellows commonly participated in World Geothermal Congresses in Japan, Turkey, Indonesia, and China, and **FTP** fellows participated in International Institute of Fisheries Economics & Trade (IIFET) Conferences in Spain, Tanzania, and the USA.

Type of research and knowledge outputs

One of the goals of the GRÓ International Centre is to contribute to **knowledge production and dissemination**. The fellows of the postgraduate training programme are key actors in achieving this goal, as they produce and disseminate knowledge both during and after their training. Figures 75 and 76 illustrate the types of knowledge outputs produced by fellows in relation to the postgraduate programme by cohort. Among the 2018-2023 fellows, almost all survey participants (93.5%) **produced a final project paper** upon programme completion. Moreover, most fellows (59.2%) produced a **master's thesis** either based on their research during the postgraduate programme or during their studies funded by GRÓ. Other common knowledge products among the survey participants are **conference papers and proceedings** (22.5%), policy reports (14.6%), and journal articles (12.5%). Few fellows from the 2018-2023 cohort produced a PhD thesis based on their research from the programme or during GRÓ-funded studies (4.4%). The percentage of fellows who developed knowledge output related to the programme is **higher among the 1979-2017 group** for all output types except final project papers. This disparity may be due to pre-2018 fellows having more time to produce knowledge since their graduation from the programme.

Figure 10: Research and knowledge outputs by 2018-2023 fellows based on frequencies

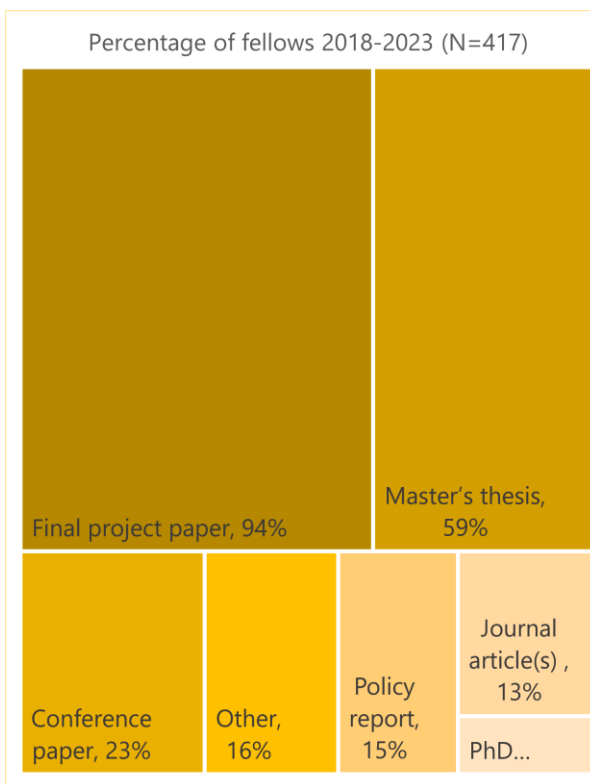


Figure 11: Research and knowledge outputs by 1979-2017 fellows based on frequencies

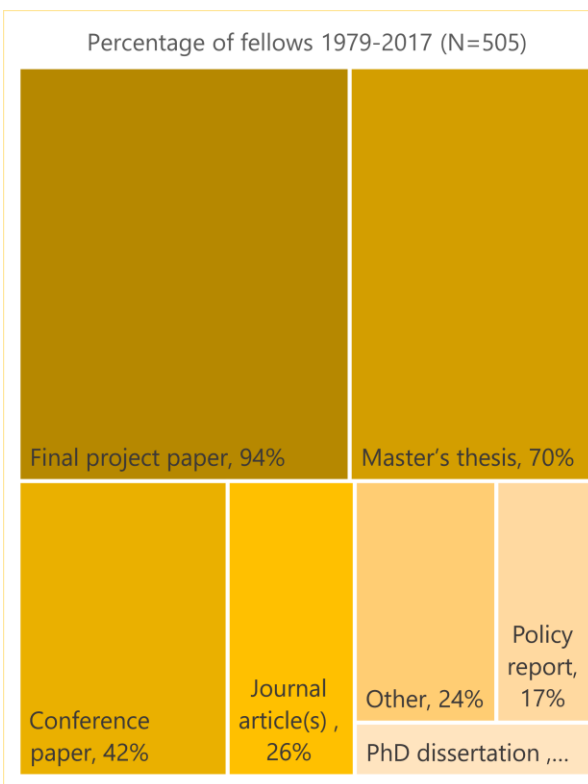
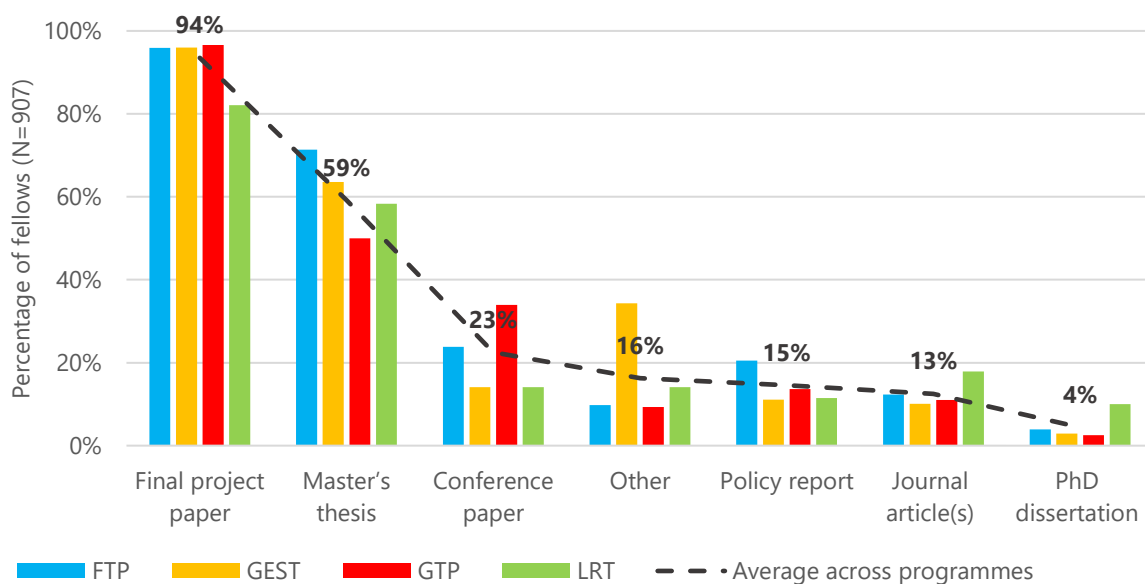


Figure 77 indicates some differences in the kind of knowledge outputs produced by fellows from different programmes for those who graduated between 2018 and 2023. The percentage of **GTP fellows** who **produce conference papers and proceedings** is higher than the average of all programmes, and **FTP fellows are more active in the production of policy papers and master's theses**. GEST fellows produce fewer conference papers and proceedings and fewer journal articles than other programmes. However, **GEST fellows seem to produce knowledge outputs in less conventional ways** such as a podcast on gender, a gender related online blog, a gender training toolkit, and other knowledge outputs that fall into the "other" category of the survey response.

Figure 12: Types of research and knowledge outputs produced by fellows 2018-2023 per programme



Dissemination of knowledge

Survey participants also indicated the channels through which they disseminated the knowledge produced during or concerning the postgraduate training programme or their studies funded by GRÓ. The survey respondents were given twelve different options of dissemination channels. Figure 78 shows the average number of dissemination channels used per individual fellow. On average, fellows use 3.47 different ways of disseminating knowledge. When comparing the different technical programmes, on average **GTP fellows use most different channels to disseminate knowledge while GEST fellows use the least amount of different dissemination channels**. The difference is statistically significant as GTP fellows on average use 1.14 more channels to disseminate knowledge than GEST fellows. This difference is also significant when excluding GTP fellows who graduated before 2009, considering that they have had more time to disseminate knowledge compared to GEST fellows. On average, fellows who graduated before the evaluation period of 2018-2023 have used more dissemination channels. Although this difference is statistically significant, the additional time since graduation should be considered as a confounding factor affecting this indicator. Recent graduates had less time to disseminate knowledge after graduation, while older cohorts have been disseminating knowledge for a longer time and incorporating different ways to disseminate their knowledge.

Figure 13: Average number of different knowledge dissemination channels used per fellow (max. 12 channels)

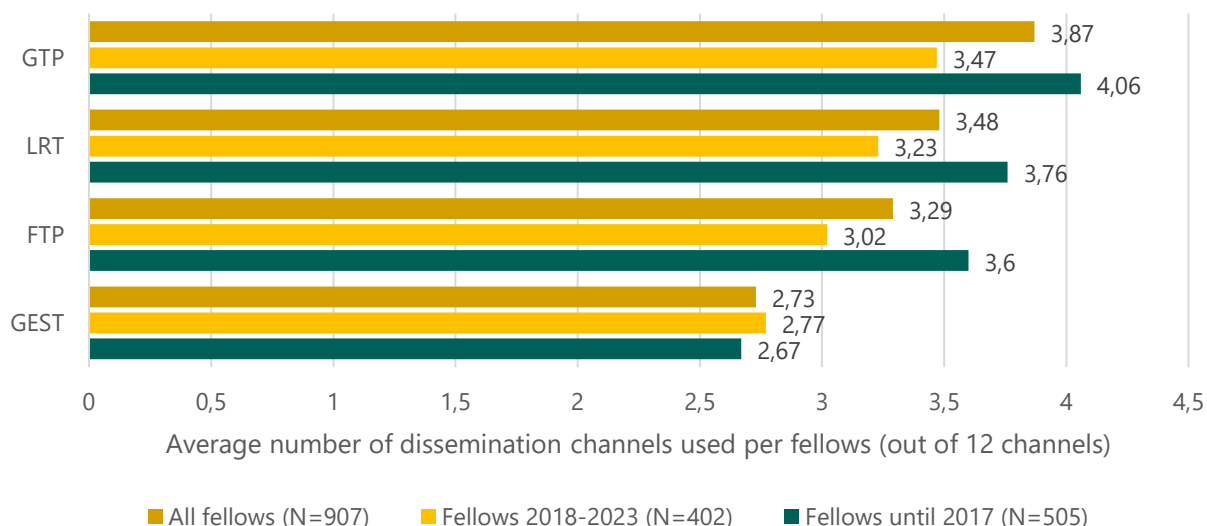
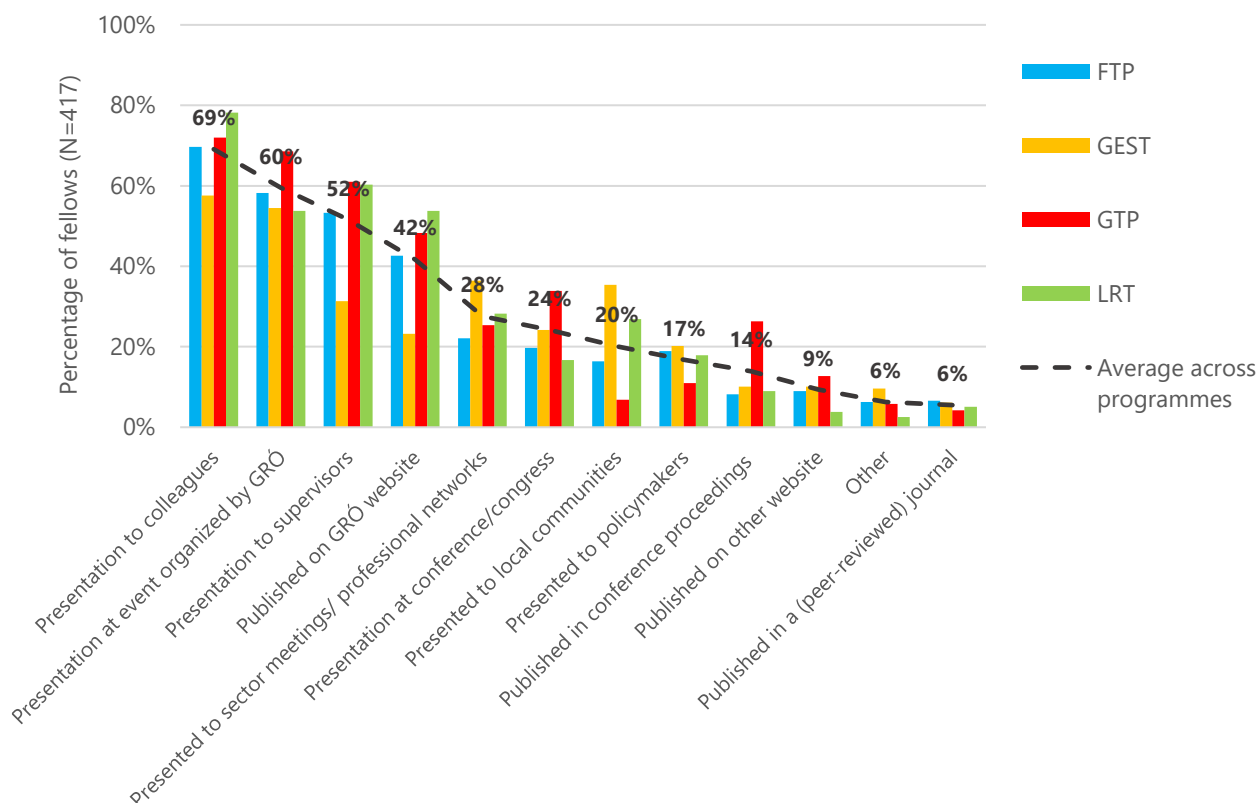


Figure 79 shows the percentage of fellows who reported using the twelve different channels by technical programme for those who graduated between 2018 and 2023. The **most common way to disseminate the knowledge is through presentations to colleagues (69.1%)**, followed by presentations at GRÓ events (59.5%), and presentations to supervisors (51.6%). Only a few fellows publish their research in journals (5.5%). When comparing the different programmes, it becomes apparent that each line of training uses preferred channels to disseminate knowledge. On average, GTP fellows are more likely to present their findings at GRÓ events and conferences (including conference proceedings). GEST fellows are less likely to present their knowledge to their supervisor or at the GRÓ website, but they are more active in sharing knowledge within professional networks and local communities. LRT fellows commonly share their knowledge with colleagues and supervisors, local communities, and on the GRÓ website.

Figure 14: Types of dissemination channels used based on the percentage of fellows 2018-2023



Participation in regional and international conferences

Overall, **18.2% of all survey participants (158 out of 870) participated in regional and international conferences with GRÓ/UNU funding.** The share of fellows who participated in conferences with the support of GRÓ/UNU is highest among GTP fellows (26.7%), followed by those from FTP (16.4%), LRT (8.8%), and GEST (8.2%). Survey participants commonly mentioned their participation in the following conferences:

- **GTP:** World Geothermal Congresses in Japan, Turkey, Indonesia, and China
- **FTP:** International Institute of Fisheries Economics & Trade (IIFET) Conferences in Spain, Tanzania, and the USA and Blue Economy Conferences in Kenya and the USA
- **LRT:** Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) World Conferences in Iceland, South Africa, and England
- **GEST:** smaller individual formats like “The Imagine Forum: Women for Peace” organized by the University of Iceland as well as the United Nations (UN) Commission on the Status of Women

1.3.3 OUTPUT 3: COMMUNITY BUILDING AND NETWORKING

The GRÓ International Centre aims to empower fellows professionally through networking and community building activities. The survey results indicate that **only 55% of the fellows engage in networking activities** after their graduation, despite a high interest and enthusiasm for networking. The lack of financial resources and individual availability as well as the lack of awareness around networking opportunities are the main reasons for fellows not engaging in networking and community building. The perceived benefit of networking among those who have been actively doing so is high (98%). The assumption that “GRÓ alumni interact and collaborate within their home countries, regions and beyond. As such, GRÓ alumni networks serve as mechanisms for south/south cooperation” is partially confirmed by the survey results. While there seems to be a relatively strong online exchange between fellows, in person networking activities seem to concentrate on Uganda. The survey results indicate the following:

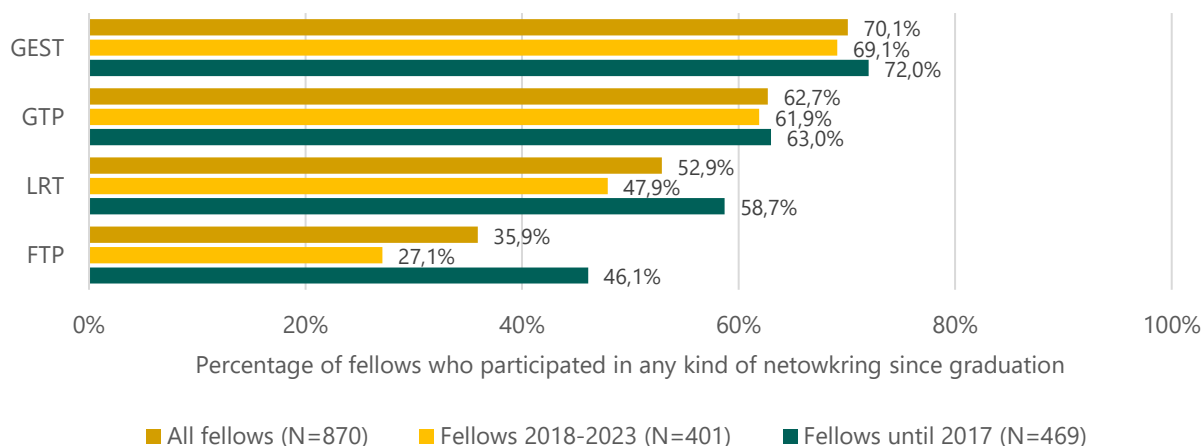
- Overall, **55.6% of the survey respondents report that they have been involved in any formal or informal networking activity**. The percentage of fellows who are involved in these activities is highest for GEST (70.1%) and lowest for FTP (35.9%). The involvement in networking activities is slightly higher for fellows who graduated before 2018. The involvement rate among 2018-2023 fellows is 51.5%.
- The percentage of fellows who participated in any kind of networking since their graduation is highest for fellows living in Europe, Asia, and Africa after their graduation. **Fellows living in Oceania are less likely to be involved in networking**.
- **The lack of financial resources and time is the main reason** for fellows not to participate in networking (56.1%). The lack of interest was very rarely mentioned, indicating that there is a demand for networking opportunities.
- **53.3% of the survey respondents are active in alumni forums** (mainly email lists, WhatsApp and Facebook), and **36.2% participated in formal exchange** (e.g. GRÓ alumni events and short courses).
- Most fellows among the 2018-2023 cohort participated in a GRÓ/UNU networking/alumni event (80.0%) followed by a GRÓ/UNU-funded participation in an international/regional conference (33.9%) and the involvement in a GRÓ/UNU short course (13.0%).
- **GEST and LRT fellows** are more involved in **networking/alumni events**, while **FTP and GTP fellows** are more likely to be involved in **international and regional conferences**. Moreover, the percentage of fellows who are involved in the short courses is highest among GTP fellows while GEST fellows do not seem to be involved in the delivery of short courses.
- More than **98% of fellows who were involved in networking perceive this exchange as beneficial**. The main perceived benefit of networking and community building are personal matters (77.2%). Moreover, fellows frequently mentioned that networking helped them in finding technical solutions for problems in their field (69.0%) and for increasing their personal motivation (66.9%).

Participation in community building and networking

Survey respondents were asked if they had participated in any kind of formal (e.g. GRÓ alumni event) or informal (e.g. informal exchange between fellows) networking or community building activity since their graduation from the postgraduate training. Figure 80 shows the percentage of fellows who participated in any kind of networking activity after graduation by technical programme and for the different cohorts. **Overall, 55.6% (484 out of 870) of the survey respondents report that they have been involved in any formal or informal networking activity**. Generally, the percentage of fellows who are involved in these activities is highest for GEST (70.1%) and lowest for FTP (35.9%). This difference is statistically significant for all cohorts, meaning that FTP fellows are significantly less likely to engage in networking compared to GEST fellows⁶. The percentage of fellows who have been involved in networking is higher among older cohorts. This difference between cohorts is only significant for FTP fellows and is mainly due to the fellows who recently graduated before taking the survey and might not have yet had the chance to get involved in networking activities.

⁶ Since a small number of 2024 FTP graduates participated in the survey, the percentages were also compared excluding fellows who report a graduation year of 2023. Excluding the most recent graduates, the percentage of GEST fellows who were involved in networking is 70.3% and the percentage of FTP fellows is 40.1%. The difference is still statistically significant.

Figure 15: Participation in any kind of networking after graduation by programme



Figures 81 and 82 display a regional comparison in terms of networking activities for different cohorts. Among the 2018-2023 fellows, the percentage of fellows who participated in any kind of networking since their graduation is highest for fellows from Europe (69.2%) followed by Asia (58.8%), Africa (49.8%), and LAC (44.8%). The difference is significant for Asia compared to Oceania, suggesting that fellows from Oceania are less likely to be involved in networking. Among older cohorts who graduated before 2018, the percentage of fellows who participated in networking is highest among fellows from Africa (65.2%) followed by Europe (63.0%).

Figure 16: Participation in any kind of networking by region of residence after programme participation for fellows between 2018-2023

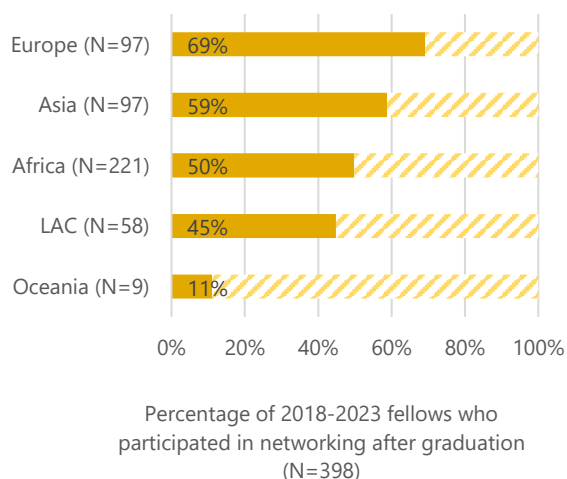


Figure 17: Participation in any kind of networking by region of residence after programme participation for fellows between 1979-2017

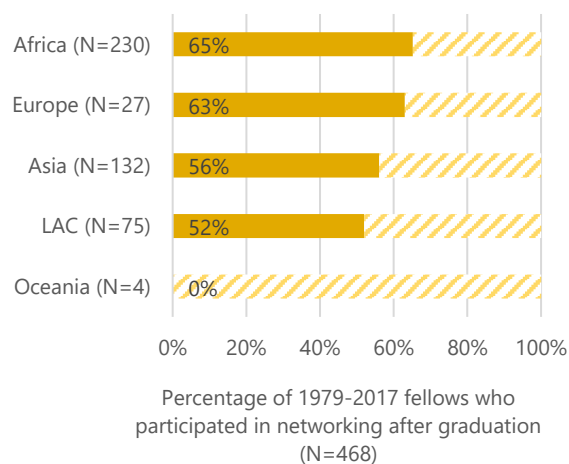
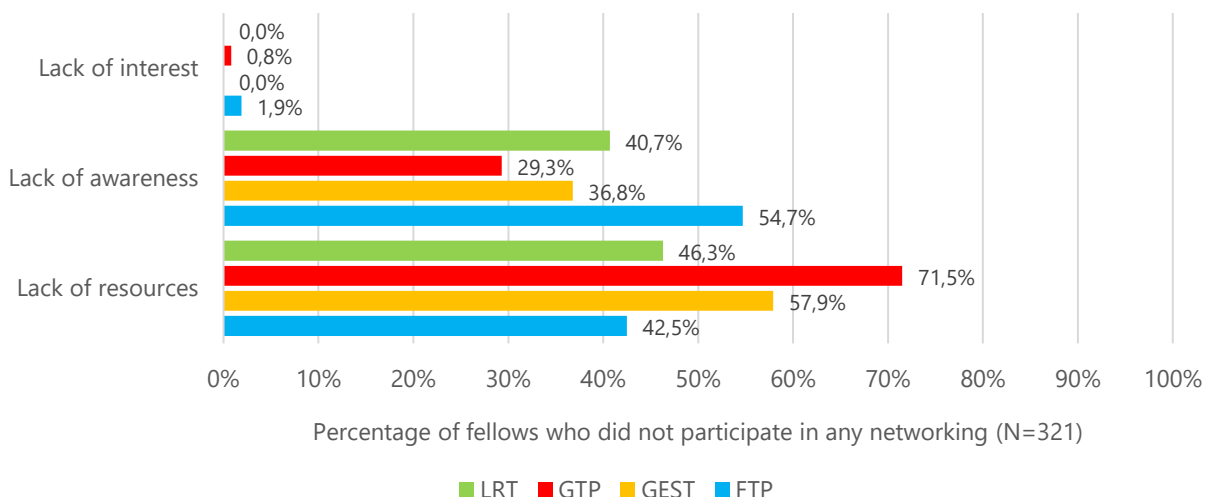


Figure 83 illustrates the reasons for fellows not to participate in networking. It includes all fellows who have not participated in any kind of networking activity since their graduation and excludes the most recent cohort since they have not had the chance to engage in networking yet. The **lack of resources (financial and timewise) is the main reason for fellows not to participate in networking (56.1%)**. More than 70% of GTP fellows who did not take part in networking indicated this reason. Moreover, the lack of awareness of networking opportunities was frequently mentioned by 40.5% of the fellows, and it was specifically pronounced for FTP fellows. The lack of interest was very rarely mentioned, indicating that there is a demand for networking opportunities among former fellows.

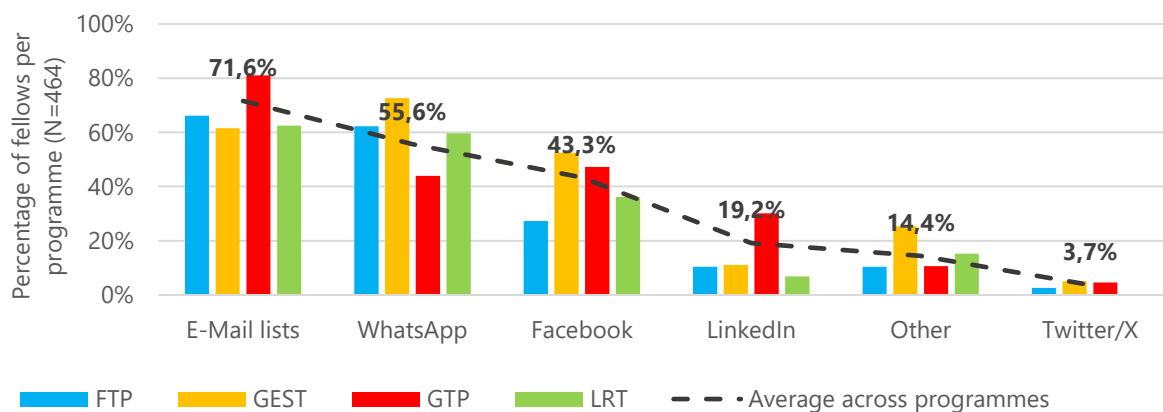
Figure 18: Reasons for lack of networking participation per programme



Type of community building and networking

Concerning the type of networking activities, **53.3% (464 out of 870) of the survey respondents are active in alumni forums**. Figure 84 illustrates the percentage of fellows who use a particular alumni forum for networking. **The most common alumni forums used by all programmes are email lists (71.6%), WhatsApp (55.6%) and Facebook (43.3%)**. GTP fellows use email lists and LinkedIn more than average while GEST fellows use WhatsApp and other channels such as Instagram and Zoom more than the other programmes.

Figure 19: Percentage of fellows per programme using different alumni forums



In total, **36.2% (315 out of 870) of the survey participants participated in formal networking activities**. Among the 115 fellows from the 2018-2023 cohort, most participated in a GRÓ/UNU networking/alumni event (80.0%) followed by a GRÓ/UNU-funded participation in an international/regional conference (33.9%) and involvement in a GRÓ/UNU short course (13.0%). The survey results indicate that among the 2018-2023 fellows who participated in formal networking, **GEST and LRT fellows are more involved in networking/alumni events, while GTP and FTP fellows are more involved in international and regional conferences**. Moreover, the percentage of fellows who are involved in the short courses is highest among GTP fellows while GEST fellows do not seem to be involved in the short courses. The percentage of fellows involved in GRÓ alumni events is lower for the 1979-2017 fellows (60.0%), but their involvement in GRÓ-funded conferences (59.5%) and short-courses (37.0%) is higher than the younger cohorts. Moreover, among the 1979-2017 cohorts, most GEST fellows participated in a GRÓ alumni event, most FTP fellows in a conference, and more than half of the GTP fellows were involved in short-courses through organizational matters or teaching.

Figure 20: Percentage of 2018-2023 fellows who participated in formal networking per programme

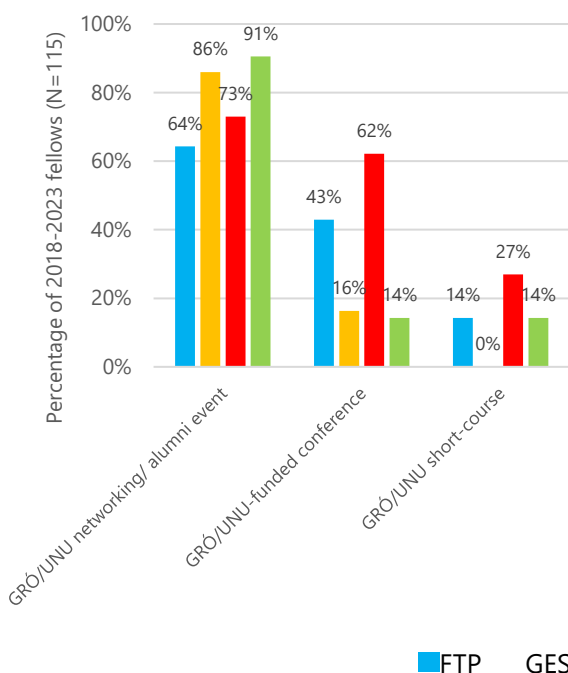
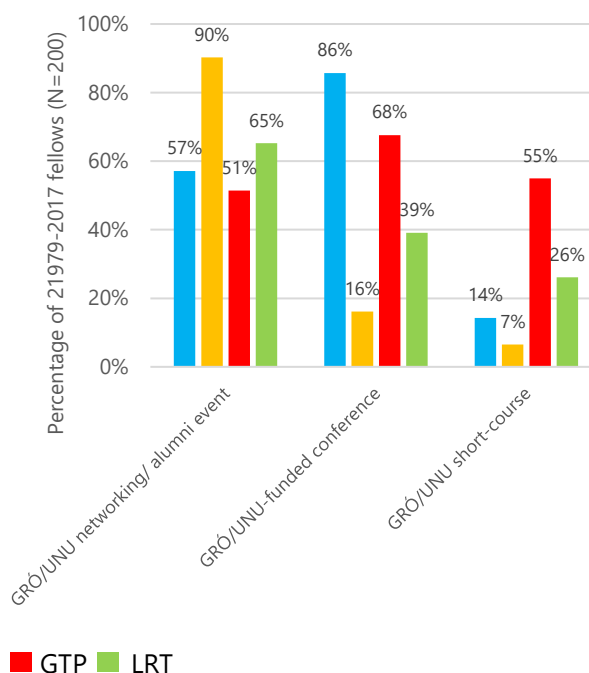


Figure 21: Percentage of 1979-2017 fellows who participated in formal networking per programme



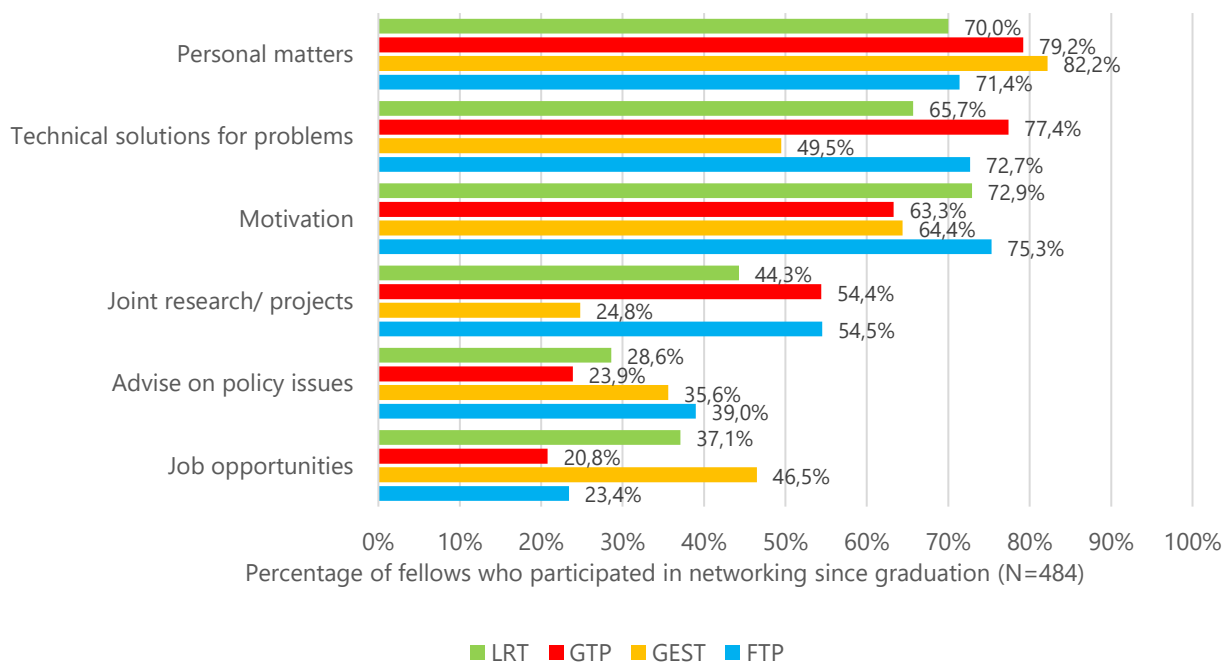
Survey participants also had the chance to name the formal activities they participated in. The **following networking activities were frequently mentioned:**

FTP	GEST	GTP	LRT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRÓ alumni events in Uganda and Indonesia • Icelandic Government events in Sierra Leone and Malawi • IIFET and BLue Economy conferences • GRÓ/UNU short courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRÓ GEST alumni online meetings • GRÓ alumni events in Uganda and Kenya • Icelandic Government events in Malawi • Social media (WhatsApp, Facebook) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRÓ alumni events in Uganda • WhatsApp Group • World Geothermal Congresses • Short course involvements (e.g. geothermal exploration Kenya) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRÓ alumni events in Uganda and Lesotho • Informal alumni meeting in Mongolia • SER World conferences • GRÓ/UNU short-courses and guest lecturers at GRÓ

Benefits of networking

Of all fellows who participated in networking events since their graduation, around 98% indicated that it benefitted them in some way. Figure 87 shows that the **main perceived benefit of networking and community building are personal matters (77.2%)**. Moreover, fellows frequently mentioned that networking helped them in finding technical solutions for problems in their field (69.0%) and for increasing their personal motivation (66.9%).

Figure 22: perceived networking benefits among fellows active in networking activities



These findings are in line with the findings from the 2017 “Evaluation of UNU Programmes in Iceland”, which indicated that GEST fellows are most active in networking (using social media and remote means) and that personal matters and friendship as well as discussing technical solutions are the most common benefits related to networking⁷.

1.4 EFFECTIVENESS IN TERMS OF OUTCOMES

Through its three different outputs of technical capacity improvements, professional empowerment, and production of knowledge, the GRÓ International Centre aims to **empower GRÓ fellows to promote and implement changes needed to achieve SDGs** relevant to their field of work. Thereby, **outcomes at the micro, meso, and macro level** should be achieved. Micro level results focus on individual career advancements due to participation in the postgraduate programme. Meso level results refer to changes at the institutional and sector level. Macro level results focus on broader national and/or policy changes.

Micro level	Individual achievements
	• Individual career advancement
Meso level	Institutional and sectoral advancements
	• Contribution to institutional changes
	• Contribution to the technical field
	• Contribution to changes at the local level
Macro level	Broader societal and policy influence
	• Contribution to changes at national level
	• Contribution to policy changes

⁷ See “Evaluation of UNU Programmes in Iceland”, September 2017, NIRAS indevelop, Annex 4, p. 46.

1.4.1. MICRO LEVEL OUTCOMES

At the outcome level, the GRÓ International Centre aims to empower fellows in their individual career advancements which ultimately enables them to spread their knowledge and drive sustainable change. The survey findings suggest that **postgraduate training is successful in fostering individual professional development**. Many fellows reported substantial career promotions by either moving into higher roles, leading departments, and taking on greater responsibilities within their organizations. The outcome level assumption is that "GRÓ fellows become leaders in their field of expertise. They use the increased capacity gained through the GRÓ training to promote sustainability within their sphere of influence in their organisations and home countries" which seems to be confirmed by these findings. The survey results find that:

- Before training most fellows either worked in the governmental/ public administration sector (47%) or in the academic/ research sector (25%). The sectors become more diverse after training participation, suggesting that **the training equips fellows with skills and opportunities that enable them to transition into a wider variety of sectors**.
- Overall, most fellows indicated that they have substantially (4/5 on the scale) or extremely (5/5 on the scale) advanced their career because of the postgraduate programme training. In total, **44.02% of the fellows indicate substantial career advancement and 34.9% indicate extreme career advancement**.
- The most common type of career advancement relates to more **responsibility in their job** after programme completion (75.8%), followed by **promotions** (46.7%) and **salary increases** (38.0%).
- The rating of career advancement does not differ across programmes but is significantly **higher for fellows who graduated before the evaluation period of 2018-2023**. This could be because positive career effects may require more time to materialize. While **all cohorts take on more responsibility** directly after programme completion, that does not immediately lead to promotions or salary increases.
- When asked about their most important career advancement due to the postgraduate programme, numerous fellows reported **substantial career promotions**, moving into higher roles, leading departments, and taking on greater responsibilities within their institutions.

Sector of the workplace before and after participation

Figures 88 and 89 illustrate the percentage of fellows who work in a specific sector by programme before and after postgraduate training participation. Before training participation, most fellows either worked **in the governmental/ public administration sector (47%) or in the academic/ research sector (25%)**. While more than 80% of all FTP and LRT fellows worked in these sectors before completing the training programme, a substantial portion of GEST fellows also worked for national civil society organisations (27%), and GTP fellows worked for public sector enterprises (20%). The sectors become more diverse after training participation. The percentage of fellows working in the **governmental/public administration sector reduces to 38% of the fellows after training participation** while the percentage of fellows working in other fields like international NGOs (from 3% to 8%) and private sector enterprises (4% to 7%) increases. The percentage of fellows employed in academia remains unchanged after training, suggesting a stable interest and involvement in the academic/research sector. Overall, **the postgraduate training programmes appear to equip fellows with skills and opportunities that enable them to transition into a wider variety of sectors**, thus reflecting a broader distribution of employment across different fields.

Figure 23: Sector before programme participation

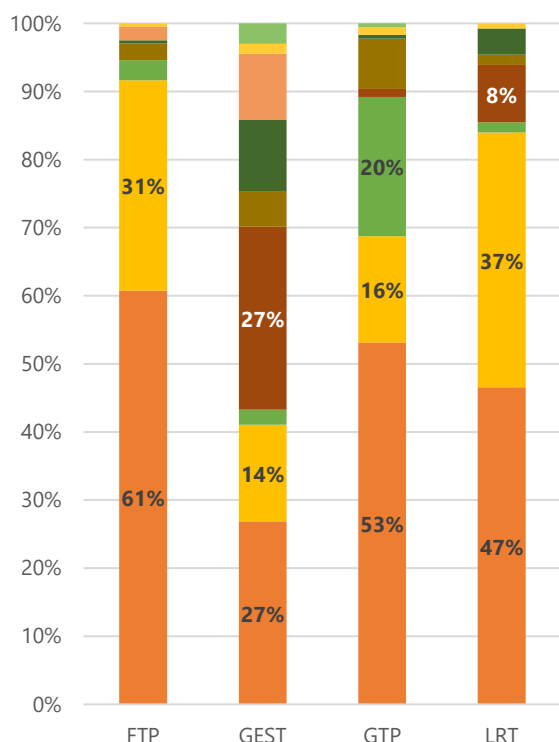
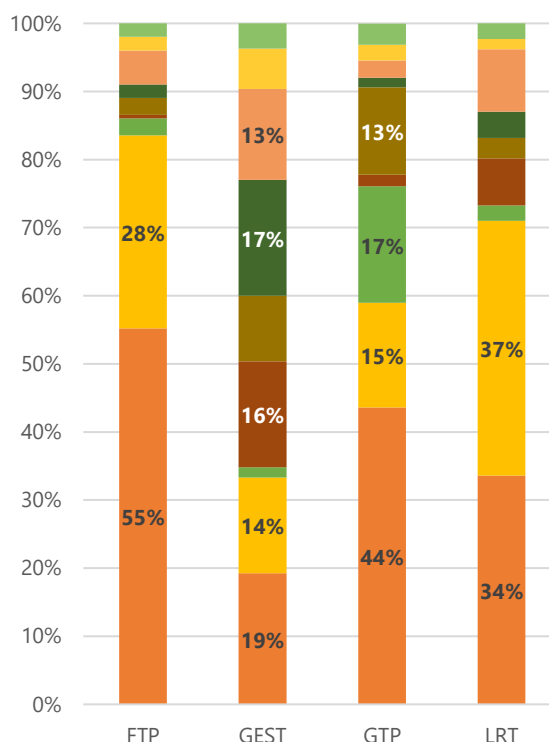


Figure 24: Sector after programme participation

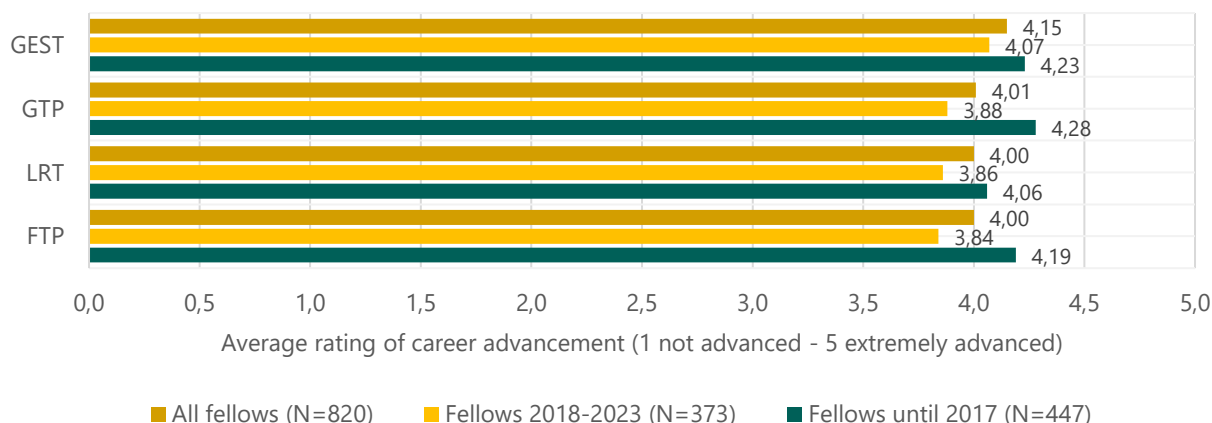


- Government/ Public administration
- Academia/ Research institute
- Public sector enterprise
- Private sector enterprises
- International organizations
- Self-employed
- National civil society organizations
- International NGO
- Other

Professional career advancement

Survey participants were asked to what degree they had advanced professionally due to their participation in the postgraduate programme on a scale from 1 (not advanced) to 5 (extremely advanced). Figure 90 illustrates the average rating by programme and cohort. Overall, the rating is very high with **most fellows indicating that they have substantially (4/5) or extremely (5/5) advanced**. 44.0% of the fellows indicate substantial advancement and 34.9% indicate extreme advancement. GEST fellows rated their advancement highest on average, although only to a statistically insignificant degree. However, fellows who graduated before the evaluation reference period rated their career advancement on average 0.16 points higher on the scale compared to fellows who graduated after 2017. This might be because more time has passed for new career opportunities to develop for the older cohorts.

Figure 25: Professional career advancement after postgraduate programme participation

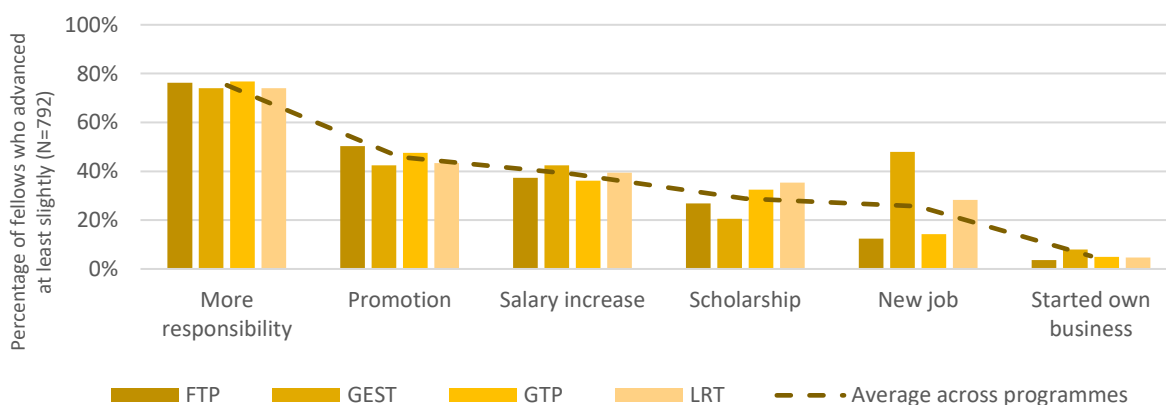


In addition to the significant difference between the career advancement of the different cohorts, there is a significant difference between regions. **On average, fellows living in African countries rated their career advancement after graduation 0.42 points higher compared to fellows living in LAC.**

Types of advancement

Figure 91 indicates that the most common type of career advancement among fellows who advanced at least slightly due to the postgraduate programme relates to **more responsibility in their job after programme completion (75.8%)**, followed by **promotions (46.7%)** and **salary increases (38.0%)**. While GEST fellows are less likely to advance through receiving scholarships after programme completion, a larger proportion of GEST fellows began a new job after the postgraduate programme.

Figure 26: Types of career advancement of fellows who advanced at least slightly due to postgraduate programme



When asked about their most important career advancement due to the postgraduate programme, numerous **fellows reported substantial career promotions, moving into higher roles, leading departments, and taking on greater responsibilities** within their institutions. According to the fellows' perspective, the enhancement of specific professional skills, including research, technical expertise, project management, and analytical skills improved fellows' qualifications for higher positions. For example, one LRT fellow mentioned that he/she referenced the knowledge gained from the programme during a job interview and consequently was promoted to a Senior Land Resources Conservation Officer. Furthermore, the programmes have expanded fellows' professional networks internationally, enabling them to **engage with global experts and peers** to enhance their career opportunities and foster valuable collaborations. Notably, many fellows have **transitioned into leadership roles** where they **influence policy and lead significant projects**. For example, a **GEST fellows became the first female executive director in her organization**, reporting the programme had equipped her to take this role.

Figures 92 and 93 compare the types of career advancements for fellows before and within the evaluation period of 2018-2023. While the percentage of fellows assuming more responsibilities is equal in both groups (around 75%), the **percentage of fellows who received a promotion or a salary increase after programme completion is significantly higher among fellows who graduated before 2018** (around 25 percentage points for promotions and 15 percentage points for salary increases). It seems that while fellows immediately take on more responsibilities after programme completion, it takes more time for fellows to receive subsequent benefits such as promotions and/or salary increases. The findings are in line with the 2017 “Evaluation of UNU Programmes in Iceland”, which found that on average, more than 60% of the fellows who graduated before 2018 report that they have been promoted as a result of participating in the postgraduate training programme⁸.

Figure 27: Career advancement fellows 1979-2017 Figure 28: Career advancement fellows 2018-2023

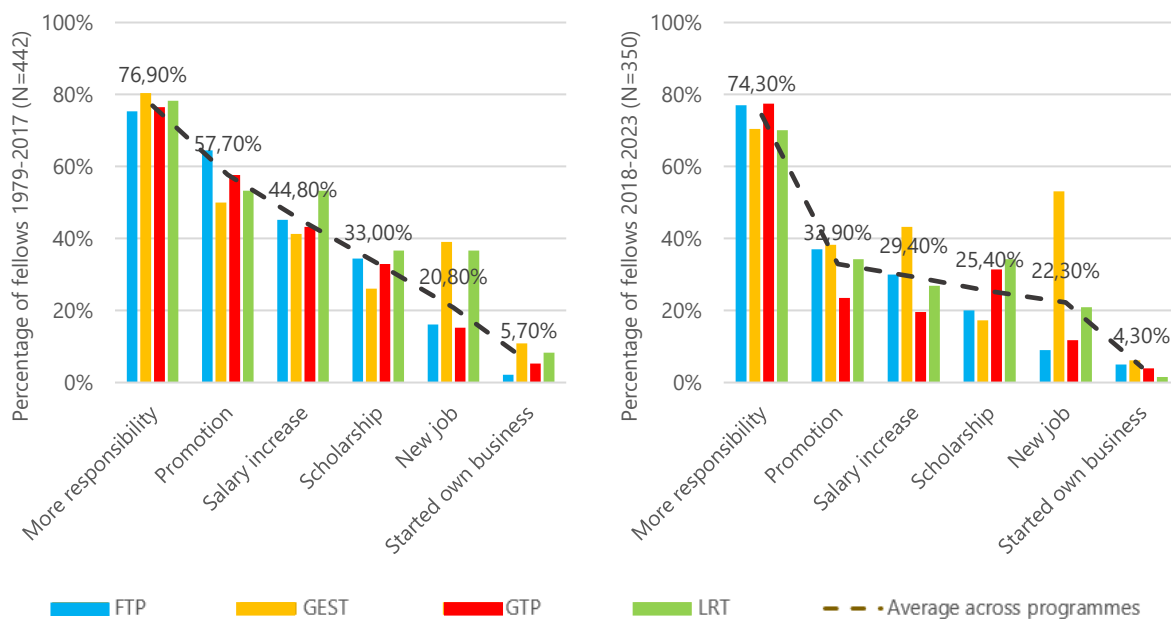
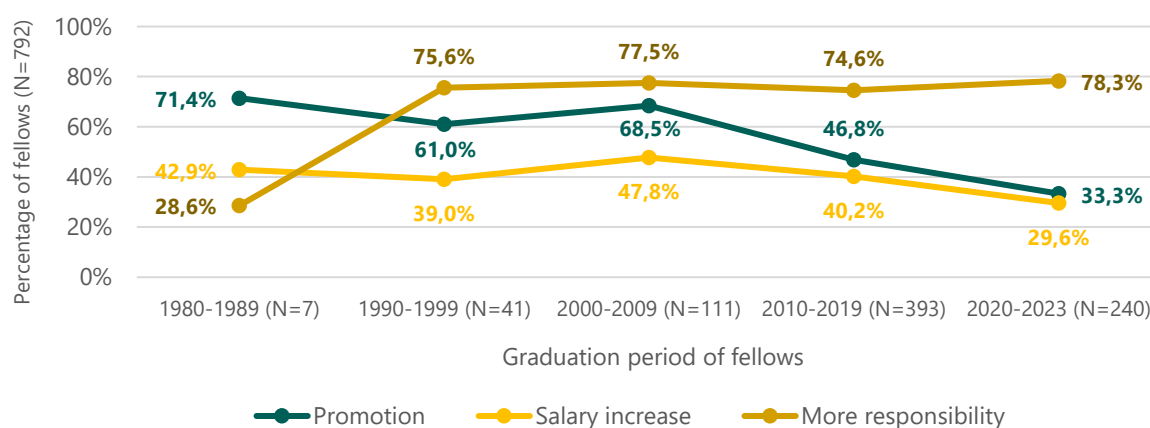


Figure 94 illustrates the percentage of fellows who received promotions and/or salary increases due to programme completion across the entire period from 1979 to 2023. It shows a decreasing percentage of fellows benefiting from these career advancements among more recent graduates. This reinforces the observation that **immediate responsibility uptake after programme completion do not immediately correlate with promotions or salary increases, suggesting a lag period before such advancements are realized.**

⁸ See “Evaluation of UNU Programmes in Iceland”, September 2017, NIRAS indevelop, Annex 4, pp. 39-40.

Figure 29: Fellows receiving promotions and/or salary increases after programme completion by graduation period



1.4.2. MESO LEVEL OUTCOMES

The GRÓ International Centre aims to create outcomes at the meso level such as institutional changes, contributions to the technical fields/sectors, and results at the local/regional level. While meso level changes cannot be measured robustly, the survey results find that **GRÓ fellows actively contribute to all meso level outcome areas using the skills and knowledge they have gained through the postgraduate programme**. The contributions vary by technical programme. While GTP, FTP and LRT fellows actively share the gained knowledge within their institutions, GEST fellows seem to face more resistance to change at the institutional level. However, they can be **change agents driving more gender equitable institutional changes** (e.g. policies, practices, norms). Almost all fellows confirm that **the programme enabled them to advance their technical contributions**, primarily through training and mentoring of others. **GTP fellows** actively contribute to their technical field through **continued research**, while **other fellows** (especially LRT) **advise local communities** after programme completion. The results framework assumption that “partner organizations recognize the new knowledge, skills and competencies acquired by GRÓ fellows and other GRÓ trainees” seems to be verified based on the fellows’ perception, although less so for GEST fellows. The assumption that “partner institutions will encourage returning staff members to practice what they have learned in the programme” is partially verified as only 45% of the respondents feel supported in knowledge application by their institution. The survey results find that:

Institutional level:

- More than **80% of the fellows feel confident that the management in their institution appreciates and values the skills** they have gained from the training programme participation. This percentage is significantly higher among LRT fellows compared to GEST and GTP fellows.
- **25.4%** of the fellows have used their skills from the postgraduate training programme **to introduce new initiatives, projects, programs, or approaches within their institution**.
- Around **45% of the fellows feel supported by their institution** in applying their knowledge **while 25% think that the lack of institutional support is hindering them** from applying their knowledge.
- Despite the lower institutional support and **unfavourable institutional power dynamics** faced by GEST fellows, they can be **major drivers of institutional change** when it comes to implementing gender responsive institutional policies. Fellows from the other three programmes are comparatively more involved in knowledge sharing.

Technical field/ sectoral level:

- **91.6% of the fellows** agree or strongly agree with the statement that they were able to **advance their contribution to their technical field/subject area** due to the training programme. In addition, 82.2% of the fellows agree or strongly agree that they have contributed to other areas outside of their postgraduate programme focus.

- Fellows contribute to their technical field/subject area through the **training and mentoring of others** (80.6%), conducting **further research** (65.4%) and implementing **projects or initiatives** in the technical field (61%)
- Fellows report that they have applied their training and expertise to **make meaningful contributions** to their respective technical fields in many ways (e.g. publication in international journals, application of specific expertise to design fishing gear, dedicated research team to contribute to rangeland monitoring system).

Local/ regional level:

- Fellows have contributed to meso level changes by **advising local communities** (48.4%), **advising private entities/ institutions** (29.0%), and contributing to **regional policy changes** (22.2%).
- On average, **LRT fellows have been very engaged in advising local communities**, while GTP fellows were less involved in that capacity.
- Reported examples of meso level results illustrate the fellows' commitment to fostering sustainable development at the local/regional level, **enhancing community capacity**, and promoting inclusive and equitable practices.

Institutional change

The GRÓ International Centre aims to create results on the outcome level leading to changes on the partner institutions' level. An important prerequisite for achieving institutional level results is that the management of the institutions recognized and values the postgraduate training and the newly acquired skills by the fellows. Figure 95 shows that **84.5% of the fellows agree or strongly agree with the statement that their management appreciates their skills and knowledge from the postgraduate training**. This high percentage underscores the relevance and value of the programme to partner institutions based on the fellows' perception. The results find differences between the programmes. On average **LRT fellows are more convinced that their management appreciates their acquired skills compared to GTP fellows and GEST fellows**. There is no significant difference between different cohorts suggesting that the perceived management appreciation does not depend on the time that has passed since graduation. These findings are mostly in line with the 2017 "Evaluation of UNU Programmes in Iceland", which found that the percentage of fellows who agree with this statement is highest among LRT fellows.

Figure 30: Percentage of fellows who think that their management appreciates the skills gained from the postgraduate training programme

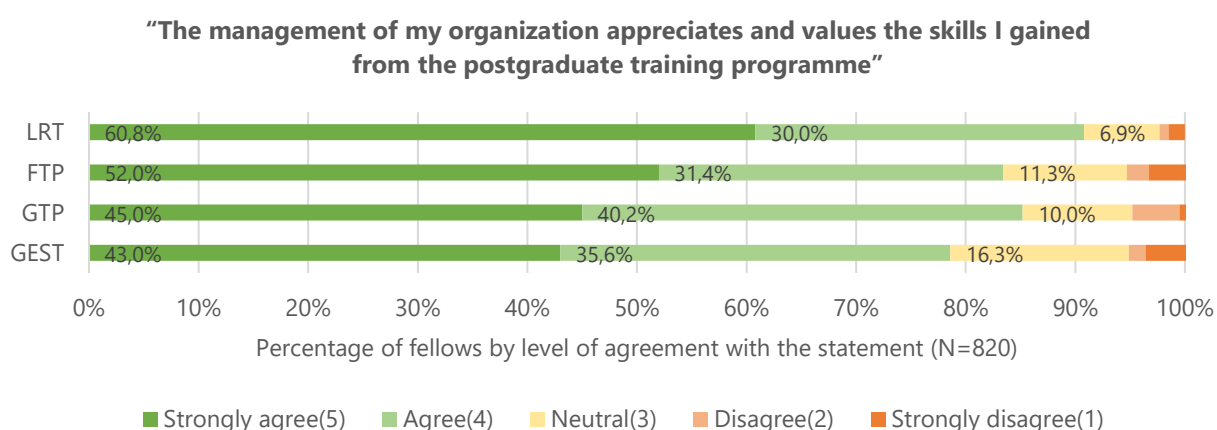
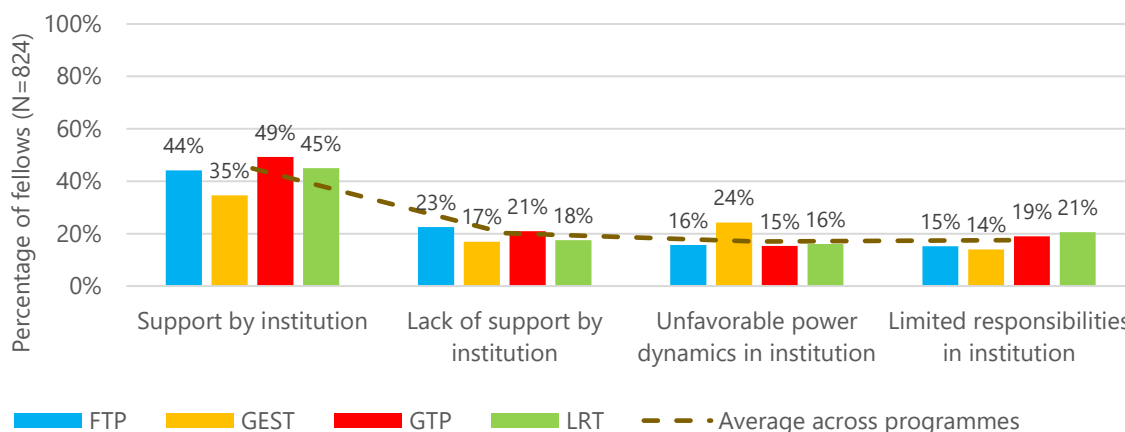


Figure 96 illustrates several other supporting or discouraging factors for knowledge and skills application in the partner institutions. Overall, **46.9% of the fellows report that they received support from their institution in applying the gained knowledge and skills after programme completion** while 25.3% of the fellows reported that the lack of institutional support hindered them in applying the knowledge. Generally, it seems that **GEST fellows feel less supported by their institutions** after completing programme, especially compared to GTP fellows. One of the reasons for GEST fellows to receive less support compared to other fellows might be unfavourable power dynamics related to gender norms as

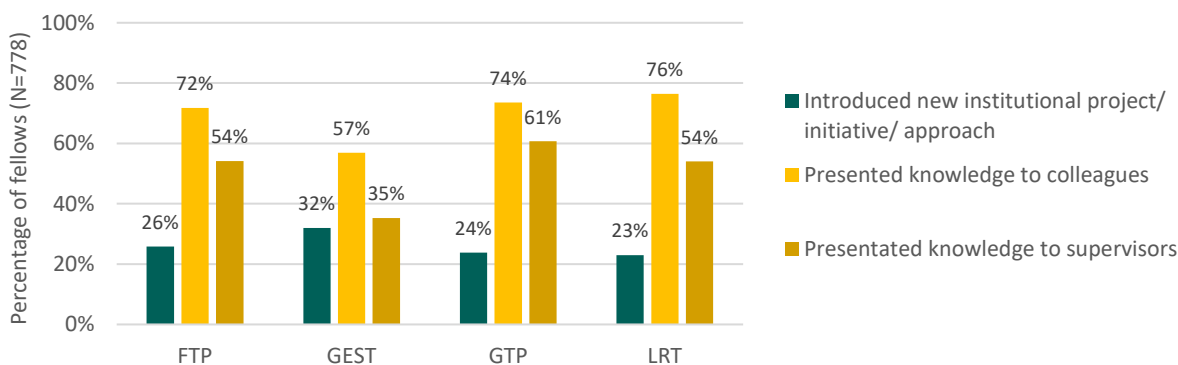
GEST fellows indicate this as a limiting factor around 10 percentage points more frequently than fellows from other training programs.

Figure 31: Institutional factors influencing knowledge application after programme completion



Moreover, figure 97 shows that **25.4% of the** fellows have used their skills from the postgraduate training programme to **introduce new initiatives, projects, programs, or approaches within their institution**. The share is highest among GEST fellows (32%) as many of them report to have **introduced institution policies supporting gender equality**. For example, one GEST fellow has ensured that a phrase on sexual harassment at work was included in their institutional policy. While GEST fellows are less active in disseminating their knowledge from the programme within their institution, fellows from the other programmes report **sharing their acquired knowledge with colleagues and supervisors** as a common approach of institutional knowledge diffusion.

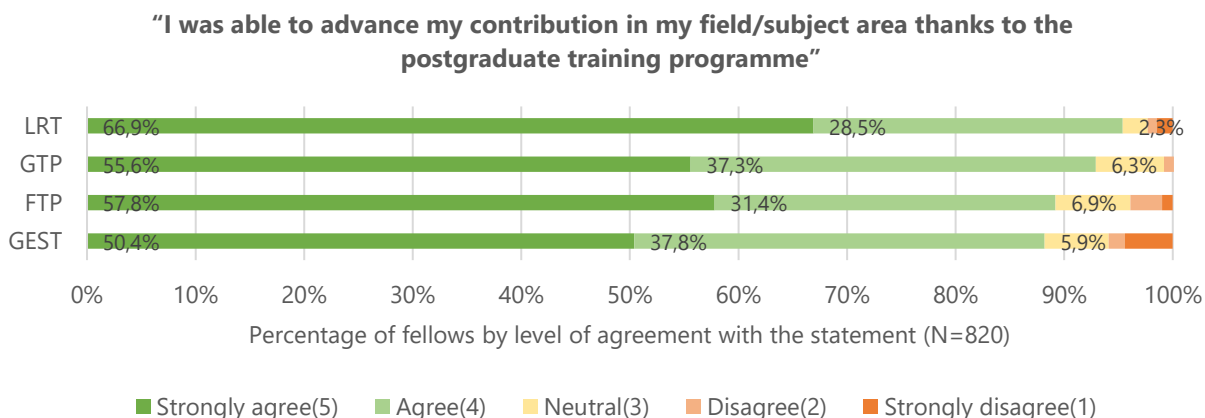
Figure 32: Institutional changes and results achieved by fellows



Technical field

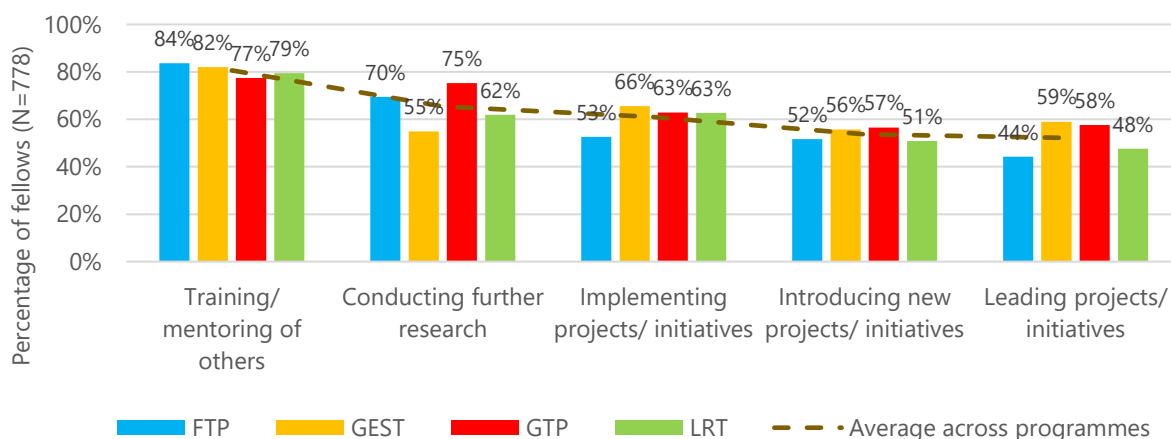
In addition to institutional level changes, the GRÓ International Centre aims to empower fellows to contribute to their technical field/subject area after programme completion. Figure 98 shows that on average **91.6% of the fellows** agree or strongly agree with the statement that they were able to **advance their contribution to their technical field/ subject** area due to the training programme. On average, the level of agreement is significantly higher among LRT fellows compared to GEST fellows (around 0.3 points on the 5-point Likert scale). Additionally, **82.2% of the fellows** agree or strongly agree that they have **contributed to other areas** besides their postgraduate programme focus. This percentage is relatively high across all programmes and cohorts, indicating that fellows contribute to their technical field irrespective of their graduation year.

Figure 33: Fellows' contribution to their field/ subject area due to the training programme



After programme completion, fellows mainly contribute to their technical field/subject area through **training and mentoring others** (80.6%), conducting further research (65.4%) and implementing projects or initiatives in the technical field (61%) as figure 99 illustrates. **GTP fellows are on average more engaged in further research** compared to GEST fellows. Around 50% of the fellows lead projects or initiatives after programme completion, although this share is lower for FTP fellows.

Figure 34: Types of contributions to the technical field

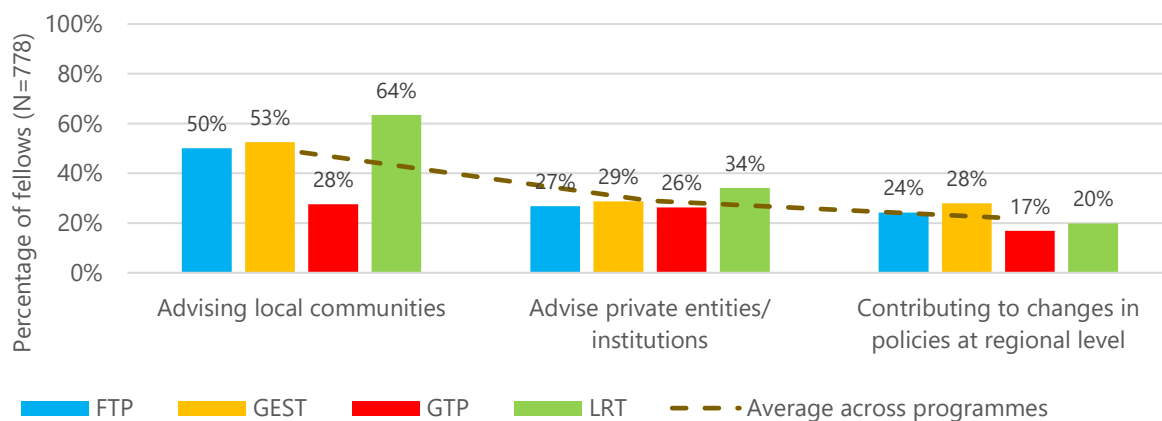


Survey respondents provided compelling examples of their contributions, showcasing the diverse ways in which fellows have applied their training and expertise to make **meaningful contributions to their respective technical fields**. One GTP fellow mentioned the engagement in institutional research and **publishing three papers in international journals**. An LRT fellow described building a **research team** in rangeland ecology and management which contributed to a nationwide **rangeland health monitoring system**. Another FTP fellow highlighted learning fishing gear design during the training in Iceland which led to **applying this specialised knowledge in constructing floating cages for fish farming** after programme completion.

Local/ regional level

In addition to technical and institutional contributions, fellows contribute to meso level results on the community and regional levels within their countries. Figure 100 below shows that fellows have **contributed to meso level results by advising local communities** (48.4%), advising private entities/ institutions (29.0%) and contributing to regional policy changes (22.2%). On average, **LRT fellows have been very engaged** in advising local communities, while GTP fellows were less involved.

Figure 35: Types of contributions at the local/ regional level after programme participation



Reported examples of meso level results demonstrate the fellows' commitment to fostering sustainable development, enhancing community capacity, and promoting inclusive and equitable practices. For example, an LRT fellow **established a multi stakeholder platform** for integrated planning, harmonization, and coordination of sustainable development efforts **at the district level**. A GEST fellow is contributing to local development by conducting **training for a local organization on gender responsive budgeting**. Some FTP fellows have also provided training for coastal communities on **sustainable conservation of the coastal and marine resources**.

1.4.3. MACRO LEVEL OUTCOMES

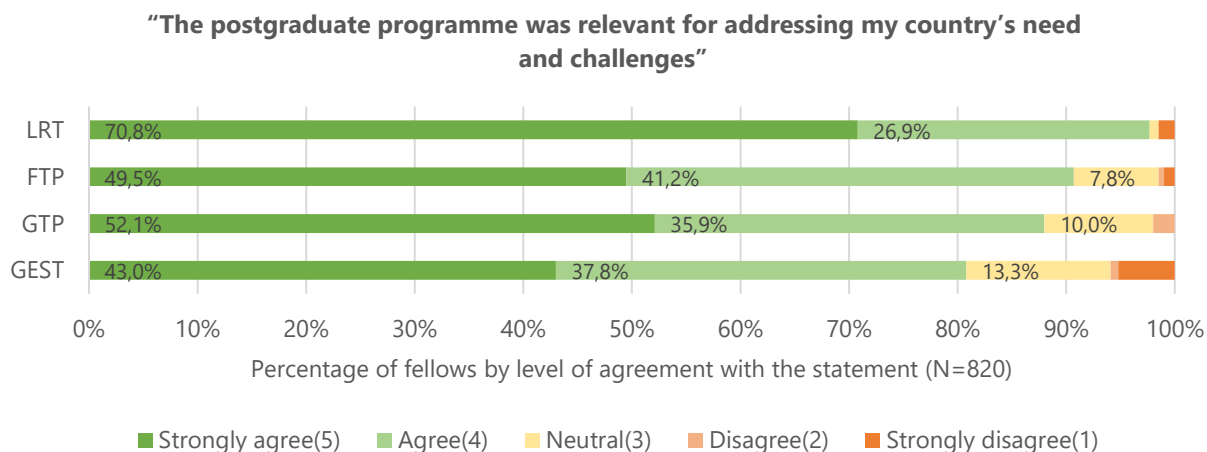
In addition to micro and meso level outcomes, the GRÓ International Centre aims to create macro level outcomes through capacitated fellows and institutions. While it is difficult to robustly measure macro level results attributed to GRÓ's activities, the survey results suggest that fellows contribute to this level to some extent. Overall, the fellows report that the **postgraduate training programme is relevant to the challenges and needs of the respective partner countries**, which is an important prerequisite for macro level results. However, many fellows perceive the political will to change within their country as not supportive, which might externally limit potential changes at this level. It becomes evident that **through high-level positions within their countries, many fellows contribute to changes on a national or international level**. The survey findings suggest that:

- **89.3% of the fellows agree** to the statement that the programme was **relevant for national needs and challenges**, which indicates that the training programmes are tailored to national contexts. The percentage of fellows who agree or strongly agree is **highest among fellows who resided in African countries** before training participation (92.7%).
- Only around **10% of the fellows indicate that there is a political will to change** that supports them to apply their knowledge from the programme.
- 39.6% of the fellows contributed to national or international debates and 36.9% advised policymakers or high-level decision makers. **GEST and FTP fellows were especially active advising policymakers or high-level decision makers**.

Country specific needs and challenges

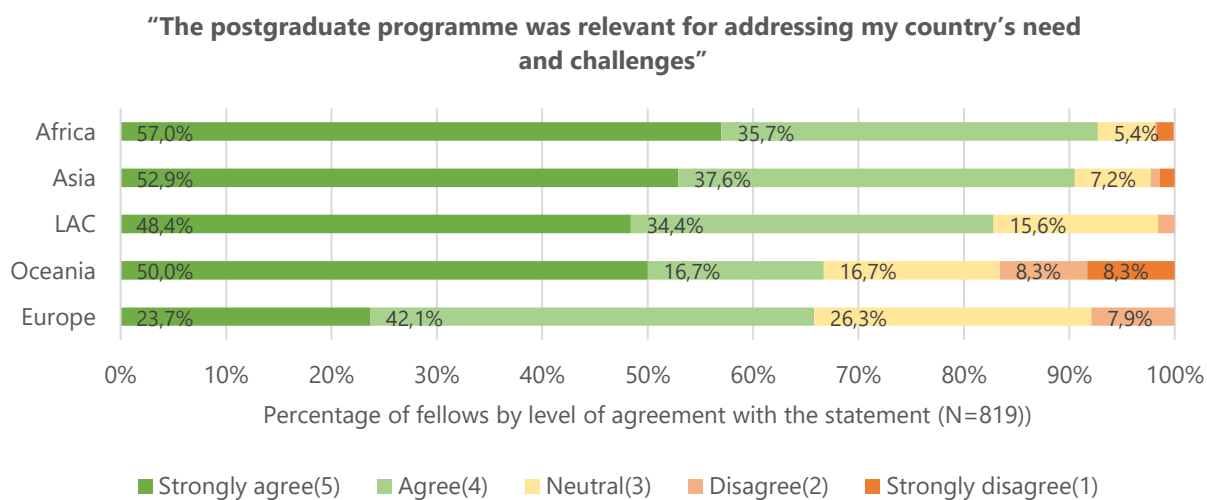
Macro level results depend on the extent to which the programme is relevant for national needs and challenges. Figure 101 illustrates that **89.3% of the fellows agree to the statement that the programme was relevant for national needs and challenges**, which indicates that the training programmes are tailored to national contexts based on the fellows' perception. Comparing the level of agreements between the different programmes, several statistically significant differences become apparent. The **percentage of fellows who agree or strongly agree is the largest among LRT fellows (97.7%)** followed by FTP (90.7%), GTP (88.0%) and lastly GEST (80.8%). There is no difference for the various cohorts, suggesting that the extent to which the fellows agree with the statement is irrespective of their graduation year.

Figure 36: Relevance of training programme for national needs and challenges by programme



Comparing the extent to which fellows agree to this statement by the different regions of residence before programme participation, figure 102 shows that the percentage of fellows who agree or strongly agree is highest among fellows who resided in **African countries before training participation (92.7%), followed by Asian countries (90.5%) and countries from LAC (82.8%)**. The differences between Africa, Asia, and LAC compared to Europe are statistically significant, indicating that the training programme content is perceived as **less relevant for challenges in European countries** by the fellows.

Figure 37: Relevance of training programme for national needs and challenges by region of residence before training participation



Another **external success factor** for achieving macro level results is **the political will to change within partner countries**. Survey respondents were asked if the political will to change enabled them to apply their knowledge after programme completion. Figures 103 and 104 show the percentages of fellows who confirm that the political will in their country is a supporting factor, categorized by both programme and by residence region after programme completion. Results indicate there seems to be an **overall lack of political will to change** within the countries as **only around 10% of the fellows indicate that there is political will to change** which supports fellows to apply their knowledge from the programme. This is an overarching challenge as no statistically significant difference in political will to change can be observed between programmes or between regions.

Figure 38: Political will to change by programme

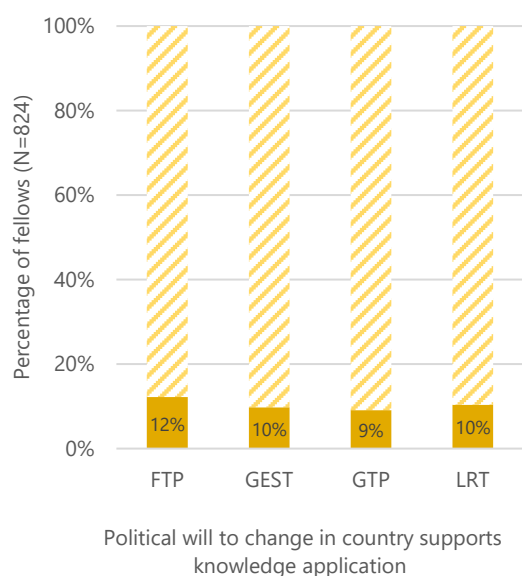
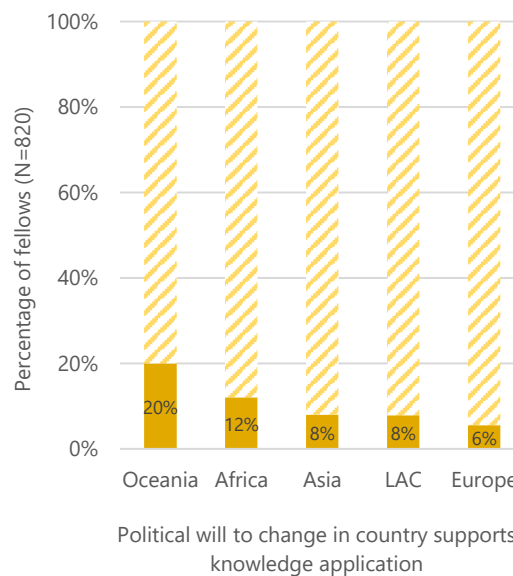


Figure 39: Political will to change by region of residence after programme completion

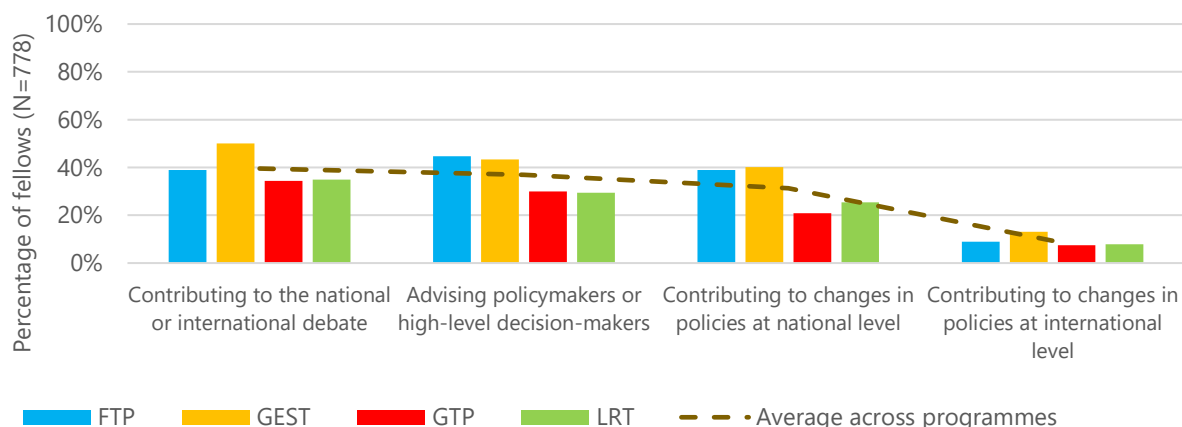


Policy contributions

Figure 105 shows that on average **39.6% of the fellows contributed to national or international debates, and 36.9% advised policymakers or high-level decision makers**. Furthermore, 31.4% of fellows contributed to changes in policies at the national level. These findings indicate that the GRÓ International Centre has the potential to contribute to outcome level results at the macro level through its fellows who are driving change after completing their training. **GEST fellows most often contribute to important debates, advise policymakers, and contribute to changes at national level and international level compared to the average fellow**. Also, **FTP fellows contribute relatively more often to policy advice and policy changes at the national level compared to other fellows**⁹. There are no significant differences in contributions across cohorts, indicating that fellows contribute to macro level changes irrespective of their graduation year. The 2017 “Evaluation of UNU Programmes in Iceland” also found that FTP fellows have been more active in advising policymakers while GTP fellows are less active in that regard.

⁹ The following differences are statistically significant at a 95% confidence level: GEST fellows are on average more likely to contribute to debates compared to GTP fellows, GEST and FTP fellows are on average more likely to advise policy makers/ high-level decision makers compared to GTP fellows, GEST and FTP fellows are more likely to contribute to policy changes at national level compares to LRT and GTP fellows.

Figure 40: Types of contributions at the policy level after programme participation



Reported examples of contributions at the macro level show that **many fellows hold influential positions within their countries** where they can potentially leverage their expertise to drive impactful contributions. For example, a GEST fellow developed a Gender and Equity handbook for the human capital development programme commissioned by **the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development in Uganda**. An LRT fellow is currently engaged in transboundary initiatives transferring water to the Republic of South Africa from the vast reserves of Lesotho. Furthermore, many fellows hold influential positions within their country that allow them to make impactful contributions at the macro level. These positions include for example: Technical assistant to the **Director of Fisheries and Aquaculture in Nigeria** (FTP); Senior Exploration Geologist at the **Geological Survey of Papua New Guinea** (GTP); and Development Cooperation Advisor for Water, Environment and Climate to the **Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Addis Ababa** (LRT).

1.5 IMPACT

Ultimately, the GRÓ International Centre aims to achieve **progress towards the SDGs through capable individuals and organisations** on the impact level. While it is not possible to robustly measure the impact of GRÓ's activities on national SDG progress, the survey captured the fellows' perspective on their individual SDG contribution through projects or initiatives. Fellows of the postgraduate training programme are crucial in initiating projects and programmes that contribute, according to the fellows' perception, to sustainable development in their home countries. The survey findings indicate that the **fellows are very active in implementing projects or initiatives that are linked to the SDGs**. Whether these SDG-related projects contribute to SDG progress cannot be assessed. Their contributions span policy advocacy, community engagement, research, and practical interventions, all demonstrating their commitment to sustainable development. The survey results find that:

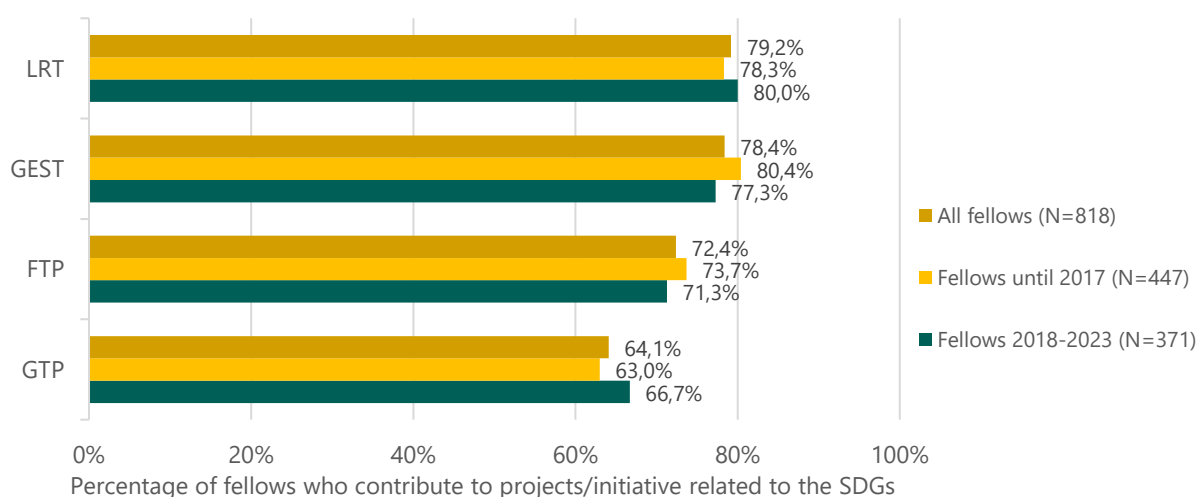
- **Overall, 70.9% of all survey respondents** report to have implemented projects, programmes and/or initiatives that are **linked to the SDGs**. The percentage is slightly higher for the 2018-2023 cohort, from which 73.1% report involvement in projects linked to the SDGs. The percentage of LRT and GEST fellows contributing to the SDGs through projects is significantly higher than the percentage of GTP fellows. Moreover, fellows living in African countries after programme completion have been found to be more likely to work in projects and initiatives related to the SDGs.
- Fellows mostly engage in initiatives and projects related to **SDG 7 Affordable and Clean Energy**, **SDG 13 Climate Action**, and **SDG 5 Gender Equality**. Among the **2018-2023 alumni**, contributions to **SDG 5, SDG 13, and SDG 2** were most common.
- Fellows report contributing to SDG advancement in their countries through **policy and advocacy** (e.g. developing gender responsive policies), specific **initiatives on renewable energy**, further **research on climate change impact**, and **community engagement** (e.g. training of women on clean water usage).

- The **technical focus of each training programme is reflected by the most frequently mentioned SDGs** addressed by programme fellows. For the 2018-2023 cohort, LRT fellows have made strides in progress towards SDGs on sustainability such as 13, 15, and 2, while GEST fellows have made significant contributions to inclusive equity through SDGs 5, 4, and 10. FTP fellows are engaged in initiatives linked to the sustainable blue economy in SDGs 14, 2, and 1, and GTP fellows are active in achieving climate resilience through SDGs 7, 13, and 5.
- Overall, most of the survey respondents **apply their training to advancing sustainable development** and addressing global challenges.

Projects and initiatives contributing to SDG progress

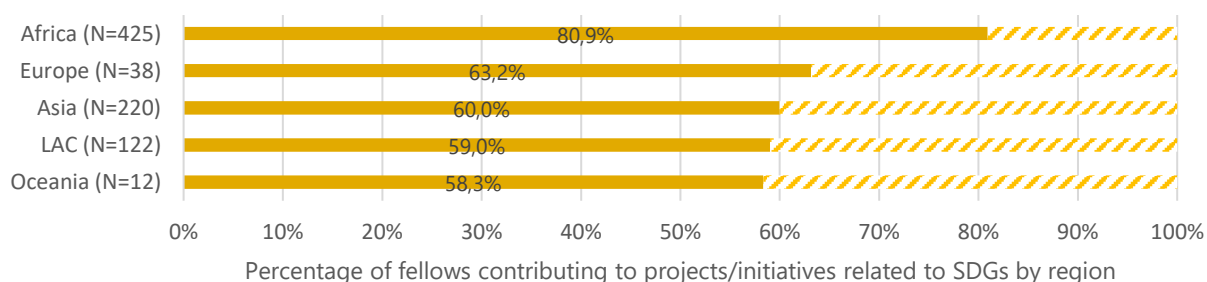
The survey results indicate that overall, **70.9% of all survey respondents report to have implemented projects, programmes and/or initiatives that contribute to the achievement of the SDGs**. Figure 106 shows the percentage of fellows who have contributed to the SDGs through initiatives and projects. Overall, the percentage of **fellows who contributed to the SDGs is highest among LRT fellows (79.2%) and GEST fellows (78.4%)** while it is statistically significantly lower for GTP fellows (64.1%). This means that the percentage of GTP fellows contributing to SDGs is up to 15 percentage points lower than for LRT and GEST fellows. The percentage of 2018-2023 fellows who contributed to the SDGs is 73.1%.

Figure 41: Percentage of fellows contributing to SDG achievement per programme and cohort



The comparison of contributions to achievement of the SDGs by region in Figure 107 indicates that the **percentage of fellows who report contributing to SDGs through projects is highest among those who are from African countries (80.9%)**. The difference is statistically significant for Asia and LAC, meaning that, on average, fellows from African countries contribute more to the SDGs than those from these two regions.

Figure 42: Percentage of fellows contributing to projects/initiatives related to SDGs by region of residence after programme completion



Areas of SDG contributions

Survey respondents were able to choose the five most important SDGs, which are linked to their projects and initiatives. Figure 108 visualizes which SDGs the 2018-2023 fellows most frequently indicated contributing to. Among the 271 fellows who contributed to the SDGs, 42.4% of fellows implemented activities related to **SDG 5 Gender Equality**, 37.3% implemented activities related to **SDG 13 Climate Action**, 30.3% to **SDG 2 Zero Hunger**, 27.7% **SDG 7 Affordable and Clean Energy**, and 24.0% **SDG 4 Quality Education**.

Figure 43: Projects and initiatives related to the SDGs based on frequencies of 2018-2023 fellows (N=271)



Figure 109 visualizes SDG contributions by all cohorts including those before the evaluation period. Among the 580 fellows who contributed to the SDGs, 39.1% of the fellows implemented activities related to **SDG 7 Affordable and Clean Energy**, 38.6% to **SDG 13 Climate Action**, 36.9% to **SDG 5 Gender Equality**, and 28.8% to **SDG 2 Zero Hunger**.

Figure 44: Projects and initiatives related to the SDGs based on frequencies (N=580)



Although the actual SDG progress through the fellows' initiatives is not measurable, survey participants had the opportunity to describe the ways they have contributed to the SDGs through relevant projects and initiatives. The **reported individual contributions of the fellows to SDG 7** range from technical projects like geothermal energy development and biogas production to policy advocacy and community training initiatives. For example, a fellow contributed to the expansion of geothermal power generation in Kenya through a project drilling geothermal wells. Another fellow supported the review and revision of Kenya's energy policy towards a sustainable energy policy. Fellows reported to **contribute to SDG 13** through advanced research and policy development as well as practical interventions and community engagement. Many fellows conduct research on the effects of climate change in their country such as one on the development of a scientific basis for the ecological condition, protection, and restoration of crisis foothill rangelands in Uzbekistan. Other fellows engage by serving as a youth delegate in the Africa Climate Mobility Programme focusing on the intersection of climate mobility and gender. The reported **contributions of the fellows to SDG 5** include policy advocacy, community empowerment, and research in cross-cutting sectors like water supply, sanitation, and environmental conservation. For example, GEST fellows were involved in the implementation of WASH programs through UNICEF in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Zimbabwe with attention to gender impacts.

Programme specific contributions to the SDGs

Due to the technical topics addressed in each training programme, fellows from each programme contribute to SDG achievement in many different ways. Figure 110 illustrates the five most important SDGs per programme for the 2018-2023 fellows, based on the percentage of fellows who report that they contribute to them.

LRT fellows report contributions to SDGs 13, 15, and 2 through a variety of projects and initiatives. 79.2% of all LRT survey participants engaged in projects/initiatives aimed at achieving the SDGs. Their efforts in climate mitigation and adaptation, research, and community training directly support SDG 13 by addressing the impacts of climate change and promoting resilience. Engagement by fellows in sustainable land management, ecosystem restoration, and conservation projects contribute to SDG 15 by protecting and restoring terrestrial ecosystems. Additionally, their work in promoting climate-smart agriculture, improving food production, and supporting food security initiatives aligns with SDG 2 in ensuring sustainable food systems.

Figure 45: Projects and initiatives related to the SDGs based on frequencies (N=271) by programme for 2018-2023 fellows



78.4% of all GEST survey participants were involved in projects directly addressing the SDGs. **GEST fellows mention contributions to SDGs 5, 4, and 10.** The fellows directly support the achievement of SDG 5 of promoting gender equality and empowerment through designing gender responsive policies, conducting research, and engaging in community-based education. They contribute to SDG 4 by ensuring equitable education through advocating for inclusive education policies, developing educational resources, and implementing community-based education initiatives. Additionally, their work in reducing inequalities, supporting marginalized groups, and enhancing inclusion aligns with SDG 10 to create equitable opportunities and reduce disparities.

FTP fellows report contributions to SDGs 14, 2, and 1 through a variety of projects and initiatives. 72.4% of the FTP survey participants report to have contributed to the SDGs through their initiatives. Their efforts in sustainable fisheries management, marine conservation, and aquaculture development directly support SDG 14 by promoting the sustainable use of marine resources. They promote food security and the corresponding achievement of SDG 2 through enhancing fish production, improving fish processing methods, and supporting community-based aquaculture. Additionally, their work in improving the livelihoods of fish farmers, designing alternative income projects, and building capacity in fishery communities aligns with SDG 1 as it helps to alleviate poverty and create sustainable economic opportunities for rural and coastal populations.

64.1% of the GTP survey participants were involved in initiatives related to the SDGs. **GTP fellows mention contributions to SDGs 7, 13, and 5** through efforts in geothermal energy development, policy advocacy, and community engagement. Their efforts chiefly supported SDG 7 by promoting affordable and clean energy solutions. They contribute to SDG 13 and address climate change through implementing climate mitigation and adaptation projects, conducting research, and participating in environmental conservation campaigns. Additionally, their work in inclusive hiring practices, mentoring and empowering women and girls, and forming gender-focused networks aligns with SDG 5 to enhance gender equality.

1.6 SUSTAINABILITY

The previous chapters outline that the fellows of the postgraduate training programme contribute to outcome level results and impact after programme completion, but the sustainability of these results is also critical. The **survey reached many fellows who graduated more than 20-40 years ago** which allows a more detailed analysis of long-term effects. Specifically, the sustainability assessment focuses on graduates who graduated ten or more years ago (cohorts before 2014) including 324 survey respondents in total. In addition, the sustainability assessment identifies factors that drive micro, meso, and macro level changes through linear multivariate regression models. The findings suggest the following:

- **81.8% of fellows are still working in the same technical field in 2024** or have worked in that field until retirement. This indicates that, even after at least decades, fellows continue to contribute to the same technical area in which they have been trained in Iceland.
- In 2024, **86.4% of the fellows who graduated before 2014 are still residing in the same region** of residency before training programme participation. This indicates that most fellows are contributing to changes within their home country and region rather than migrating to others.
- The analysis of influencing factors indicates that **fellows who feel that their skills are being appreciated by their management have a higher chance of contributing to the SDGs**, advising policymakers and local communities, and rating their professional career advancement higher.

Long term retention in the trained technical fields

One key factor in sustained results refers to the technical field/subject area of fellows. Figure 111 illustrates that among fellows who graduated before 2014, 81.8% are still working in the same technical field/subject area in 2024 (or have worked in that field until retirement). This indicates that **even after decades, fellows continue to contribute to the same technical area in which they have been trained in Iceland**. This indicates that the training programme is sustainable in fellows continuing to cultivate and utilize their expertise after training.

Figure 46: Technical field of fellows who graduated before 2014

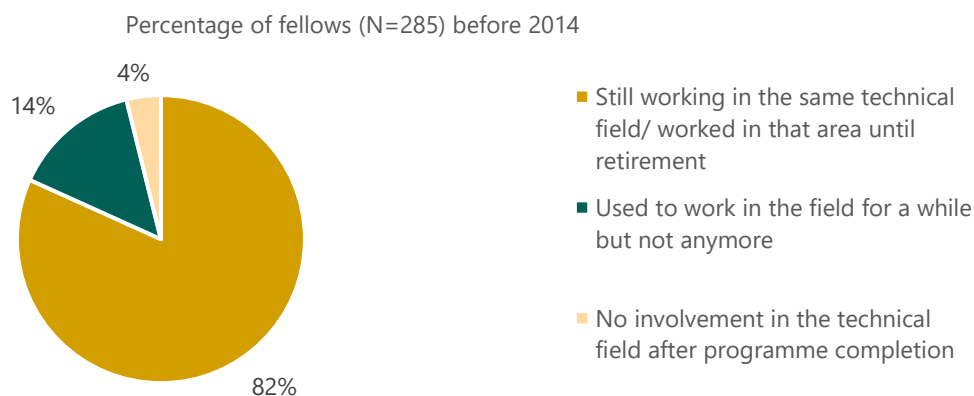


Figure 112 illustrates the reasons for fellows who left their technical field or have not been worked in that field after graduation. The main reason for fellows to not work in their field of training are **better professional career advancement options in other technical fields (30.8%) followed by job opportunities in other fields (28.9%)** and a lack of national or international job opportunities in that field (around 20%). Very few fellows change their interest in the field or report not having sufficient skills to match job requirements in that field.

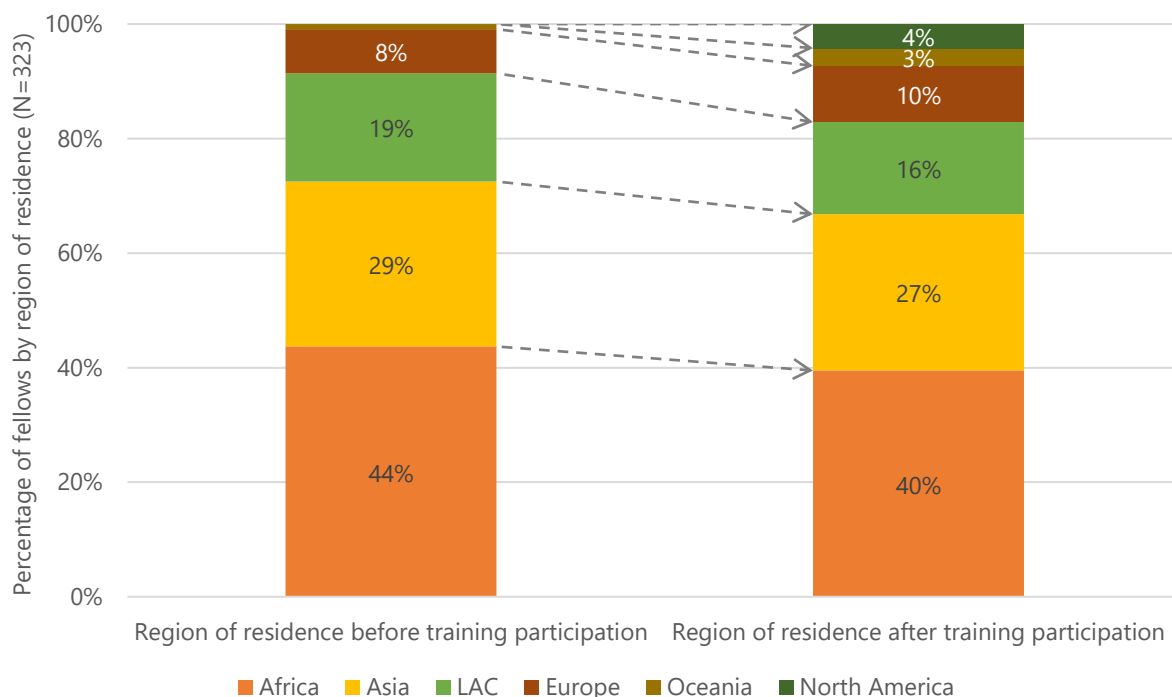
Figure 47: Reasons for leaving or not working in the technical training field for fellows who graduated before 2014



Long term retention in the geographical region

The GRÓ International Centre aims to empower individuals and institutions in their partner countries to contribute to positive changes within these countries. The extent to which fellows remain within their country and region thus is a critical sustainability factor. Most fellows who graduated before 2014 are still living in the same country contributing to changes there. **In 2024, 86.4% of the fellows who graduate before 2014 are still residing in the same region compared to their residency before training programme participation.** This indicated that most fellows are contributing to changes within their initial region rather than migrating to others. Figure 113 illustrates the percentage of fellows who graduated before 2014 by region of residence before training participation and now. It shows that **the geographical distribution has not changed a lot after programme completion.** The percentage of fellows living in African countries (-4 percentage points), LAC countries (-3 percentage points) and Asian countries (-2 percentage points) has slightly decreased while the percentage of fellows living in North America (+ 4 percentage points), Oceania and Europe (both +2 percentage points) slightly increased. The most common destination countries among fellows who graduated before 2014 and changed their region of residence are the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Iceland, and Canada.

Figure 48: Region of residence before training programme participation and now for cohorts before 2014



Factors influencing outcomes and impact

To investigate the factors influencing outcome level and impact level results, a multivariate linear regression analysis was conducted including all former fellows. Multivariate regression is a statistical technique used to **understand the relationship between one outcome variable and several independent variables**. It helps in examining how multiple factors simultaneously influence an outcome of interest. In total, four multivariate linear regression analyses are conducted to assess the 1.) Impact level, 2.) Outcome macro level, 3.) Outcome meso level and 4.) Outcome micro level. Table 65 shows which outcome variables were used and which independent influencing factors were included.

Table 3: Outcome variables and influencing factors used in the statistical analysis

RESULTS LEVEL	OUTCOME VARIABLE	INFLUENCING FACOTRS
Impact	SDG contribution (yes/no)	The technical programme, residence region after graduation, scholarship recipient, gender, graduation year, rating of skills improvement, rating of programme quality, sector of work after programme completion, perceived programme relevance for country needs, perceived management appreciation of skills, the political will to change, unfavourable power dynamics in institution
Macro level outcomes	Advising policy/ high-level decision makers (yes/no)	
Meso level outcomes	Advising local communities (yes/no)	
Micro level outcomes	Career advancement (1-5 Likert-scale)	

The multivariate linear regression analysis suggests that there are **statistically significant correlations between the outcome variables and several of the influencing factors**. It is important to note that this analysis is suitable to identify statistically significant correlations between an outcome and influencing variables, but it is not suitable to identify causalities. For the different outcome variables, the regression analysis suggests that:

Impact: Contribution to SDGs

- The **region of residence** has a statistically significant correlation with contribution to the SDGs, suggesting that the region in which a fellow resides after the programme correlated with the chance that a fellow contributes to the SDGs.
- Being a **GTP fellow** is negatively associated with the probability of reporting contribution to the SDGs, which indicates that these fellows are less likely to report contributing to the SDGs.
- Participation in any **networking activity** is positively correlated with contribution to the SDGs, which indicates that fellows who engage in networking are also more likely to contribute to the SDGs.
- The **political will** to change in a country is positively associated with contribution to the SDGs, which indicates that fellows who reside in countries in which they think the political will to change is supportive are more likely to contribute to the SDGs.

Macro level outcomes: Advising policy/high-level decision makers

- Being a **GTP or LRT** fellow is negatively associated with advice to policy/high-level decision makers suggesting that these fellows are less likely to give advice at this level.
- The **graduation year** is negatively associated with giving advice to policy/high-level decision makers which indicates that younger cohorts are less likely to give that advice.
- A **fellow's gender** has a statistically significant correlation with the likelihood of giving policy advice suggesting that male fellows are more likely to give that advice.
- The **perceived appreciation of skills by the institution management** is positively correlated with policy advice, which suggests that fellows who experience higher appreciation by their management are more likely to give advice to policy/high-level decision makers.
- **Insufficient resources** for project implementation are negatively correlated with giving advice to policymakers, which suggests that fellows who indicate a lack of resources are also less likely to give policy advice.

Meso level outcomes: Advising local communities

- Being a **GTP fellow** is negatively associated with giving community advice, which indicates that these fellows are less likely to give advice at this level.
- A **fellow's gender** has a statistically significant correlation with the likelihood of giving advice to local communities, showing male fellows are more likely to give that advice.
- The **perceived appreciation of skills by the institution management** is positively correlated with local community advice, which suggests that fellows who experience higher appreciation by their management are more likely to give advice to local communities.
- The **political will** to change in a country is positively associated with advising local communities, which indicates that fellows who reside in countries in which they think the political will to change is supportive are more likely to give that advice.

Meso level outcomes: Career advancement

- Receiving a **scholarship** funded by GRÓ/UNU is associated with a higher career advancement score.
- A higher average **rating of skills improvement** due to the programme is associated with a higher career advancement score.
- The **sector of work after programme completion** significantly correlated with the career advancement score.
- The **perceived appreciation of skills by the institution management** is positively correlated with career advancement, which suggests that fellows who experience higher appreciation by their management rate their career advancement higher.

1.7 CONCLUSION

The findings demonstrate a high level of **effectiveness of the training programmes between 2018 and 2023** across various dimensions, based on the perception of fellows from the postgraduate training programme. In terms of outputs, the training programs successfully equipped fellows with advanced technical skills and knowledge elevating professional competence. The outcomes indicated practical application of acquired skills through contributions to policy development, advisory roles, and community-based initiatives. The potential contribution to impact level results is evident in the

widespread involvement of fellows in projects and initiatives related to the SDGs as reported by fellows. Fellows have been instrumental in driving projects and initiatives related to climate change, gender equality, sustainable fisheries, clean energy, and more. Key assumptions about GRÓ's ToC were mostly validated. The data highlights the potential sustainability of these results as a significant proportion of fellows **continues to work in their trained technical fields and their home countries even decades after graduation**, indicating long term retention and application of their skills.

Survey respondents had the chance to provide feedback in a final note. In total, **314 respondents used the opportunity to provide their open feedback**. The qualitative content analysis identified the following common topics:

- **Appreciation for the Programme's Impact:** Across all programmes, fellows expressed profound gratitude for the training they received and its significant impact on their professional development and personal growth.
- **Professional and Personal Growth:** Fellows consistently reported that the programmes had a substantial positive effect on their professional careers and personal development. They noted substantial improvements in their knowledge, skills, and capabilities — essential markers of an effective training program.
- **Global Networking and Collaboration:** Many fellows noted the value of the networking opportunities provided by the programmes. The ability to connect with professionals from around the world not only enriched their learning experience but also fostered global collaboration which is crucial for addressing international challenges.
- **Cultural and Scholarly Exchange:** Fellows appreciated the cultural exchanges and the scholarly environment attained through participation in the programmes. These elements enhanced their overall learning experience and contributed to a broader understanding of global perspectives.
- **Suggestions for Extended Program Duration:** Many fellows across the programmes suggested extending the duration of the training. They felt that a longer duration could provide a deeper understanding of complex subjects.
- **Request for More Practical and Field Experiences:** Fellows from various programmes expressed a desire for more practical training and real-world applications of their learning. They highlighted the importance of hands-on experiences and fieldwork to effectively apply their skills in their respective fields.
- **Enhanced Support and Follow-Up:** There was a common request for continued support after the programme's completion. Fellows suggested follow-up visits, ongoing technical support, and continuous professional development opportunities to help them apply their newly acquired skills effectively back in their home countries.
- **Creation of Stronger Alumni Networks:** Fellows advocated for more robust alumni networks through structured opportunities such as alumni gatherings, webinars, and online forums that would enable them to stay connected with peers and leverage collective expertise.
- **Opportunities for further Studies and Scholarships:** Many fellows expressed a desire for expanded opportunities to pursue further studies, such as Master's or PhD programs, related to their training.
- **Inclusion and Diversity:** Some fellows pointed out the need for more inclusivity and diversity among programme participants. They suggested that the programme should ensure a wider representation from different geographic and professional backgrounds to enrich the learning environment and degree of cultural exchange.
- **Improvements in Program Content and Structure:** Suggestions were made to update and diversify the curriculum to include cutting-edge topics and ensure content is relevant to the current global context.