

## Prof Bart Criel receives honorary doctorate

He was awarded the degree by the University of Lubumbashi in the DRC.

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Dit is de omschrijving

**Professor Bart Criel of the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) in Antwerp received an honorary doctorate from the University of Lubumbashi in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 27 July 2019. Bart Criel was not only one of the driving forces behind the development of the University's Master of Public Health programme, but also has been playing an important role in the scientific projects of the École de Santé Publique of the University of Lubumbashi, an institutional partner of ITM.**

Prof Criel was awarded an honorary doctorate for his extensive experience in the field of education and his scientific support to the School of Public Health. He received the title during an official ceremony at the University of Lubumbashi. "This award was a complete surprise to me, but of course I am honoured and grateful. This title also implies a certain responsibility and I will therefore continue to work relentlessly for Lubumbashi and DR Congo," says Prof Bart Criel.

Fifteen years ago, Prof Criel helped set up a structural partnership with the University of Lubumbashi. The focus of the collaboration was on the creation of a Master of Public Health programme at the university. Together with Jean van der Vennet, his then ITM colleague, and the Congolese ITM alumnus, Dr Faustin Change, Bart Criel concentrated on the course content. The Master of Public Health programme has been in existence for over 12 years now and has become a leading course on health system management and disease control programmes, attracting students from all over the Republic.

Prof Bart Criel and Prof Abdon Mukalay (Lubumbashi) coordinate the scientific part of the collaboration between ITM and the University. An important spin-off of this cooperation is the 'Renforcement Institutionnel pour des Politiques de Santé basées sur l'Evidence au Congo' programme, or RIPSEC. Its aim is to strengthen the capacities of Congolese training and research institutions. RIPSEC is based on a collaboration between four Congolese scientific institutes and the Ecole Nationale de Santé Publique in Rabat, Morocco. Bart Criel and Dr Albert Tambwe (Lubumbashi) are responsible for the scientific coordination of this latter programme. RIPSEC, launched in 2015, is funded by the European Union and led to the creation of the 'Centre de Connaissances en Santé au Congo' or CCSC, a Congolese health knowledge centre in 2017.

The institutional cooperation between the University of Lubumbashi and ITM is financed by the Belgian Development Cooperation.