

SOCIAL, DEVELOPMENTAL AND PROFESSIONAL IMPACT EVALUATION OF ITM EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

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Presentation of the Results

Institute of Tropical Medicine | 23rd June 2021

AGENDA

01

Scope of the
Evaluation &
Methods used

02

Relevance

03

Effectiveness &
Impact

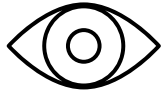
04

Coherence

05

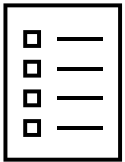
Recommendations

Scope of the Evaluation



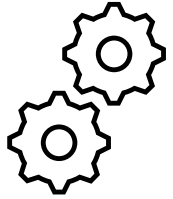
Object of the Evaluation

- ITM's **educational activities**: Short Courses, Master, PhD, Post-Graduate Certificate
- **DGD-funded scholarship programme**



Evaluation Criteria

- Focus on **relevance, effectiveness and impact**, as well as **coherence**



Quantitative & Qualitative Data collection

Quantitative Data:

- Student database with 4895 entries, 3903 distinct student IDs
- Survey of alumni and comparison group (shortlisted applicants), response rate of 36% and 35%

Qualitative data collection:

- Four country case studies
- Interviews with PGC graduates
- Focus group with ITM staff
- Interviews with VLIR, ARES, KIT

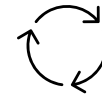
What are the results?



Relevance



Effectiveness & Impact

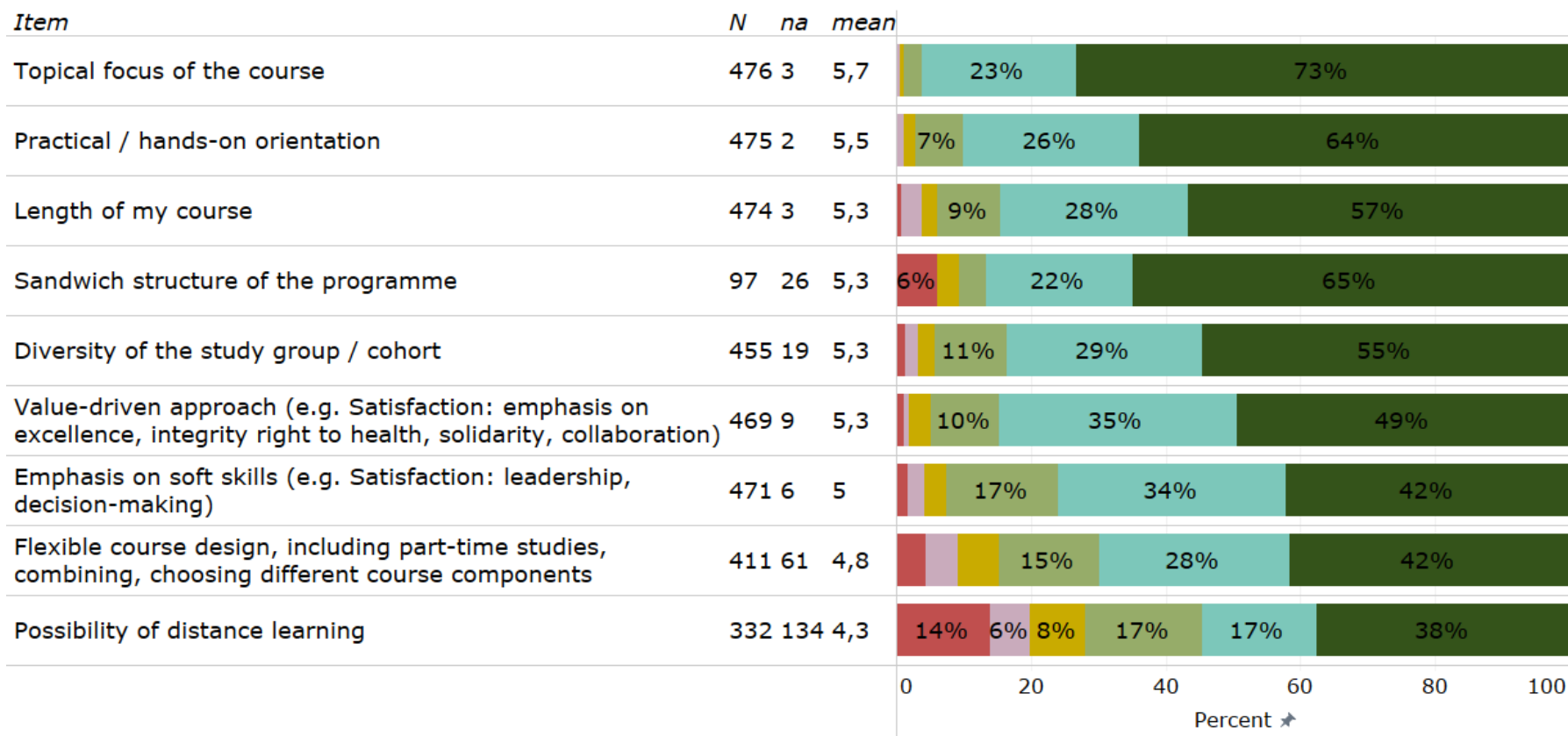


Coherence

ITM's educational activities are relevant

STUDENTS ARE SATISFIED WITH THEMATIC FOCI, ACADEMIC SUPPORT, AND SOCIAL SUPPORT.

29. How satisfied were you with the following aspects of your studies?



Responses


- ◇◇◇ Not at all
- ◇◇
- ◇
-
-
- Very much


- Graduates were **highly satisfied with their studies at ITM**. 98% would **study at ITM again**.
- The **topical focus** of the courses and the **hands-on orientation** show the highest satisfaction rates
- Graduates show high levels of **satisfaction with academic and social support**


Overall relevance: Satisfaction with scholarship & employers' needs


DGD-FUNDED SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME MEETS **THE (FINANCIAL) NEEDS** OF THE TARGET GROUP.


ITM MEETS **EMPLOYERS' NEEDS** FOR PRACTICAL SKILLS, TRANSFERRABLE KNOWLEDGE, AND SOFT SKILLS.


 Most of the **interviewees would not have been able to study** at ITM due to insufficient personal funding


 The **scholarship addresses the needs** of the students: It covers visa costs, travel and flight costs and provides a budget for dependents of the scholarship recipients

 **Short Course graduates were most satisfied**

 **Not all research expenses are covered for Master and PhD**

 **ITM**, in contrast to other institutes, **ensures a practical orientation and application of contents**

 Employers in research appreciate the **application of research methods** in the field as well as the **transfer of research results into policy briefs**

 Institutional partners were able to some extent to use the individual capacity building strategically due to the **long-term partnerships**

 Institutional partners gain **visibility and reputation** by sending staff abroad

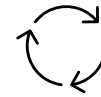
Evaluation criteria



Relevance



Effectiveness & Impact

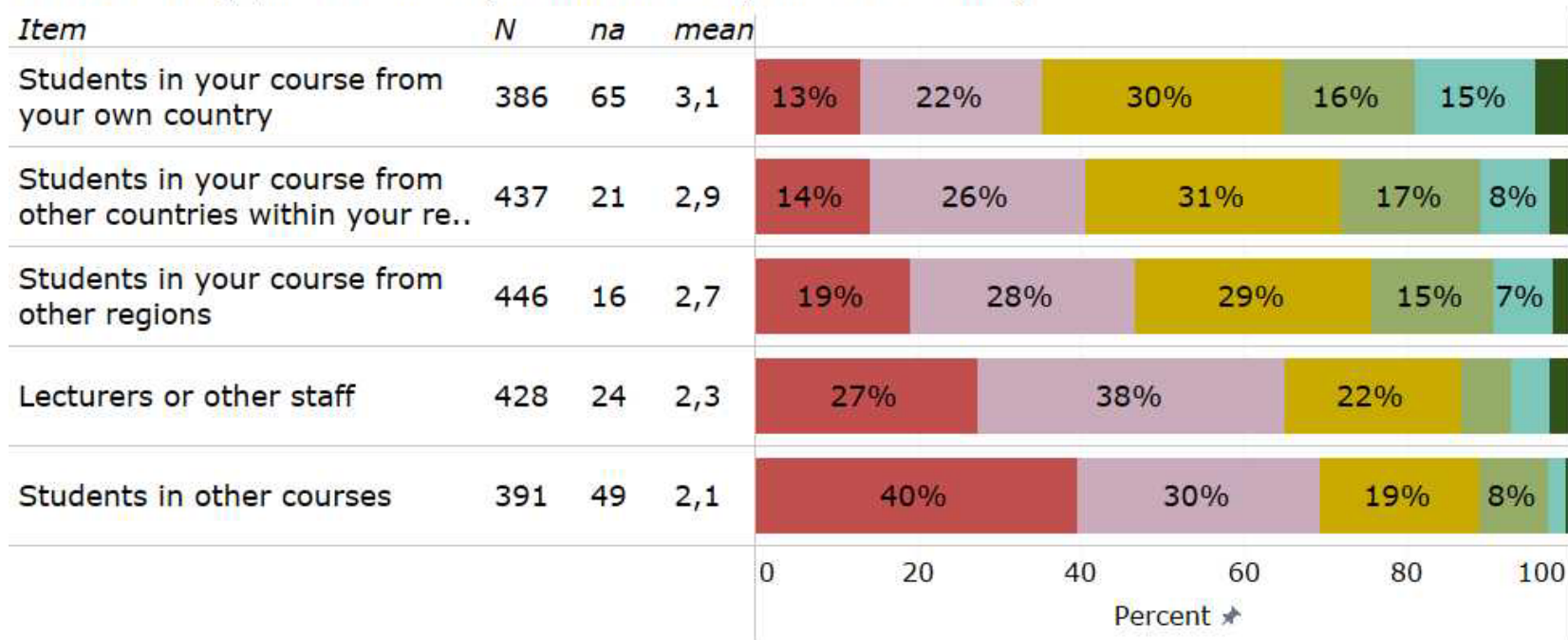


Coherence

Outcome 1: Networks

LONG-LASTING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN GRADUATES AS WELL AS STAFF ARE CREATED

39. On average, how often are you in touch with your contacts today?



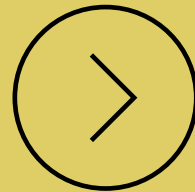
- Responses
- ◊◊◊ Never
 - ◊◊ Once a year or less
 - ◊ Multiple times a year
 - Monthly
 - Weekly
 - Daily

- Within the same countries students from different cohorts connect to each other, thereby **strengthening an informal alumni network across generations of students**
- **Graduates stay connected via multiple channels** and on multiple levels.
- **ITM alumni activities** are appreciated but **not systematically known or used.**

Outcome 1 – Impact: Networks for lifelong learning and exchange

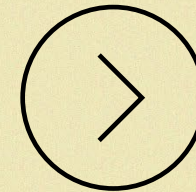
Mechanism

- Diverse cohorts, study groups and communities contribute to exchange, which can be maintained over a long time.
- Informal networks are sometimes used to leverage organisational changes



Outcome 1

Graduates strengthen formal and informal networks for lifelong learning, exchange and belonging



Impact

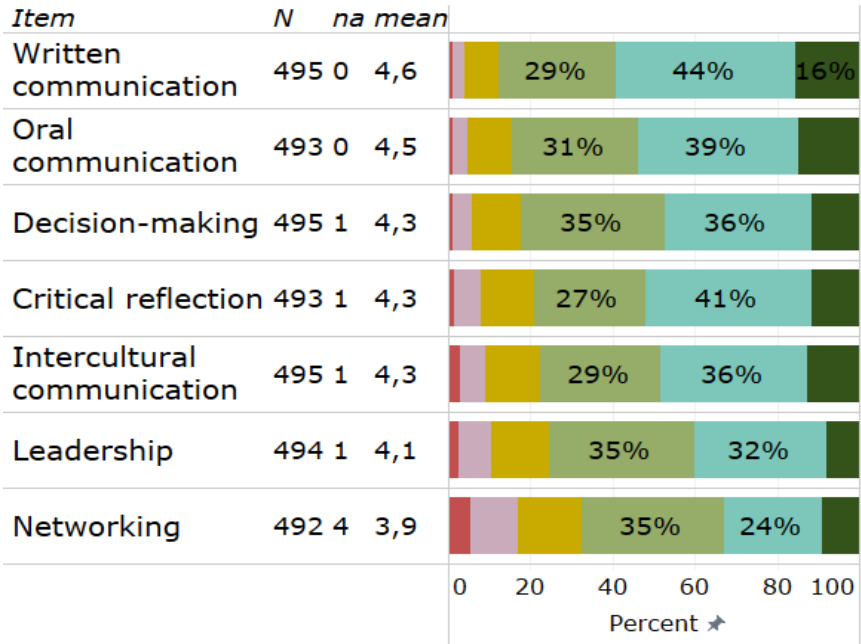
Graduates have the potential to act as agents of change in fields of tropical medicine and public health, but: this is dependent on the connections and support that they have from their organisations.

Organisations, including partner organisations and ITM itself are strengthened in their professional capacities to contribute to scientific and public discourse and practice relevant to their respective contexts.

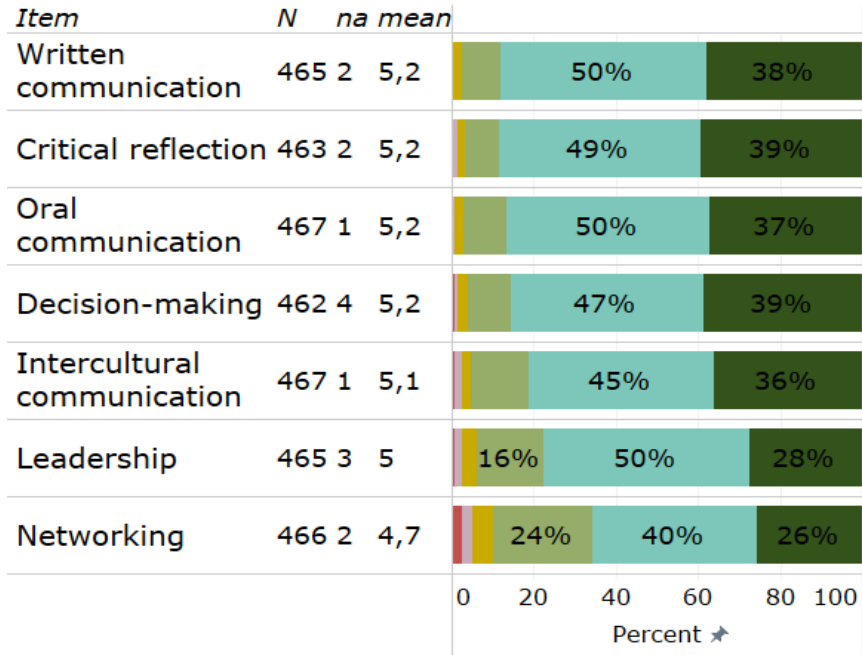
Outcome 2: Capacity development, "Soft" skills

FOLLOWING THE INCREASE OF "HARD" SKILLS, SOFT SKILLS ARE STRENGTHENED AT ITM.

13. How would you rate your soft skills in the following areas when you applied to ITM?



43. Now, how would you rate your soft skills in the following areas?

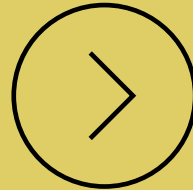


- ITM graduates gain ethical, thematic and methodological competencies.
- The evaluation results support the **value-driven approach** at ITM, according to which softs skills and hard skills are intertwined

Outcome 2 – Impact: ITM’s alumni and staff act as agents of change

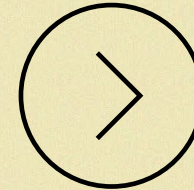
Mechanism

- **Interactions between students and staff are a crucial factor** in developing soft skills.
- The diverse cohorts and broad experiences of lecturers and staff are valuable factors to **ensure the development of skills**
- The educational activities’ explicit **focus on soft skills is a vital mechanism** to strengthen soft skills
- **Graduates can use** their newly acquired **skills in combination**, re-enforcing each other



Outcome 2

Graduates further develop their soft skills



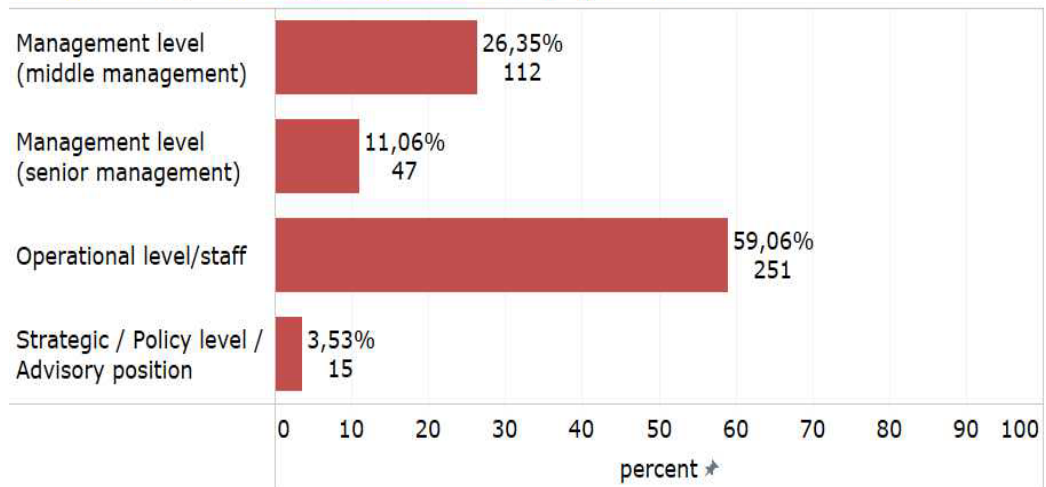
Impact

Alumni and ITM staff act as agents of change that embody scientific, ethical, and professional attitudes and value

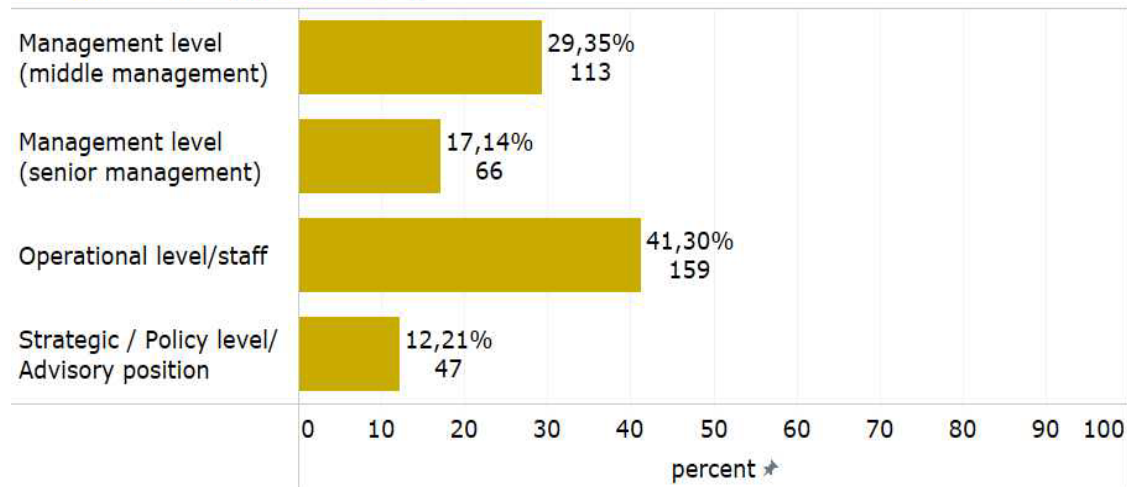
Outcome 3: Use of skills

GRADUATES CAREERS ADVANCE AND THEY ADD VALUE IN THEIR WORK

11. Work: What position did you have at the time of application?



51. Work: What is your position now?

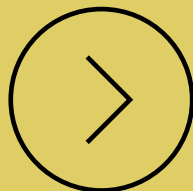


- ITM graduates specialize their professional profiles and have a **higher increase in their position** than students that did not study at ITM
- Graduates became **focal points on specific topics and assume greater responsibility**
- **Graduates mostly pass on their knowledge** to their colleagues, **implement changes** and **strengthen the capacities of their organizations.**
- **Challenges** can result from the **confinement of their particular positions** or **organisational inertia**
- **Partner institutes gain greater international visibility** by sending their staff and students overseas,

Outcome 3 – Impact: ITM graduates use their acquired competencies to add value

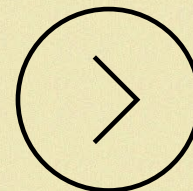
Mechanism

- **The diverse experience of students and lecturers is crucial for knowledge exchange.** This contributes to graduates adding value in their professional practice and interactions
- **Students conducting research in their home countries tend to work in their home countries afterwards.** This can add value in their local contexts
- **The hands-on orientation of ITM's education is crucial** to ensure that thematic, methodological and ethical competencies can be used in the professional environment
- **Informal networks** are sometimes used to **leverage organisational changes**



Outcome 3

Graduates use their acquired competencies to **add value in their professional practice and interactions** (professional agency).



Impact

Alumni and ITM staff act as agents of change that embody scientific, ethical, and professional attitudes

ITM and its Partner organizations are strengthened in their professional capacities.

Outcome 4: graduates are only viewed as valuable assets to some extent

GRADUATES ADD VALUE TO THEIR WORK BUT DO NOT BENEFIT FROM A WIDELY KNOWN REPUTATION

Graduates are viewed as **valuable assets** within their personal work environment.

- They progress in their careers and can become valuable assets in the public health community.
- In their work, they influence e.g. health services and programmes.
- Employers and partner institutes appreciate the practical, thematic and soft skills of ITM graduates.

ITM is **not consistently widely known** in the scientific communities in some countries



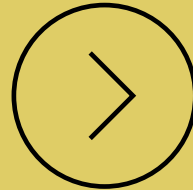
Graduates are **only viewed as valuable assets to some extent**

- In the wider scientific community, ITM graduates do not benefit from a widely known reputation.

Outcome 4 – Impact: graduates are somewhat viewed as valuable assets

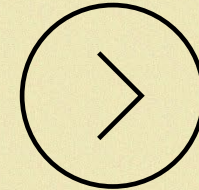
Mechanism

- The **hands-on orientation of ITM's education is crucial** to ensure that thematic, methodological and ethical competencies can be **used in the professional environment**
- Graduates get **higher positions**, such as ministries or international organizations
- **Graduates are regarded as competent actors and a valuable asset** by/to the scientific and public health community.



Outcome 4

Graduates are only viewed as valuable assets to some extent

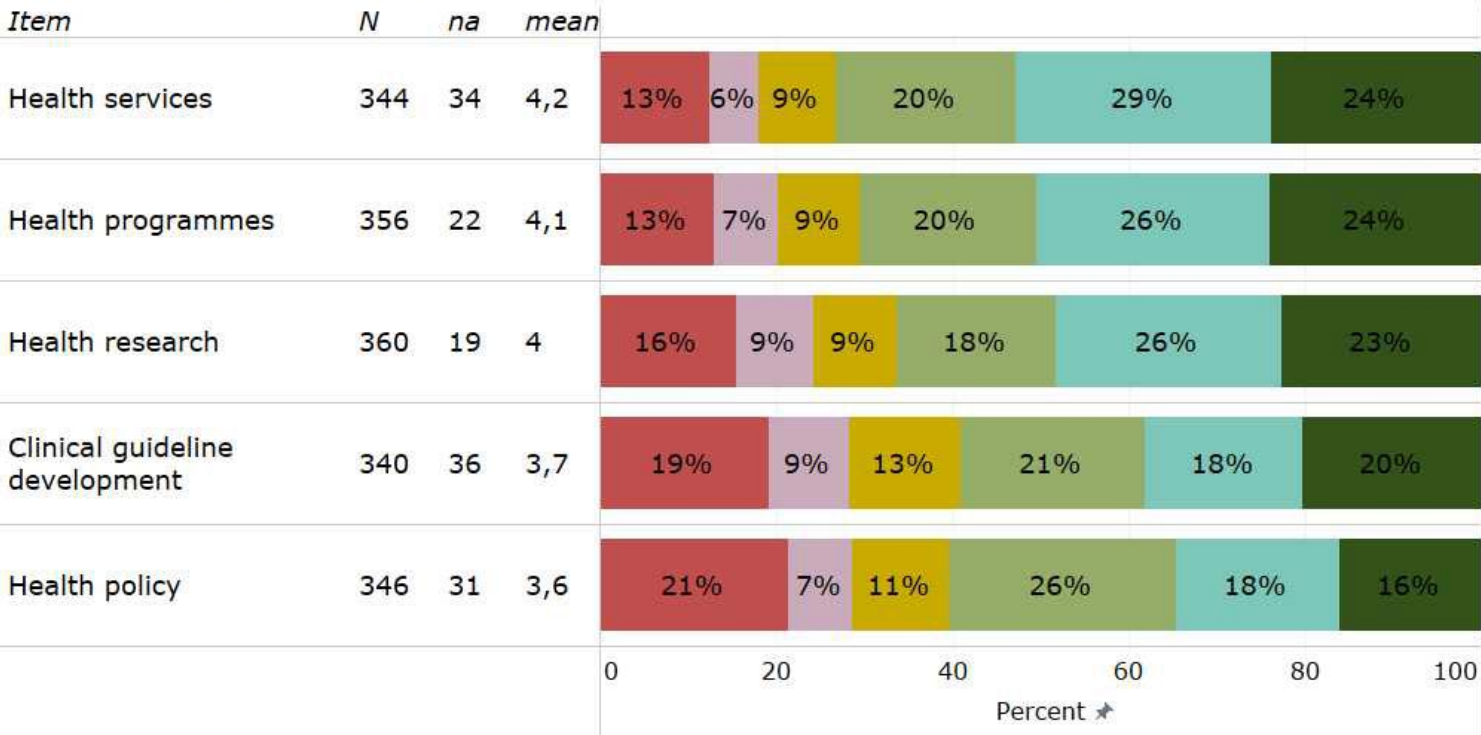


Impact

Alumni and ITM staff act as agents of change that embody scientific, ethical, and professional attitudes and value, but: do not enjoy from a widely known reputation

Impact: Graduates have the potential to contribute to health worldwide

58. In your work, to what extent have you been able to influence the following fields?



Responses

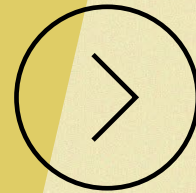
- Not at all
-
-
-
- Very much

- Graduates are in position to **contribute to the improvement of health worldwide**
- ITM equips the graduates with **important skills for their professional practice** and to a certain extent to contribute to further transfer their knowledge
- It is plausible that **ITM contributes to worldwide health through the influence of its graduates on changes on the department level.**

ITM's overall impact: contribute to improving health worldwide

Outcomes

- **Networks** for lifelong learning and exchange
- ITM's alumni and staff act as **agents of change**
- ITM graduates use their acquired competencies to **add value**



Overall Impact

✓
Contribute to improving health worldwide

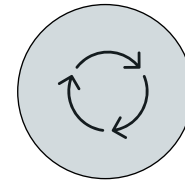
Evaluation Criteria



Relevance



Effectiveness & Impact



Coherence

Internal Coherence

ITM CONTRIBUTES TO DGD'S OVERARCHING GOALS OF HEALTH AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Health: strengthening the human resources available for healthcare and the integrated fight against specific and neglected diseases

- ITM's educational activities and scholarship programme contribute to human resources in health care

Education: improve education, particularly higher education in its joint strategic frameworks

- **ITM is a key actor in higher education** in the field of tropical medicine and public health

Geographic Focus:

- Discrepancy between DGD's **narrow and specialized focus** on certain priority countries
- In contrast, ITM's educational activities aim to have students from **as many low- and middle-income countries** as possible to **foster exchange in diverse student cohorts.**

External Coherence

ITM ALIGNS WITH OTHER DGD-FUNDED INSTITUTES WHILE DISPLAYING UNIQUE FEATURES

Objectives: offer students from low- and middle-income countries the opportunity to study in Belgium

VLIR: scholarship programmes for PhD and Master students

ARES: scholarship programmes for Master students, internship holders, PhD students and Belgian students

KIT offers similar educational activities as ITM, namely Master courses and Short Courses in the fields of public health and tropical medicine

The institutes coordinate through various **coordination mechanisms**: The tropED-Network (KIT/ITM, i.a.), Common Strategic Framework (VLIR, ARES, ITM)

External Coherence

ITM ALIGNS WITH OTHER DGD-FUNDED INSTITUTES WHILE DISPLAYING UNIQUE FEATURES

Compared to the peer institutions, ITM shows **unique features**

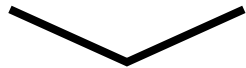
- ITMs **thematic expertise** is based on a long-standing focus on tropical medicine and public health and experienced staff. Its focus on students with a professional background supports the development of high-quality courses.
- ITM has a strong **gender and geographical diversity** within the cohorts
- ITMs secure funding allows to build long-lasting partnerships and to offer the opportunity to maintain the alumni networks
- ITM's overall support structures assist its students to successfully manage their studies abroad

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DGD AND ITM

01

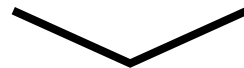
Finding: The DGD-funded scholarship programme is highly relevant and effective, as it gives students the necessary financial resources to access education and focus fully on their studies.



Recommendation: DGD should continue funding the diverse range of educational activities at ITM through its scholarship programme.

02

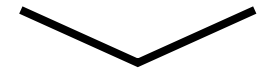
Finding: The financial support is mostly adequate in duration, amount and scope; nonetheless, the allowance should be reviewed to ensure that the research costs during the PhD can be covered.



Recommendation : DGD and ITM should maintain the financing structure of the scholarship programme, which considers visa costs, flight costs, as well as a small allowance for dependents, but review the research allowance.

03

Finding: An added value of ITM is its diverse cohort and the high quality of its student profiles, which are essential for knowledge exchange and learning



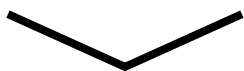
Recommendation : DGD should continue funding scholarship recipients from a range of countries, as the diversity in cohorts is a crucial factor to facilitate capacity development

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ITM

04

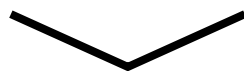
Finding : ITM's range of educational activities meets the needs of different students or of students in different phases of their lives.



Recommendation: ITM should maintain its diverse range of courses offered, which combines Short Courses, Master courses, post-graduate certificate courses and PhDs, as well as the modular structure within the courses.

05

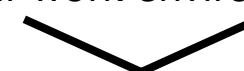
Finding : The close support provided to students at ITM is one of the very effective and distinguishing features of ITM. It is crucial for the learning experience at ITM and for the long-term connections of students with ITM.



Recommendation: In its educational activities and scholarship programme, ITM should continue its emphasis on close academic and social support.

06

Finding : ITM's educational activities are largely effective in developing skills and competencies among students. ITM graduates can use their thematic, methodological and ethical competencies, and soft skills to add value in their work environment.



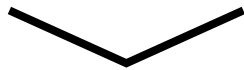
Recommendation: ITM's emphasis on values, critical thinking and soft skills should be maintained and strengthened in its educational environment.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ITM

07

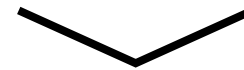
Finding : Students benefit from the wealth of knowledge and experience of ITM staff. The diversity of staff, in terms of professional and geographic diversity of lecturers contributes to acquisition of knowledge.



Recommendation: ITM should strengthen the diversity of lecturers and staff.

08

Finding : Overall, the application is fair and selects appropriate candidates for the studies. ITM could further contribute to the Leave no one Behind Agenda by strengthening the access of disadvantaged groups.



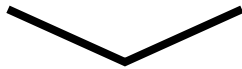
Recommendation: ITM should maintain its selection process overall but consider integrating the Leave no one Behind agenda.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ITM

09

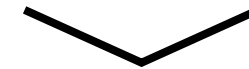
Finding : To fully benefit from the wealth of courses offered, ITM should foster interaction between courses. This could facilitate cross-cultural learning and exchange.



Recommendation: ITM should create more joint activities between courses, especially between the Post-Graduate Certificate courses and other courses.

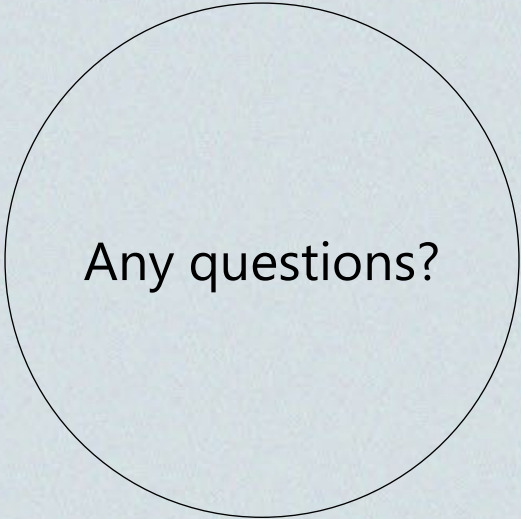
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Finding: Graduates are well connected, but the formal alumni network is not often used by the graduates. In its sustained efforts to develop its alumni strategy, ITM puts an emphasis on leveraging the network for impact, meaning that connections are created and maintained between students at regional, national or local levels for professional exchange and aim for organisational changes at higher organisational levels.



Recommendation: To leverage its alumni network for impact, ITM should further develop its alumni strategies and activities.

THANK YOU!



Any questions?