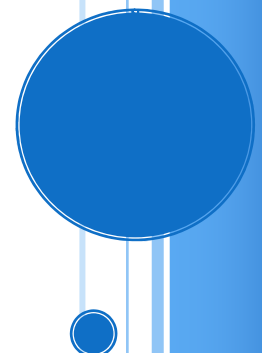


# EDUCATIONAL NETWORKING

*Kick-off workshop, 3-7 November 2008, Antwerp*

## *Executive summary*

The educational network gathered for the first time in the first week of November 2008, at ITM Antwerp, Belgium. The kick-off workshop resulted in a consensus among all network participants that there was sufficient common ground for the further development of this network. The diversity of contexts and stages of development of education among the participating institutes was valued as a major opportunity for learning and exchange in the network. Network partners chose *quality in education* as the theme for further collaboration, considering this as a generative theme for the future development of the network, although partners stressed that the network should play a *formative and facilitative role*. An *executive committee* –composed of one member per continent– was appointed to keep the network dynamics going and facilitate the next meeting. The *next meeting* (planned in 2009) will address the theme of quality in education, and will be prepared by a separate *task force*. The network partners agreed to develop a *website* for interim communication and exchange. Partners identified as a challenge for the network that it is important to *embed* network activities in the activities of the member institutes.



<b>1. THE EDUCATIONAL NETWORKING PROJECT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1. THE RATIONALE OF THE KICK-OFF WORKSHOP	4
2.2. NETWORKING TO LEARN: FINDING COMMON GROUND AND PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE	5
<b>2.2.1. EDUCATION AND THE FIELD</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.2.2. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2.2.3. E-LEARNING</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2.2.4. EXPLORATION OF POSSIBLE OTHER THEMES</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3. THE WAY FORWARD: NETWORK DECISIONS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>4. FEEDBACK OF THE WORKSHOP</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>5. FINANCIAL BALANCE</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>ANNEX 1: PARTICIPANTS OF THE KICK-OFF WORKSHOP</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>ANNEX 2: SUMMARIES OF THE PRESENTATIONS BY NETWORK PARTNERS AND FEEDBACK</b>	<b>II</b>
EDUCATION AND THE FIELD	II
QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION	VII
E-LEARNING	XII
<b>ANNEX 3: LEARNING TO NETWORK – CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ON BUILDING A NETWORK</b>	<b>XV</b>
WHICH NETWORK DEFINITION DID WE USE?	XV
QUESTIONS FOR NETWORKS-TO-BECOME	XVI
<i>What brings organizations together?</i>	<i>xvi</i>
<i>Who is involved in a network?</i>	<i>xvii</i>
<i>Power dynamics</i>	<i>xviii</i>
<i>Coordination and leadership</i>	<i>xviii</i>
NETWORKING AND LEARNING	XVIII
<i>Learning to network</i>	<i>xix</i>
<i>Networking to learn</i>	<i>xix</i>
<b>ANNEX 4: METHODOLOGY OF THE WORKSHOP</b>	<b>XXI</b>

# EDUCATIONAL NETWORKING

The *educational network* took off during a workshop in the first week of November 2008. This report intends in the first place to present the minutes of the kick-off workshop, focusing on the content of discussions and the decisions made by the network. More detailed information can be found in the annexes.

This report is prepared on the basis of minutes made by ITM staff. We explicitly wish to thank Hilde Buttiëns, Valéria Campos da Silveira, Redgi De Deken, Tom Hoerée, Maxime Madder, Marjan Pirard and Govert van Heusden. The report was written by An Piessens and approved by the executive committee, consisting of Mina Abaacrouche, Silvester Haripurnomo Kushadiwijaya, Eduardo Suarez Barrientos and An Piessens.



Picture 1: group foto of the educational network participants

Back row (from left to right): Hilde Buttiëns, Abderrahmane Maaroufi, Redgi De Deken, Elsa Gonzalez, Irma Sosa Lorenzo, Linda Venter, Juan Echevarría, Antonio Espada Teran, Subodh S. Dhakal, Govert van Heusden, Prahlad Karki, Elizabeth Nabiwemba, Koos (JAW) Coetzer, Upendra Bhojani

Front row (from right to left): George Pariyo, Cecilia Vaca Jones, Narayanan Devadasan, An Piessens, S. Haripurnomo Kushadiwijaya, Faustin Chenge Mukalenge, Rosa Goyes Ayala, Eduardo Suarez Barrientos, Supargiyono, Abdon Mukalay wa Mukalay, Mina Abaacrouche

*ANNEX 1. Participating institutes and representatives in the Kick-off workshop*

## 1. THE EDUCATIONAL NETWORKING PROJECT

The educational network is a project funded within the 3<sup>rd</sup> Framework Agreement (FA3) between ITM Antwerp and the Belgian Directorate General of Development Cooperation (DGDC), a programme with as central theme and political message *switching the poles*. Apart from individual and institutional capacity strengthening, this programme includes an explicit component of networking. The educational networking-project aims at strengthening training capacities of partner institutes by sharing experiences and expertise between partners, building on the specific expertise and comparative strengths of all participants and by learning together, eventually with input from external experts. The educational network puts *education* for health in the centre of attention but also wants to explore the surplus value of *networking*.

ITM Antwerp initiated this project among its institutional and other selected South partners, based on the finding that its partners dealt with similar problems and challenges even if they are at different stages in the development of training projects. It was indeed a response to the analysis that common challenges were addressed throughout different Institutional Collaboration projects. ITM Antwerp itself considered an educational network as a possible opportunity to internationalize its educational expertise, to maintain and strengthen the professional relevance and quality of its own educational programme and, finally, considered the network as a possible source for joint programmes. Whereas bilateral collaboration offers interesting opportunities for exchange and support, networking with different partners on common problems throughout the world is expected to provide complementary avenues for sharing experiences and learning.

The project proposal was informed by an exploratory needs assessment among possible network partners and by an assessment of the training needs as described in proposals for institutional collaboration. Like all other FA3-projects, this project was presented in the format of a 'logical framework', describing overall objectives, project purpose and results. The intervention logic of the educational networking project – fitting in the subprogramme on training – can be found in the table below.

### **INTERVENTION LOGIC**

#### **OVERALL OBJECTIVES** (FA3 subprogramme on training)

*To train at post-graduate level health experts and scientists from developing countries in the management of health services and disease control programmes, in health-related research or in the delivery of reference health services.*

#### **PROJECT PURPOSE**

*Strengthen postgraduate training capacity in clinical, public and international health in the network partners*

#### **RESULTS**

- Result 1 Opportunities for collaboration, joint learning and mutual support in education are identified.*
- Result 2 Consultative structures and supportive cluster networks on specific themes and/or within a specific region are functioning.*
- Result 3 A common reference framework for educational quality assurance has been developed.*
- Result 4 Complementarities, gaps and synergies of training programmes are identified and modules for exchange are evaluated*

## INTERVENTION LOGIC

Result 5	Additional modules are organised to complete the regional offer by appropriate network partners
Result 6	Interested eligible network partners have joined the tropEd network.

Table 1: intervention logic of the educational network, FA3

*Switching the poles*, the overarching theme and political message of FA3, questions the uneven balance between the North and the South in the development and achievement of global health. Networking is expected to have an added value on the political level of FA3 and is considered as a means to jointly address global priority needs in health research, practices and policies.

To summarize, the educational network was created because of the expectation (1) that it will reinforce partners' training capacities by dealing jointly and in a flexible way with common educational problems and (2) that it will contribute to switching the poles.

At the outset of the project, 11 South partners were identified among ITM Antwerp's partners as possible network partners. ITM Antwerp takes up a role as a partner among other partners. The first network activity was a kick-off workshop that took place in the first week of November 2008, in Antwerp, Belgium. Network funds allowed coverage of travel costs and subsistence for two persons per partner institute. Partner institutes received an invitation to delegate both a person involved on a more strategic level in education and a person involved in education on a more operational level. The project funds were designed to enable networking activities, but ITM Antwerp also recruited scientific staff to support and coordinate the network.



## 2. MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP

### 2.1. The rationale of the kick-off workshop

The educational network faced two overarching questions, dealing with both the method of networking and the outcomes of this networking process.<sup>1</sup>

- (1) *How can the network evolve from a group of interested institutes to an active network, in such a way that it reflects a switching of poles?*
- (2) *How can the network indeed contribute to capacity building and strengthening of training activities in the network partners?*

This led to the formulation of two general learning objectives for the kick-off workshop, (1) *learning to network* and (2) *networking to learn*.



Through the objective *learning to network* attention was paid to decisions about the network. Although a general project proposal was already outlined in the FA3-programme, the network still had to decide for itself what it wanted to realize. These operational decisions needed to be complemented by decisions about network structure, leadership and membership. The task was thus to reach a common understanding of the future of this network.

These decisions were addressed through a learning-by-doing approach, based on the assumption that network decisions would only become clear and relevant by working on the content of the network.



During the workshop, several possible themes in education for health were explored, so the network could start with *networking to learn*. Based on the initial project proposal, three themes were identified for in-depth work, i.e. *education and the field*, *quality assurance and accreditation* and *e-learning*. An extra session was scheduled for a *general exploration of other relevant themes* for the network.

At the first network meeting, 12 partner institutes from 12 countries were represented. For the organization of the kick-off workshop, ITM Antwerp made a distinction between its role as participant in the network (2 participants) and its role as facilitator of the network and the first meeting (1 network coordinator). In the table in *ANNEX 1*, participating institutes and participants are listed in alphabetical order.

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed conceptual background of the kick-off workshop, see ANNEX 3.

## 2.2. Networking to learn: finding common ground and priorities for the future

The kick-off workshop aimed first at mapping broadly the interests of workshop participants as well as their expertise in education, in order to define working topics and set priorities. This report gives a summary of the presentations and network discussions for each of the three themes, i.e. *education and the field* (§2.2.1), *quality assurance and accreditation* (§2.2.2) and *e-learning* (§2.2.3). Another session focused on the exploration of other themes of interest. The results of this session will be discussed after the summary of the three themes.

Each theme was elaborated through a series of sessions, with case-presentations, exchanging information, exploring the expertise of partners and learning from each other. The sequence of sessions was designed to make room for institutional perspectives as well as for a network perspective. A more detailed explanation of the methodology applied during the workshop can be found in *ANNEX 4*.

### 2.2.1. Education and the field

The theme titled *education and the field* proved to be relevant to network partners. Five partner institutes wanted to present a case about this theme. In chronological order of presentation, following topics were covered:

- *A new course for district health managers* (IPH, India)
- *The proposed health systems fellowship programme in Uganda: some observations, issues and considerations* (MUSPH, Uganda)
- *Field exercises, a key component in a learning process. Experience from the School of Public Health of the University of Lubumbashi* (SPH, DR Congo)
- *Masters in public health, Institute of Public Health (ISP), Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador* (PUCE, Ecuador)
- *Practical training in non-health organizations* (INAS, Morocco)

The case presentations are presented in an integrated way. The summary below was composed on the basis of the case presentations and the ensuing discussions. Examples in the text are non-limitative. A more detailed outline of each presentation and its feedback can be found in *ANNEX 2*. The hand-outs of the presentations were distributed during the workshop (on paper and on CD-Rom).

#### ◎ CASE PRESENTATIONS

During the presentations, the link between education and the field emerged in numerous ways. The theme contains a lot of subthemes.



One angle to look at education and the field is the question *how to use the field as a tool in medical and (public) health education*. This angle was reflected when partners described their experiences with integrating education in the field and learning on campus (e.g. SPH, DR Congo; PUCE, Ecuador). Even though the concrete practices differ, both institutes refer in their educational approach to the irreplaceable value of working with the field and with real-life problems. This question is strongly related to the question *how education can be more*

*relevant* to local and national health needs, to the needs of health professionals as well as needs of the population. This concern was explicitly addressed in the *needs assessment* preceding new courses or programmes (e.g. IPH, India; MUSPH, Uganda; INAS, Morocco). The concern returned in other aspects of training, like in the *evaluation of course outcomes* (PUCE, Ecuador), in the *curriculum of a course* (e.g. SPH, DR Congo) and eventually in the feedback discussions too.

The question was also addressed how students could learn from involvement in non-health related fields. INAS (Morocco) recounted the exposure of its trainees to a practical training in a non-health organization, which opened up a discussion about possible contributions from non-health organizations to health.

Partners address the problem of *relevance of education* also with efforts to *train professionals in the field*, or to *combine education and working in the field*. Different answers to this problem have been presented, such as the training of teams (IPH, India), a work-based training (MUSPH, Uganda), or the organization of a part-time Master's programme (PUCE, Ecuador). In the course of the presentations and the ensuing feedback discussion, the question returned whether and when *education and the field mutually strengthen each other*.

Gearing a successful course entails different *educational issues*, but entails also a lot of attention to context factors, or attention to the 'relation with the outside world'. Recurrent *educational topics* were programme development and curriculum building, course objectives, development of training material (content and pedagogy), course pedagogy and expected and evaluated outcomes of courses. Different accents were stressed during the presentations, related to the stage of development of the courses presented.



The *relation between the course and the 'outside' world* is crucial if a course wants to succeed. Several partners describe how consortium building and government ownership are a necessary part of the development of a course (e.g. IPH, India; MUSPH, Uganda). This exercise is not only restricted to the needs assessment, but extends to organization, recognition and funding of the course. *Content-wise*, the relation with the field is essential to the development of courses. PUCE (Ecuador) describes for instance the difficulties of embedding action research in field sites. Ultimately, the importance of *finding interesting field sites* is recognized by different partners.



Finally, the *issue of mentorship and coaching* of course participants returned regularly in the presentations and feedback discussions. Good mentorship was not only considered as a problem for organizational reasons (although it's an important aspect), but is deemed necessary because courses aim at the *development of skills* (research skills and management skills). *Motivation of staff and participants* was another recurring issue, framed both as a problem for which a course could be an answer (e.g. MUSPH, Uganda) and as a problem courses are faced with: how to motivate professionals to follow and finish a course?



## © NETWORK DISCUSSION: SETTING PRIORITIES FOR THE NETWORK

This first discussion about setting priorities for the network took place on the second day of the workshop. The discussion aimed at deciding whether the theme *education and the field* was considered as a theme for this educational network. In case of a positive answer, possible subthemes for the future would have to be specified. Final decisions for the network had to wait until the last day of the workshop, decisions that then could be made based on the inventory of each thematic discussion.

*Education and the field* is a very relevant topic and a thematic priority for the educational network, since many partners have a field module in their courses. Some participants use their trainings as a means for improving performance of health systems outputs. Thus, linking field realities with using field in education is paramount and the network 'should absolutely work on it'.



Partners felt that it was important to explore the right *balance between theoretical and field learning*. The assumption is that field education and theory feed each other and that this interaction strengthens the understanding of the reality. It is expected that the experience of different contexts might help to learn from each other on how to better prepare students for the field. Additionally, network collaboration on the theme of *education and the field* could provide an opportunity to *monitor and evaluate* practices in the field and could stimulate the *exchange of evaluations*. Some participants also showed interest in the topic of *mentorship and coaching skills*. Others showed interest in the place of research in this network's collaboration, which led to the proposal to add a *research component* to the work of this network.

As to *how* the network could work on this theme, several avenues are proposed, such as student- and teacher-exchange between institutes, as well as the exchange of material. In the ensuing discussion, it was stipulated that it is necessary to have good field practices to agree to exchange students. The creation of *guidelines* of good practices was proposed as a possible instrument to define these 'good practices'. However, some participants called attention to the necessity to be careful and to avoid standardization of approaches.



Network collaboration shouldn't focus solely on collaboration between ITM and its partner institutes, but should also enable South-South collaboration. The present network could learn from other networks working on education and the field. These networks share material, assessment methods, contents of trainings, etc. The educational network could particularly learn from these networks on how they bring things to the students.<sup>2</sup> There was a proposal to create a *clearinghouse* where everyone could pick what they need.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Networks cited as examples are TEPHINET (*Training Programmes in Epidemiology and Public Health Interventions NETWORK* <http://www.tephinet.org/>) and AFENET (*African Field Epidemiology Network* <http://www.afenet.net/english/index.html><http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/>)

<sup>3</sup> See for example the *Supercourse* from the University of Pittsburgh, USA <http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/>

### 2.2.2. Quality Assurance and Accreditation

Quality assurance and accreditation are central themes in education. Five partner institutes wanted to present a case about this theme. In chronological order of presentation, following topics were covered<sup>4</sup>:

- *Recognition of the Postgraduate programme in Tropical Medicine*  
(UGM, Indonesia)
- *Accreditation of the Short Course Training in Tropical and Infectious Diseases*  
(BPKIHS, Nepal)
- *Accreditation: the external look at quality and the experience of the ITM Master in Disease Control*  
(ITM, Belgium)
- *Design of and experiences with the training module in the MD Epidemiology*  
(INHEM, Cuba)
- *Evaluation of the Master's course*  
(UMSS, Bolivia)

The case presentations are presented in an integrated way. The summary below was composed on the basis of the case presentations and the ensuing discussions. Examples in the text are non-limitative. A more detailed outline of each presentation and its feedback can be found in ANNEX 2. The hand-outs of the presentations were distributed during the workshop (on paper and on CD-Rom).

#### ◎ CASE PRESENTATIONS



Issues of quality assurance and accreditation were explicitly addressed during this series of thematic sessions, although the *concern for quality of education* was present in all presentations given during the workshop. Some partners focused in their presentations on accreditation, be it national or international. Accreditation goes along with a form of external recognition of programmes, important for several reasons: for the attraction of students and staff, to have an external actor state that the education provided is good or excellent, to obtain funding ... Even though accreditation often coincides with formal processes of quality control, processes of quality assurance are much more encompassing than accreditation. Quality assurance has to do with a certain alertness and willingness to keep on questioning the quality of everyday educational practices. Some presentations focused more on attention for quality in the design and evaluation of new programmes. As with the theme of education and the field, the cases presented by partners differed highly in stage of course-development.

Some cases focused on an *accreditation process* partners had been involved in (INHEM, Cuba; ITM, Belgium). Accreditation is described as a process of quality assurance in which an external body evaluates educational programmes to determine if standards are met (INHEM, Cuba; ITM, Belgium) and to increase alignment (ITM, Belgium). Accreditation processes contain a factor of accountability and public transparency. Both partners who presented an accreditation process refer to different stages: a self-evaluation, an evaluation

---

<sup>4</sup> See also ANNEX 2

by externals and an accreditation. In this process, different dimensions are under review (non-exhaustive): relevance of the course; clarity of learning objectives; coherence between objectives, programme, teaching methods and students' assessments, appropriateness of means (staff and infrastructure) and results in terms of pass rates and job profiles of former students. Although it can be very rewarding when results are positive, the accreditation process is described as time-consuming. Nevertheless, it leads to broadening the scope of the routine quality assurance, to incremental improvements in courses and to strategic thinking at institutional level.

Accreditation of existing or new courses is also pursued by other partners (UGM, Indonesia; BPKIHS, Nepal). In the account of UMSS (Bolivia) this pursuit gets a somewhat different sound: here the lack of professional recognition of the existing course was deemed problematic, which led to the formation of a programme at master level through the addition of extra modules. The postgraduate programme in Tropical Medicine offered by UGM



(Indonesia) is already accredited by a national body, but UGM wants to proceed to an *accreditation by an international body*. In order to reach such an international accreditation, UGM considers *strategies* like changing the teaching approach (change to PBL), teacher and expert exchange, developing a joint-degree programme and standardizing the curriculum. BPKIHS (Nepal) describes the background of a newly organized course (context, its relevance, curriculum) and asks the network for some advice on how to *assure the quality* of the selection process of prospective candidates, how to organize student assessments, how to evaluate the course. UMSS (Bolivia) recounts the *evaluation* of the first year of the Master in tropical medicine and disease control. The evaluation looks into both process and content of the course and involves all actors.

### © NETWORK DISCUSSION: SETTING PRIORITIES FOR THE NETWORK



After the sessions on *exploring themes for the network* (see §2.2.4) and the presentations, group discussions and feedback on *quality assurance and accreditation*, the network partners agreed that *everybody is involved in quality* and all were interested in improving quality. However, partners have *different needs* as they are in *different phases*: some are developing new courses, so need to develop adapted tools for quality assurance (e.g. Nepal, India). Others have specific needs such as quality assurance tools for e-learning (South Africa). The partners from Morocco, Uganda and Cuba have a long standing experience with accreditation and expressed their willingness to share tools. As for accreditation: some are currently involved in a process of national accreditation (e.g. Nepal, Bolivia) whereas others aspire international accreditation on a relatively short term (e.g. Indonesia, South Africa).

During the sessions it became clear that partners have a *different understanding* about *what quality is*; hence the need is expressed to clarify the different dimensions of quality. Some partners called for *harmonization*, including *standardization, norms and guidelines*. In the ensuing discussion partners agreed that at this stage the purpose of the network is not to set quality standards but to exchange experiences, tools, frameworks etc. and to support the network members to improve their internal quality assurance system and

possibly to prepare for accreditation. A *formative* more than a summative *approach* was preferred for the network.

As to the question *how the network could work on quality*, several forms have been explored. A new *workshop* was proposed, focused on exploring the concept of quality and defining a roadmap. This would need preparation, a research of existing tools and frameworks, which leads to the need for a *task force or working group* that should prepare this meeting. Another form of collaboration proposed was *peer assessment*, the evaluation of one institute by network



partners. It was argued that it was not yet the right time to do so in view of the heterogeneity of practices and concepts-in-use. In a similar peer-spirit, *twinning* was introduced as a possible method, linking an experienced and a less experienced institute, which could be useful for institutes with coinciding objectives.

The discussion led also to formulating a challenge for the network, being the necessity to *embed* the work done by the network in each institute. The persons present in the kick-off meeting are not necessarily the “quality experts”, if a next workshop would focus on quality assurance, this might be translated in a different representation in the workshop. However, it was also said that *embedding* the network is a shared responsibility of all participants in the meetings and in the network.

### 2.2.3. E-learning

E-learning, technology enhanced learning and distance learning are all considered to be part of a new paradigm of instruction. E-learning is expected to play a role in making education more available and accessible for a broader and more diverse group of people. It is expected to challenge the educational institutes to change their way of thinking about learning and education, including the fact that the method is claimed to invite students to learn very actively. Three cases were presented about e-learning, in chronological order:

- *E-learning: An MSc programme and CPD modules in Veterinary Tropical Diseases – An African perspective* (DVTd, South-Africa)
- *E-learning – Peru: a learning process* (IMTAvH, Peru)
- *E-learning for whomever the shoes fit* (ITM, Belgium)

The case presentations are presented in an integrated way. The summary below was composed on the basis of the case presentations and the ensuing discussions. Examples in the text are non-limitative. A more detailed outline of each presentation and its feedback can be found in *ANNEX 2*. The hand-outs of the presentations were distributed during the workshop (on paper and on CD-Rom).

### © CASE PRESENTATIONS

The presentations delivered during the workshop gave examples of e-learning and distance learning in a South-African context (DVTd) and in a Peruvian context (UPCH). A third presentation went into pros and cons of e-learning as such (ITM, Belgium). Both in the presentations of DVTd (South-Africa) and IMTAvH (Peru) *context factors* urged the development of distance learning methods. Nevertheless, it was also argued that e-learning

is part of nowadays' educational landscape and that every educational supplier will be confronted with it.



IMTAvH (Peru) described its own *learning process* of being involved in forms of distance education for 20 years, going from delivering printed manuals to remote areas and radio broadcasting to the development of online learning resources and eventually exploring the possibilities of mobile learning. The learning question formulated in this presentation was *how to develop e-learning in a feasible, successful and sustainable way*.

DVTD (South-Africa) presented and discussed the development of an e-learning MSc programme and the use of e-learning for continuous professional development (CPD). The presentation also elaborates on *advantages of and success factors for the implementation of an e-learning programme*. All presentations refer to *resources* necessary for the development of good e-learning material and the implementation of an e-learning programme. For the *development of good learning material*, it is stressed that content specialists need to work alongside graphic designers, photographers, video specialists, .... Learning material needs continuous monitoring and improvement on the basis of feedback. Key actors for a successful implementation of e-learning are *management, facilitators and learners*. All face unique challenges, but management must provide support to overcome these challenges. Students, for instance, need to be introduced in the e-learning course, they also have to deal with time management issues and face technical challenges (like power cuts and bandwidth). Lecturers and facilitators need advice and assistance in developing and implementing the modules and need support in dealing with online facilitation of a heterogeneous group of learners.



Although accents in the presentations differ, all presenters agree on the fact that e-learning is important, but that it needs to be *planned and managed carefully*. Both ITM (Belgium) and IMTAvH (Peru) stress the importance of an *incremental growth of e-learning programmes*. E-learning, it is said, is not merely about technology, but primarily about engaging humans with technology as an instrument.

## © NETWORK DISCUSSION: SETTING PRIORITIES FOR THE NETWORK



The afternoon session of Thursday 6 November was dedicated to the definition of activities that should deserve priority, should the network focus on e-learning. At the outset, the discussions on this topic went by hesitantly because the concept of e-learning and the interest for this topic was not the same for all. Furthermore a large part of the audience didn't feel entirely comfortable discussing a topic with which it felt insufficiently acquainted.

One of the participants of the afternoon session formulated it as such: “Among the participants of this session one can distinguish *three groups*; a first group is *interested by e-learning and acquainted* with this topic, a second group is *currently not familiar* with this topic *but very interested* to know more about it and a third group is *not interested or not yet into e-learning* because he is convinced that e-learning doesn't fit with his type of lecturing, because of infrastructural reasons or because he fears the unknown.”

With the end of the kick-off workshop coming closer, thoughts about the network's activities began to crystallize. The discussion about e-learning became intertwined with a larger discussion about the future of the network. Some participants were convinced that a next workshop had to be organized as soon as possible in order to capitalize rapidly on the results of the current workshop. However, a majority of the participants was convinced that during the period between workshops the internet space would constitute an excellent way to preserve contact among institutes of the network. It was said that an electronic forum, where the different institutes could discuss training issues, would be very successful and a good tool to prepare the next workshop, on condition that the discussion topics would be sufficiently challenging and interesting for all. Therefore several participants asked to start the discussion forums with simple but relevant topics (e.g. quality insurance, accreditation... instead of e-learning) or to have separate groups handling different topics. Network members have to feel free to participate or not in a discussion on a specific topic. There was no unanimity on keeping the discussion forums open for other training institutes or on the contrary to limit the discussions to a small number of participants which are all interested in a specific issue and belong to the network. A compromise would be to discuss topics in small groups and then to present the results of the discussion to a larger forum.



Some participants stressed that the organization of such an electronic forum needs careful preparation and rigid organization. A general coordinator must be appointed, as well as (for each topic) a facilitator assisted by a technical group to guide the discussions and formulate conclusions. The task of the coordinator would be to manage the platform and its access and to supervise the technical organization. A well defined topic, the duration of the forum, the different deadlines and the possibilities to give feedback must be agreed on for each specific forum.

#### 2.2.4. Exploration of possible other themes



The choice to elaborate on a limited number of themes more thoroughly during the kick-off workshop entailed the danger of narrowing down the scope of the educational network too soon. On Tuesday afternoon (4 November), an extra session was scheduled for a more general exploration of possible themes of interest of the network partners. The session was designed so that partners could share possible learning questions and expertise about 5 clusters of topics: concepts of learning and strategies of teaching;

professional development; alumni; forms of and reasons for collaboration; strategic choices in the development of courses.<sup>5</sup> Participants were invited to brainstorm in small and repeatedly changing groups to brainstorm about the different clusters. Afterwards small groups had to define priorities on the basis of the brainstorming results.

## © SUMMARIES OF THE THEMES

Under the topic *strategic choices in the development of courses*, several subtopics were selected during the session. For the *development of curricula*, partners claimed an interest



in *exchange on different topics*: materials, definition of competencies and diploma levels. In order to ensure quality, partners not only wanted to discuss about dimensions and criteria of quality, but also wanted to learn to know and apply tools to assess quality. In relation hereto, standards and benchmarks were considered to be interesting. Accreditation, national as well as international, was put on the agenda as well, with the expectation that the network would play a facilitating

role. Finally, the theme of student assessment proved to be an important theme for the partners when they think about development of courses.

On a more *didactic level*, partners showed interest in *learning concepts* and *teaching strategies*. Partners claimed they wanted support for *E-learning*, comprising know-how, implementation and improvement. *Mentoring, coaching, supervision, skills in field-based learning* were other themes of interest generated by the discussions. More in general, partners wanted to *exchange experiences* on the advantages and disadvantages of different teaching methodologies, taking into account context, values and culture. The idea was raised to *organise discussions or a forum* on (new) educational trends, like competence-based, problem-based, experiential learning.

The theme of (*continuous*) *professional development* was subdivided in development of teaching staff and development of health staff. An important issue for professional development is thinking about the *method of delivery*, in terms of *accessibility, practicality and feasibility*. For this, partners thought it would be useful if the network could facilitate *development and sharing* of CPD materials. Sharing of materials and resources



between institutes was also for this theme an urgent question. Another topic the network could address is the management of CPD in an institute. In the discussion, questions about career path were raised: how does participation in CPD activities count? This, in turn, led to the question whether *career path* is something the network can successfully deal with, or should it be addressed on another forum?

The *network* itself was considered as an interesting *means* for the professional *development of teaching staff*, a theme where issues of career development, motivation, management in the institute play an equally important role. Possible activities would be the organisation of an *annual colloquium* (for teachers and alumni) and *trainer of trainer activities*, alongside

<sup>5</sup> See ANNEX 4 for more details.

exchange activities. Some claimed that international accreditation and guidelines would prove to be essential conditions for a successful exchange.

*Alumni* was a theme people showed interest in, but most didn't really consider the theme in their institutes and it is not a priority. Even though a wide variety of reasons (technical, political and social) could be seen to keep contact with alumni, at this point, the contact with alumni was taken into account mainly to reinforce the institutes and less so for the benefit of the alumni themselves.



Finally, the partners shared their thoughts about *reasons for and forms of collaboration*. The idea was raised to include *regional representatives* in the *steering committee* on a voluntary basis. The *creation of a website* was strongly promoted, for the *exchange of learning materials*, to *consolidate the institutional memory* and for *day-to-day communication*. This mode of communication should be complemented by *regular meetings at partner institutes* in a flexible way.

### 3. THE WAY FORWARD: NETWORK DECISIONS



The last day of the workshop was earmarked to work out the operating modalities and prioritise the topics on which the network would be working in the coming year(s) of the project. As a last source of information and inspiration, the president-elect of the TropEd network presented his experiences and analysis on working in and with TropEd, a network that accredits modules for a Master in International Health course in Europe.

The core of the day was set on designing the network future, via a consensus building exercise. In a sequence of tasks, the partners were asked to develop a scenario for the network in the future, taking into account the preliminary priorities developed earlier in the week, as well as five network dimensions referring to building up a network structure: membership, power, leadership, communication and structure.<sup>6</sup>

With growing amazement, the network participants saw the similarity and consensus on a lot of issues in the five scenarios. One scenario for the next year was unanimously developed.

---

<sup>6</sup> See also ANNEX 4



## © SCENARIO FOR THE EDUCATIONAL NETWORK FUTURE

- (1) **Education and quality** was chosen as the theme for the first working year.  
Following questions should be answered by next network meeting, concerning “*Quality of education and quality assurance in our training programmes*”:
  - How is it currently done in different institutes?
  - How should it be done? What do science/ experts tell (invitation of expert)?
  - Should we develop a common framework for quality assurance or not?
  
- (2) **Executive committee**  
An executive committee is formed, constituted by representatives from 4 continents. These regional representatives act in their status as member of the executive committee primarily for the network and not so much for their respective institutes. The representatives are:
  - Africa: Mina Abaacrouche
  - Asia: Hari Kushadhiwijaya
  - Latin–America: Eduardo Suarez Barrientos
  - Europe: An PiessensThe responsibility of the committee is to *keep the current dynamic going until next meeting*. The committee has the following tasks:
  - To prepare the report of this workshop.
  - To prepare the next meeting.
  - To facilitate networking and hence communication.
  - To prepare a constitution for the network (structure, leadership, decision making; formalizing membership; ...) and the election of a new executive committee
  
- (3) The network decided to compose a **task force** on “*Quality in education*”:  
The responsibilities of this task force are:
  - To gather material,
  - To prepare a working document
  - To prepare the next meeting content–wise, referring to the questions in (1).Possibly the task force should look for external experts on this issue (train the trainer-idea). Membership is not yet defined. The executive committee will propose and decide.
  
- (4) The network decided to organise a **yearly meeting/workshop** of no more than 3 days.  
Possible hosts for 2009 are DVTD Pretoria, INAS.  
Uganda, South-Africa, India, Ecuador can consider hosting in 2010. Cuba and Peru need to find out what the possibilities are
  
- (5) **Communication**  
The communication in–between meetings must be guaranteed. Therefore the group wants to start a website, and until the website is started an e–mail group can be used, although overload should be avoided.  
IPH India will host the site.
  
- (6) **Embedding** the network in each institute  
The network must pay attention to its embedding in each of the partner institutes. Embedding is a shared responsibility of all participants in the meeting, and can also be translated in changing representation for the next meeting.

## 4. FEEDBACK OF THE WORKSHOP

The network was asked to give a feedback of the kick-off workshop to interested ITM staff at the closure of the workshop. This feedback was prepared Thursday night by 4 network participants, the network coordinator and the network promoter. On Friday, the results of the exercise were presented to the group and some amendments were made.

### ◎ OUTCOMES

The diversity of network members is considered as a major opportunity for learning and exchange. In this first workshop, 12 countries from 4 continents were present in the room. The group decided that there would be room for network-growth in the future, but that it wanted to start with the present number of members.

The group felt in control and in command of the network at this last day of the workshop (see below); this reaction was shared by all network members present. But being in control goes along with feeling the responsibility on your shoulders for the network. The members felt that keeping the network together and relevant will be a real challenge. Even though the week resulted in common ground and a shared interest, the network is faced with the challenge of keeping this dynamic going. Thinking beyond the FA3 and ITM financial input, members were conscious of the fact that for long term survival other sources of funding will have to be found.

### ◎ PROCESS-INTERACTIONS



All members felt having come to know each other much better by the end of the week. Openness and frankness in the discussion and deliberations had grown remarkably; the freedom and safety to express, explore, brainstorm etc. was very well appreciated. In this respect, the facilitation by the ITM staff was well acknowledged and appreciated.

Some felt that the group discussion was still geared too diplomatically, which was considered as hampering the discussion and free flow of information and ideas. Further analysis attributed this to a normal stage in the group development and also to some language barriers.

During the week, language barriers complicated the interaction and some interim working solutions had been found. Of these solutions, working in language specific groups helped, but should not be promoted too much because of exchange with all was considered very important.

### ◎ PROCESS-STRUCTURING

Most partners felt that a bit too little time was reserved for presenting home institutes (own organisation) and even countries. Some proposals were designed to respond to this problem.

Some presentations were not too well focused on the theme; a model or canvas could have helped to streamline and improve quality of (some) presentations. For future gatherings, this should certainly be taken into account.

Timing, contents of the sessions (and presentations) and general structuring of the workshop helped greatly to focus the attention and the aims of the workshop; this was claimed to be a merit of the input of the ITM team.

Some people found that more time should have been freed to mix, consult, interact and have separate meetings with ITM staff. It was a bit of a missed opportunity to interact with ITM project promoters during the stay in Antwerp. But, at the same time all felt that the whole week was a necessary time span to get to know each other, to come together, to develop a common vision on how to develop/ build the network, to structure ideas and the network.

#### © PROCESS–CONTENT/AGENDA

A network on ‘education’ really responds to a big need. The focus could be kept thanks to the structuring of the organisers of the workshop but many felt quite uncertain about where the group would evolve; a general uncertainty was “What after this workshop? Because then the group would be in charge of leading the network...”

## 5. FINANCIAL BALANCE

The table below contains a balance of the educational network's activities for the year 2008.<sup>7</sup> The deficit of 2141,34€ is transferred to the booking year 2009.

Cost category	Description	Budget 2008	Actual Cost	Difference budget - actual cost
A. Preparation costs		0,00 €		
B. Investment costs		0,00 €		
<b>C. Consumables</b>		<b>5.000,00 €</b>		<b>2.553,47 €</b>
	<i>C.1 Office material network coordinator</i>		1.748,42 €	
	<i>C.2 Working material workshop</i>		375,78 €	
	<i>C.3 Copy and printing</i>		322,33 €	
	<b>Total</b>		<b>2.446,53 €</b>	
D. Personnel (non-ITM)		0,00 €		
E. Grants:		0,00 €		
<b>F. Travel expenses</b>		<b>22.500,00 €</b>		
	<i>F.1 Airplane tickets</i>		22.988,73 €	
	<i>F.2 Reimbursement extra travel costs participants</i>		1332,18 €	
	<i>F.3 Extra train tickets to Schiphol</i>		116,51 €	
	<b>Total</b>		<b>24.438,05 €</b>	<b>-1.938,05 €</b>
<b>G. Subsistence / accommodation</b>		<b>22.500,00 €</b>		
<b>G.1. Accommodation</b>				
	<i>G.1.1 Hotel Banks</i>		10.848,60 €	
	<i>G.1.2 Extra night Schiphol</i>		94,00 €	
	<b>Total accommodation</b>		<b>10.942,60 €</b>	
<b>G.2. Catering</b>				
	<i>G.2.1 Catering meetings at ITM</i>		45,00 €	
	<i>G.2.2 Catering workshop</i>		2.359,58 €	
	<i>G.2.3 Social Activity</i>		3.114,54 €	
	<b>Total catering</b>		<b>5.519,12 €</b>	
G.3. Per diem			8.350,00 €	
G.4. Verzekering			652,49 €	
G.5. Afzonderlijke kosten				
<b>Total subsistence and accommodation</b>			<b>25.464,21 €</b>	<b>-2.964,21 €</b>
<b>Total Ed Net WS</b>		<b>50.000,00 €</b>	<b>52.348,79 €</b>	<b>-2.141,34 €</b>

<sup>7</sup> A more detailed overview is available upon request.

## ANNEX 1: PARTICIPANTS OF THE KICK-OFF WORKSHOP

<b>BPKIHS</b>	BP Koirala Institute of Health Sciences <i>Participants: Subodh Dhakal and Prahlad Karki</i>	<i>Nepal</i>
<b>DVTD</b>	Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases, Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Pretoria <i>Participants: JAW Coetzer and Linda Venter</i>	<i>South-Africa</i>
<b>IMTA<sub>v</sub>H</b>	Instituto de Medicina Tropical Alexander von Humboldt, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia <i>Participants: Juan Echevarría and Elsa Gonzalez</i>	<i>Peru</i>
<b>INAS</b>	Institut National d'Administration Sanitaire <i>Participants: Mina Abacrouche and Abderrahmane Maaroufi</i>	<i>Morocco</i>
<b>IPH</b>	Institute of Public Health IPH, Bangalore <i>Participants: Upendra Bhojani and Narayanan Devadasan</i>	<i>India</i>
<b>ITM</b>	Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp <i>Participants: Hilde Buttiëns, Govert Van Heusden, An Piessens (network coördinator)</i>	<i>Belgium</i>
<b>INHEM</b>	Instituto Nacional de Higiene, Epidemiología y Microbiología <i>Participants: Irma Sosa Lorenzo</i>	<i>Cuba</i>
<b>MUSPH</b>	Makerere University, School of Public Health <i>Participants: Elizabeth Nabiwemba and George Pariyo</i>	<i>Uganda</i>
<b>PUCE</b>	Facultad de Medicina, Instituto de Salud Pública ISP <i>Participants: Rosa Goyes Ayala and Cecilia Vaca Jones</i>	<i>Ecuador</i>
<b>SPH</b>	School of Public Health, University of Lubumbashi <i>Participants: Abdon Mukalay wa Mukalay and Faustin Chenge Mukalenge</i>	<i>DR Congo</i>
<b>UMSS</b>	Facultad de Medicina, Posgrado Medicina Tropical <i>Participants: Antonio Espada Teran and Eduardo Suarez Barrientos</i>	<i>Bolivia</i>
<b>UGM</b>	Gadjah Mada University, Faculty of Medicine, Center for Tropical Medicine <i>Participants: Silvester Haripurnomo Kushadiwijaya and Supargiyono</i>	<i>Indonesia</i>

## ANNEX 2: SUMMARIES OF THE PRESENTATIONS BY NETWORK PARTNERS AND FEEDBACK

### Education and the field

*IPH, India      A new course for district health managers*

#### *Outline of the presentation*

IPH presented the ongoing development of the new course for district health managers, after an introduction of the district and country context. The course is being developed by the consortium Swasthya Karnataka, whose vision is ‘to achieve better health care for people through equity, quality and integrity’. Its mission is ‘to achieve excellence in health care delivery systems by strengthening district health management’. In the presentation, attention is paid to the way in which government ownership is stimulated, to the development of training material (both the content and the pedagogy), to expected outcomes and actual strengths and weaknesses. Since the training course is aimed at teams, prospective participants cover a broad professional profile. The course will first run as a pilot, after the evaluation of which eventual expansion (to other districts, to e-learning) is possible.

#### *Feedback*

During the feedback, the audience put forward questions and highlighted challenges IPH might face during the implementation of their course. Some of these questions referred more explicitly to the design and assumptions of the course. The plan to train teams was considered courageous, but people wondered if taking a team out of context wouldn't be problematic. Not only because of the working reality of the team, but also because of the difficulty of training participants of different professional levels simultaneously. Will the pedagogical material be adapted to the different target groups and how is this foreseen? Furthermore, the audience wondered how, in practice, the “can do attitude” and the “change spirit” will be promoted?

Another discussion referred to the degree the course would deliver and to estimated motivational problems of prospective participants. The question was raised how to keep participants motivated: with economic incentives or just by the training itself? Does this imply recognition of credits? If yes, accreditation matters are important to consider. Related to this was the question whether a pedagogical approach is a solution to solve the problem of de-motivation of a health team? IPH representatives reacted that the proposed IPH response to staff de-motivation is not limited to a training focusing on management and leadership skills, but comprises also action research, government ownership and involvement in training and solution strategies.

There is very few training material on public health tailored on management and reality of the field. The consortium deals with this problem through its resource persons, senior professionals with large experience.

IPH wishes to exchange on experiential learning and teaching, and on methodology to evaluate the training outputs/outcomes.

### *Outline of the presentation*

The Makerere University School of Public Health describes the development of a work-based health systems fellowship programme, one of the activities to be implemented in the Institutional Collaboration between MUSPH and ITM-A in FA3. The presentation gives a detailed account of field visits to a selection of districts, in order to understand the demands and needs as perceived by district health team cadres and in order to understand operational possibilities and opportunities for such a fellowship programme. The results of these field visits and of consultations with key partners and officials were fed into a stakeholders consultation workshop, focused on arriving at a consensus on objectives, contents, implementation modalities and time schedule.

The field visits and consultations led to diverse observations, such as the feelings of demotivation and tiredness experienced by district team members, the difficult working conditions, the low competence and experience of supervisors and the problems with planning. After an overview of desired training areas, MUSPH argues how the proposed programme seems to answer to a need in an innovative way, i.e. by keeping fellows in their work setting. It is stressed that it is a practical training. The workshop led to decisions about programme structure, admission criteria, course duration, trainee outputs, mentorship and quality assurance mechanisms.

### *Feedback*

Partners reflected that they missed information on learning and teaching strategies. What kind of learning paradigm is behind the proposed programme? To what kind of assignments will this lead?

Considering the importance attached to 'social skills', some participants wonder how MUSPH approaches these skills and how they will "teach" them? A more general comment was made, both for IPH India and MUSPH: if the field is the base of the training, how then to involve mentors in it? Who should be the mentors?

Low contact time also presented a concern for some participants, that is, that there will be not sufficient theoretical input and hence a lack of challenge to keep motivation of participants while in the field. With regards to the issue of 'awarding', the network partners suggest to think of awarding by a professional organization and peers assessment rather than by an academic institute, and to think about awards on a regional level.

MUSPH commented on this feedback that the target group already has a Master's degree. There is no shortage of professionals at District level with academic training, but these professionals do have a gap in translating their technical knowledge into practice, so what they need is to acquire 'skills', including social ones. The mentor will need to have such skills and give enough time to the participant to serve as 'role model'. This raises the question of how much time is needed for mentoring, considering that the role of mentor is crucial.

The idea of a professional organization as awarding body coincides with the reflections of the MUSPH. Concerning training and motivation: the hypothesis is that training will help participants to cope better with their context and situation.

SPH,  
University of  
Lubumbashi,  
D.R.Congo

*Field exercises, a key component in a learning process. Experience from the School of Public Health of the University of Lubumbashi, D.R.Congo*

#### *Outline of the presentation*

Field exercises are an important part of the Master's course provided at the School of Public Health of the University of Lubumbashi. In the presentation, it is argued that these exercises are a response to gaps in health professional basic training in DRC. Moreover, field exercises are considered as a more effective method than case–studies presented in class for learning to assess health problems and the functioning of health systems.

After an insight is offered in the methods used and the assessment of participants, a case of a field exercise is presented more in detail. The presenters ask the group for some feedback on possible strengths and weaknesses of the learning approach from an educational perspective and proposals for improvement.

#### *Feedback*

The feedback focused on the questions proposed by the presenters. A general remark was made that these field exercises seem to be very resource intensive, given the fact that each module requires a field exercise plan.

The network partners asked who decides on the problem that will be used for a field exercise. This question refers mostly to the ownership of the exercise and the possible impact of the exercise on health systems.

Another group of questions referred to the balance between this kind of exercises and other approaches. Based on an assumed link between field exercises and a problem–based approach, it is argued that problem–based learning has its own limits and might not cover all learning objectives. All of which would necessitate mixing approaches. Moreover, the question is raised if it wouldn't be viable to start with the existing experiences of participants. Partners suggest the combination of different disciplines in one exercise and make the exercise longer, because teams need to deal with complex problems. Another suggestion is that participants could visit other professionals working in similar situations in another system (given the fact that Lubumbashi is very close to Zambia). Another suggestion would be to see examples of where things 'work'.

Field exercises require good facilitators and mentors, and the discussion that was already touched upon in the previous presentations resurges: how to train mentors.

The presenters reacted to the comments that the problem to analyze is defined by participants. The participants choose one of these themes for their thesis. They always work in teams and supervision of the teams is easy (distance). During field exercises supervisors are always at the place of the exercise, so theory and models are given to help to solve the situation.



### *Outline of the presentation*

The Institute of Public Health at PUCE offers since 2000 a Master's programme in Public Health, a second programme specializes through a focus on either hospital management or health systems and service research. The programme is offered in a part time schedule and combines learning environments (campus and field work). After a general overview of the approach to the Master's programme is delivered, the presentation focuses on two field modules in the curriculum. The first module is oriented towards a health systems assessment, the second towards introducing changes in complex health systems and results in a thesis. The presentation gives a detailed insight in main lessons learned from these field modules. These lessons are subdivided in issues of pre-conditions, sites where the modules take place, research issues, curriculum organization, facilitators and supervisors, objectives, research products, monitoring and the evaluation system. The Master's programme uses a strong problem-based learning approach, where research has a central place. The presentation offers an introduction to the complexities experienced in the field modules.

### *Feedback*

Partners showed interest in the possibility to offer a part time Master's programme to participants already working in the field. Still other expressed the concern that participants following this course in part time would not finish their training.

Feedback also concentrated on the difficulties experienced with research. The suggestion is made that problem based learning might not be appropriate to teach health systems research. A suggestion was that it would be better to teach research skills at an undergraduate level. Another suggestion is that the thesis work would be linked to another ongoing research process.

In the comment to this feedback, the presenter explained that the part time organization of the course is legally obligatory. Changes in the training programme were introduced due to these legal changes.

In reality, it is very difficult for participants to finish their thesis and the field module does not coincide with the schedule of working.

Participants do not finish their thesis because of time availability. Also because they can not work on the topic of their action research and finalize their investigation.

A problem is that participants focus on changes in the system, but get stuck with resistance from the system itself (social environment). Another difficulty for participants is the understanding and the conceptualization from data, and to explain what has actually happened in the field.

### *Outline of the presentation*

The presentation delivered by INAS (the National Institute of Health Administration) concentrates on a part of the Master's programme, where a practical training of two weeks is organized in a non-health organization.

The training rationale is based on the importance of acquiring manager's procedures and attitudes when confronted with problems. The objectives of this training are that students learn to observe and analyse professional practices in non-health organizations and that they learn to identify underlying strategies and rationale. Moreover, they have to confront and compare professional practices in relation to the environment where the professional practices take place. Students have to write a report of this training. The rationale of the training is followed by examples of training sites, activities and enterprises.

Since 2008 this practical training has been made mandatory.

### *Feedback*

The INAS approach gained enthusiasm in the audience, although cautions were raised about the fact that training is organized in private sectors for participants that work in the public sector. It was thought enriching to study in a non-health environment. The approach seems to provide import learning from other sectors to the public health sector. This raises the question how other sectors can contribute to health in general.

Simultaneously, some partners considered the applicability in the public health sector and the transfer of knowledge from private to public sector issues to be studied. Various partners commented on the vision and logics of private sectors, where efficiency is a key element. Companies are private and have different goals and logics and it could be very frustrating for students. In the ensuing discussion it was argued that participants should also be trusted in their ability to deal with these matters.

INAS commented that the programme is still experimental and needs follow-up and evaluation. The objective of the training is to observe differences as a source of learning and observe practices that cannot be seen in the public sector. Participants are asked to say how to import the practice to the public sector (validity of practice)

## Quality assurance and accreditation

*UGM, Recognition of the Postgraduate Programme in Tropical Medicine  
Indonesia*

### *Outline of the presentation*

In 1996, UGM created a Center for Tropical Medicine to address the research and training needs in the domain of infectious diseases of public health importance. A postgraduate programme in Tropical Medicine was launched to support the development of new knowledge, tools, interventions and strategies for controlling major tropical diseases in endemic areas. This programme currently has 4 majors: Clinical tropical diseases (clinically oriented), Immunology and molecular biology of tropical diseases (research oriented), Tropical health (public health oriented) and Medical entomology (focus on vector control). The course consists of a general compulsory course, a major-specific programme, a research project and thesis defense.

The key strengths identified are the expertise of the 240 academic staff, the link between research and training and the multidisciplinary approach. The course is well embedded in the UGM with multiple links to other training programmes. The Center for Tropical Medicine is also part of an extensive international network. The course is the only postgraduate course in Tropical Medicine in Indonesia and is accredited at national level but the course organizers aim at an international recognition. Currently they are involved in a joint-degree programme with Bangkok and the London School, exchanging teachers and experts. They would like to know which standard curriculum is required to be part of an International Master in Tropical Medicine

### *Feedback*

In the feedback session partners remarked that the focus of the compulsory course modules in Indonesia is on basics sciences and wondered why public health and social sciences aren't included in the common part. This is a major difference with master courses of other network partners. The desirability of a standardized curriculum was discussed and questioned by some. The idea of a joint degree was welcomed by the partners of MUSPH and INAS, but the feasibility depends on the requirements of the institutes involved. UGM was asked which benefit they expect from the new network as they are already part of a large network. The existing networks of UGM have often a short duration as they are related to specific research projects. They would like to be part of a more permanent network offering the possibility of peer review and international recognition.

#### *Outline of the presentation*

BPKIHS, situated in the tropical part of Nepal, developed a new Short Course Training in Tropical and Infectious Diseases with the support of ITM Antwerp. A needs assessment revealed that an increasing number of doctors working in Nepal has never been trained or exposed to tropical diseases and that the quality of the peripheral services requires to be strengthened. The course orientation (a clinical and practical approach) and the duration (6 weeks) have been defined in agreement with all stakeholders. The MOH agreed to release 15 medical doctors per year to take the course.

The course will be launched in May 2009 but at this stage the course organizers ask advice on how to assure the quality of the selection process, how to organize student assessments, which degree of attendance would be required, how to evaluate the course ...

#### *Feedback*

In the feedback session, it was clarified that Tropical Medicine is indeed part of undergraduate training but many doctors have been trained abroad. Moreover there is a need for clinical updates. The 6 weeks duration was thought to be very short but seems to be the maximum time doctors can be released. Follow-up case discussions are planned through e-mail and video conferences, although it was commented that such an approach does require a lot of technicalities. Colleagues in the meeting felt that attendance should be mandatory in the case of trainees with scholarships. On the other hand attendance shouldn't be a problem if the course is interactive and aims at strengthening relevant capacities. Pre- and post-tests are a good tool to assess an improvement in knowledge but if the principal objective is to reinforce the clinical skills of health professionals it was suggested to consider case studies to assess their problem solving capacities. An alternative would be to ask students to document their learning process. "To test or not to test" also depends on the broader context: will the course be recognized as part of a diploma or master course, will it fit in a formal career development plan. Finally it was said that the development of a test requires a reflection on the course objectives and as such contributes to the improvement of the quality of the course.

*ITM Antwerp, Belgium*      *Accreditation: the external look at quality and the experience of the MPH in Disease Control at ITM*

*Outline of the presentation*

The accreditation of higher education in Flanders and the Netherlands is part of a European framework agreed upon in Bologna in 1999. The aim of this framework is to increase alignment, amongst others through shared standards for quality assurance. The accreditation is in the first place summative (is the quality good enough to justify public funding?), the accrediting body is independent from the government and the university and the report is public to guarantee transparency. Six quality dimensions are assessed: the relevance of the course, the clarity of the learning objectives, the coherence between objectives, programme, teaching methods and students' assessment, the appropriateness of the means such as staff and infrastructure, the organization of internal quality assurance and the results in terms of pass rate and job profiles of former students. An accreditation is valid for 8 years.

In 2006-2007, the 3 Masters' courses of ITM went through this accreditation process. The experience of the MPH in Disease Control is presented. The audit consisted of a preparation phase to understand the framework and the instructions, data collection (more than routine information is required), writing of an extensive self assessment report, a SWOT analysis with all stakeholders and meetings/interviews with the audit committee.

The process is very time consuming (6 months) and is a source of substantial stress but also offers an opportunity to learn and improve the course quality. It broadens the scope of the routine quality assurance, it stimulates exchange and strategic thinking at institutional level, and it leaves room for constructive discussions with the review committee. When results are positive it is very rewarding process.

*Feedback*

An accreditation process is different from internal quality assurance: the framework and the time line are imposed and the results have consequences for the recognition and/or the financing of the course. The partners from Indonesia confirmed that data collection and report writing for an accreditation require a major effort. The process described is very similar to the one in Cuba. Partners from South Africa and Uganda are interested to look into the guidelines for the self assessment and the criteria used for the accreditation as this might be a helpful roadmap to strengthen their own quality assurance system. The European framework is not the only example, East African universities set up a joint accreditation system, the same happened in Central America. Indonesia would like to engage in a peer review process within the network to share experiences and get critical inputs. Partners from India and Nepal are still preparing a national registration but they realize an international recognition might become important in future. The idea of joint teaching programmes (and joint degrees) popped up. Partners would like to get more information on this issue.

*INHEM, Cuba Design of and experiences with the Specialization in Hygiene and  
Epidemiology*

*Outline of the presentation*

INHEM already exists 106 years and is engaged in Research, Training and Technical Services. Over the years INHEM built an impressive international collaboration network. The current Cuban accreditation system was set up in 1999 and involves several committees and institutes belonging to the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Superior Education and the Ministry of Health. It consists of 3 steps: auto-evaluation, external evaluation and certification of the accreditation. At INHEM specialized staff of the teaching department steers the quality assurance process. The process covers all dimensions of quality ranging from curriculum development, staff profile, teaching methodology, logistic support, and student assessment. The Specialisation in Hygiene and Epidemiology is a 2 years programme with a large practical component. Students are prepared for their future functions involving care, research, training and management.

*Feedback*

The discussion with the partners focuses on the importance of independence of the external evaluation. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health are somehow part of the system. Examples of political influence in Belgium and Bolivia are given. A system with three steps builds in checks but is not waterproof.

UMSS, Bolivia Evaluation of the first year of the Master's course in Tropical Medicine and Disease Control

*Outline of the presentation*

Bolivia is a country with enormous variety in ecological zones. Internal migration from the highlands to the lowlands increased the burden in tropical diseases, hence the need for health staff trained in this domain. With the support of ITM the UMSS set up a specialized course in tropical medicine and health service organization: the course combined a clinical and a public health focus. This 8 months' course set up 10 years ago is highly appreciated but lacks professional recognition. It was decided to develop additional modules to complete a programme at master level. The new modules (3 months) are geared around contextual health problem analysis, evidence based control measures, disease control management with a system perspective and policy formulation based on public health principles. The course uses a mix of teaching methodologies, of theoretical and practical activities. Thesis work is based on field research during 6 months.

The first batch of masters in "tropical medicine and disease control" has been trained. So it is a good moment to look back at this first year. The course evaluation looks into both process and content and involves all actors involved. Students appreciate the interactive teaching methodology and the adjustments to their demands. They suggest an increase of the practical course components (field work in health services and at community level), an improvement of the student assessment and of the mentoring for the thesis. Teaching staff mentioned the other side of the coin: the difficulty to monitor thesis work from a distance and the need for more guidance for the tutors.

*Feedback*

During the feedback session we exchanged on the value of a degree: in Bolivia a specialized course has an academic value but not a market value. Other countries also experience the problem of the MPH not being recognized as a specialty, which has repercussions on the salary scale. Several suggestions to improve student assessments were given: formative evaluations should be scored to be taken seriously, teaching staff could prepare the test before teaching, old exam questions can be given to students as a guide to study. The main problem for the students seems to reside in the change from classical examination (testing knowledge) to more complex assessment (looking at analysis and problem solving). The partners from Indonesia explained they share the task of thesis coaching between an academic supervisor and a field supervisor.

## E-learning

DVTD, *E-learning: An MSc programme and CPD modules in Veterinary*  
South-Africa *Tropical Diseases – An African perspective*

### *Outline of the presentation*

DVTD (University of Pretoria) presents and discusses the development of an e-learning MSC programme and the use of e-learning for continuous professional development (CPD). DVTD is involved in a number of networks, both in south-south and north-south collaboration and the University of Pretoria has the only faculty of Veterinary Science in South-Africa. The first part of the presentation concentrates on the design and implementation of the MSc in Veterinary Tropical Diseases, a research-based postgraduate programme. CPD modules are certified, accredited and recognized by national and international bodies and recruits an international group of students. A number of advantages of e-learning are discussed, such as a higher enrolment of students, the impact of the MSc programme on the CPD modules and financial benefits. For the CPD modules, student enrolment was at first disappointingly low, due to different factors, for example the cost of modules and the time professionals can spend. This led to a reframing of the offer of CPD modules.

The second part of the presentation focused on the resources necessary for the development of good e-learning material. Three major role players are involved in the implementation of e-learning, i.e. management, facilitators and learners. All face unique challenges, but management must provide support to overcome these challenges. Students, for instance, need to be introduced in the e-learning course, they also have to deal with time management issues, they face technical challenges. Lecturers and facilitators need advice and assistance in developing and implementing the modules, they need support in dealing with online facilitation of a heterogeneous group of learners. Content specialists need to work alongside graphic designers, photographers and video specialists.

In conclusion, for e-learning to be successfully implemented, strong leadership is essential, combined with an investment in financial and human resources. Possible resistance needs to be overcome and facilitators and learners need support and motivation. To ensure the high quality of the programme, e-learning courses have to be monitored continuously and feedback must lead to improvements.

### *Feedback*

*Note: In this feedback session, the discussion was geared more in general about e-learning. The theme raised a lot of questions. Therefore, an integrated text about the feedback is written down at the end of the presentations about e-learning.*



### *Outline of the presentation*

IMTAvH is involved in processes of distance learning since the 80s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In Peru, e-learning and forms of distance learning seemed particularly useful. The presentation presents the learning route of IMTAvH in organizing e-learning and distance learning practices and the gradual improvements that have been made through a succession of projects. The presented learning route starts with the Pichis project (1986–1987), where technical problems were very pertinent, since the hardware literally didn't survive the environmental conditions. Between 1987 and 1998 the Primary Health Care–Loreto project took place, performing multiple training sessions in situ. The EHAS–project (1999–2003) aimed at digitalizing teaching materials in order to support primary health care activities and to stimulate learning opportunities for health staff working in rural areas. Digitalized materials were sent using VHF radios.

The e-learning project of the university (UPCH) was built upon the lessons from the EHAS jungle experiences. This evolved into the development of the first e-learning platform and of e-learning courses (non open–source), taking into account the necessary skills needed for sustainable approaches towards e-learning.

Actually, a new open source e-learning platform is being implemented. The process takes different aspects of quality assurance into account, on pedagogy as well as on the implementation of e-learning. Future avenues lie in experimenting with new technologies (e.g. mobile learning) and in taking additional steps towards quality assurance of the courses, promoting an e-learning culture, improving the capacities and becoming more competitive.

### *Feedback*

*Note: In this feedback session, the discussion was geared more in general about e-learning. The theme raised a lot of questions. Therefore, an integrated text about the feedback is written down at the end of the presentations about e-learning.*

ITM Antwerp, E-learning: for whomever the shoes fit  
Belgium

*Outline of the presentation*

This presentation of ITM's e-learning coordinator addresses some questions with regards to e-learning. In a changed global context, learners are increasingly becoming connected worldwide. Therefore, e-learning should be considered as an enterprise worth consideration.

E-learning is not necessarily a cost-saving enterprise, it is argued, e-learning requires investments in human resources, infrastructure and computers. It doesn't save time, if only because people need to learn new skills and have to rearrange their knowledge with updates and new ideas. E-learning is not merely about technology, but primarily about engaging humans with technology as an instrument. E-learning has a lot of advantages, it is claimed, advantages for providers, for users, for content development and – last but not least – marketing advantages. A wide range of e-learning tools has been developed, illustrated by a couple of examples, worldwide examples as well as tools developed by ITM.

E-learning is considered as an important road for the future. Still, the start of new e-learning projects has to be managed and planned carefully.

*Feedback*

*Note: In this feedback session, the discussion was geared more in general about e-learning. The theme raised a lot of questions. Therefore, an integrated text about the feedback is written down at the end of the presentations about e-learning.*

Feedback Integrated feedback to the three presentations about e-learning

The theme of e-learning is approached with a lot of interest and caution. Partners definitely wanted to learn more about planning and implementation of e-learning. Some would have liked a more in-depth discussion of some of the cases. To the question if e-learning is a substitute or a complement, some argued that it has to be approached complementary, it is not a substitute for all education. It was argued that no institute can avoid e-learning, because times are changing. But it can raise problems in countries where e-infrastructure is a barrier. E-learning can be an answer to some problems, but needs a lot of resources. In response to this, it was stated that e-learning doesn't have to start on a large scale, you can start somewhere small (as was illustrated by the Peru example). The concept e-learning led to questions about the kind of learning that takes place in students: some partners fear that students will learn more on the surface and that they will lose social skills. Otherwise stated: how can you stimulate as an educator that learners go in-depth? It was felt that the discussion about e-learning needed to be combined with the discussion about quality. The question was also raised how staff can be stimulated to venture into an e-learning project. And in relation to this there was a concern about the sustainability of e-learning courses. Several ideas were formulated as to how the network could be a support on this theme. The network could inform its partners about possibilities, it could be a locus for the development of knowledge of pedagogical approaches in e-learning and in comparison with face-to-face approaches. The idea was also raised to work on a specific theme through an e-learning course.

## ANNEX 3: LEARNING TO NETWORK – CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ON BUILDING A NETWORK

### Which network definition did we use?

Networks are prominent in present-day society, although the concept covers different phenomena, ranging between infrastructural networks, computer networks, personal networks, organizational networks and policy networks. (Gehre, 2005)<sup>8</sup> The network concept is both used in a *descriptive and analytical approach* (especially in sociology) and in a *prescriptive and normative approach*.

As an *analytical concept*, the network concept is used as a lens for looking at society. The claim is that society is structured through social networks, “the direct and indirect connections that link people or a group with other people and groups” (Giddens, 2006: 669)<sup>9</sup>. Network sociologists – although network sociology is a very heterogeneous brand of sociology (see e.g. Emirbayer & Goodwin, 1994; Thompson, 2003)<sup>10</sup> – stress the fact that we have to understand the structure of society by the multiple ways in which people and groups relate to each other. The analysis of social networks can help to understand how they constrain and enable social behavior and social trajectories.

The sociologist Castells argued that the growth of networks is due to a fundamental process of change taking place, namely the disintegration of the traditional, rational bureaucracy. The *network enterprise*, then, is the organizational form best suited to a global, information economy. “By this, he (Castells) means that it is increasingly impossible for organizations – be they large corporations or small businesses – to survive if they are not part of a network. What enables the process of networking to occur is the growth of information technology: organizations around the world are able to locate each other, enter readily into contact and coordinate joint activities through an electronic medium.” (Giddens, 2006: 672 – 673)

This makes the step from an analytical use to a *prescriptive and normative use* of the network concept quite small. If we accept that indeed times have changed and that the problems have become too complex for a single organization, then it follows that we should form networks to deal with these complexities.

A network is thus expected to target complex problems and to connect people or organizations faced with similar problems. Network definitions refer to both the aspects of *interdependence* and *cooperation*. (Suijs, 1999<sup>11</sup>; Gehre, 2005) But how does a network start up and how does a network ‘live on’? Can we simply assume that, if organizations want to join a network, they thus will form a (successful) network?

---

<sup>8</sup> Gehre, Gunter (2005) Sociaal-cultureel netwerken. In Larock, Y. e.a. *Spoor zoeken. Handboek sociaal-cultureel werk met volwassenen*. Gent: Academia Press.

<sup>9</sup> Giddens, Anthony (2006) *Sociology*. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Cambridge: Polity Press.

<sup>10</sup> Emirbayer, M. & Goodwin, J. (1994) Network Analysis, Culture and the problem of Agency. *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol.99, No.6 (May 1994), 1411–1454.

Thompson, Grahame F. (2003) *Between Hierarchies and Markets. The logic and limits of Network Forms of Organization*. Oxford University Press.

<sup>11</sup> Suijs, Stijn (1999) Abracadabra. De magie van (interorganisatiele) netwerken? In Baert, H.e.a. *Handboek samenlevingsopbouw in Vlaanderen*. Brugge: Die Keure.

In the conception, organization and preparation of the kick-off workshop, we<sup>12</sup> assumed that network-building is not a natural social process, but a process where sufficient attention must be geared towards the development and sustainability of a network. This is especially relevant when the expectation is that power issues must be addressed through the network format, as is the case with the idea of *switching the poles*. For the elaboration of the kick-off workshop, we considered the concept of *inter-organizational* or *professional networks* as useful, because it entailed some guidelines and points of attention. The definition we used is:

*“A network is a specific form of cooperation between multiple organizations or key actors. A form of collaboration can be called a network when the actors, who are interdependent towards a certain issue, voluntarily decide to undertake common activities in order to reach certain advantages or to avoid certain disadvantages for their own organization or for the whole. These common activities affect core aspects of the organization. Whether or not the network is sustainable depends on the history of interdependence towards the issue and on the costs and benefits the collaboration offers for the participating actors and/or for the network.” (translated from Suijs, 1999)*

## Questions for networks-to-become

A network is faced with different, equally important questions. Based on research in the development of several networks, following questions are distilled:

- (1) *What brings organizations together?*
- (2) *Who is involved in a network?*
- (3) *Power dynamics*
- (4) *Coordination and leadership of the network*

## What brings organizations together?

Why would organizations enter into collaboration or into a network? The definition we used for the development of the workshop didn't presume a predefined common purpose. Even though the FA3-project description made some choices and even though partners showed interest, it still wasn't clear if this was what the network indeed wanted to obtain and realize. Therefore, we found inspiration in the distinction between *issue, reasons and interests*. The distinction makes clear that, while organizations and/or individuals do work together and do form a network, the basic allegiance is constituted of interdependency towards a certain issue and organizational interests, instead of a common purpose. Stated otherwise, if organizations don't benefit from the network collaboration, the network itself won't be successful.

An *issue* is a theme that motivates the players enough to at least consider joining the network. For instance, in the case of the educational network, we assumed that *education* is the issue. But it was not clear whether every partner has the same intentions or the same expectations towards *Educational networking*. An *issue* stands for a complex mix of organizational interests, orientations, choices and problems.

---

<sup>12</sup> In this case: ITM's facilitating network staff

Organizations mostly join a network out of organizational self-interest, for instance the interest of gaining access to resources that were previously inaccessible. Organizations can have several *reasons* for and *interests* in joining a network, some more explicit than others, for instance:

- *Answering to complex organizational needs:* To fulfill organizational and planning needs that can't be fulfilled by the organization alone.
- *Upgrading* the performance of each member.
- *Upstreaming:* the search for alternative approaches and new ways of understanding and intervening.
- *Access to resources:* To gain access to resources and power that was previously not or less accessible.
- *Upshifting:* the need to be heard at a higher level, to influence national and global decision.
- *Market position:* To strive for or guard the exclusivity, autonomy and dominance of the organization(s) in the field (organizations can e.g. strive for competition or for complementarity).
- *Defending a paradigm:* The ambition to defend and to settle the own paradigm and expertise.

The fact that organizational interests play a role in participation in a network can easily be overlooked, especially in organizations and collaborations where purposes are often stated in terms of *interests for the target population*. From an organizational point of view, it may be relevant to strengthen your position on a *market*, whereas that sounds quite strange in the context of e.g. ensuring health for all. In this respect, the term *arena* is used. The metaphor makes clear that it is impossible to ignore the other actors and that you need the others, but that collaboration and a common purpose is not the only possible position of an organization.

All this led to the insight that a common vision and purpose are crucial for a network, although neither vision nor purpose are a precondition but more often a result of vigorous negotiation between network partners.

### Who is involved in a network?

Equally important to the question why organizations would join a network is the question which actors are involved in a network. A distinction is made between different modes of involvement:

- *Members of the network:* Those organizations that become effective members of the network. Some of these members can be situated more in the core of the network and others more in the periphery of the network.
- *Supporting actors of the network:* Those actors that coordinate and support the network.
- *Context actors of the network:* They play an important role in the 'arena' and are crucial for the progress of the collaboration, but do not necessarily take part in the network.
- *Anchoring actors:* give the network a certain legitimacy.

A question for the educational network was and is how it will deal with these different modes of involvement. Moreover, the involvement of actors in a network can evolve over time, due to factors such as the activities undertaken, possibilities in the organization, and so on. Therefore it is important to regularly evaluate the collaboration and explicate expectations of the different actors.

Despite talking about an inter-organizational or professional network, the actual network is still constituted of real people. On the level of persons, it is noted that actors in the network have several allegiances. When collaboration evolves towards networking, the actors balance between three frames-of-reference: a *personal frame-of-reference*, an *organizational frame-of-reference* and a *networking frame-of-reference*.

For the design of the workshop, this resulted in the fact that attention was paid to group dynamics, but also towards acknowledging, managing and balancing these three frames-of-reference.

Furthermore, it is important to keep an eye on network structure. The question is which structure serves the network in the best way possible? Too loose a structure drains potential and continuity, too heavy a structure stifles initiative and innovation.

### Power dynamics

An inter-organizational network has to deal with *power dynamics*. Power issues are inherently part of group dynamics, but play also a role in the position of institutes, the mandates of the actors and in the role of the coordinating institute. Whereas it is probably not possible to annihilate the power dynamics, it is once again important to acknowledge them and to pay attention to the participatory approaches and democratic structure of the network.

Some questions (short-term as well as long-term) are:

- Who makes the decisions? How will we make decisions?
- Who participates in the meetings? What is the mandate of the persons participating in the meeting?
- Can each member contribute? How is this contribution invited?
- How can / will we acknowledge power differences?
- How will accountability, transparency and open dialogue be ensured?
- How will the communication 'flow' through the network?
- How to understand conflicts and to deal with them?
- Do we strive for consensus and when and on which themes do we strive for consensus?
- Diversity of inputs, interaction is favorable

### Coordination and leadership

Related to the previous aspects is the question of leadership and coordination, although it is relevant to *distinguish between leadership and coordination*. Most networks seem to need some kind of coordination and support. However, coordinators/coordinating institutes can take up different roles: *a role of expert or a role of process coordinator*. *Roles of support, moderator, trust person, trainer ...* can be taken up in due course, but these roles are not central to the development of a network.

Regarding *leadership*, the decisions on what the network is going to be and to do still have to be made within the network itself.

### Networking and learning

From the presentation of the basic ingredients of a network follows that the educational network has a lot of development-work to do. This was approached through a *learning perspective on networking*.

## Learning to network

This learning perspective formulates questions on three dimensions:

- *The task dimension: planning*

Networks mostly want to do something real. The partners have to clarify the issue that connects them (and/or sets them apart) and have to decide what they are going to do. The task of the network is to decide what it wants to reach, within which frame-of-reference, which steps and activities it will undertake. This is prone to change over time. On this dimension, three objectives had been formulated for the workshop.

- (1) *Exploring the issue of 'education'*
- (2) *Deciding – at least – about 'the next step'*
- (3) *Finding common ground*

- *A relational dimension: networking*

The partners engage in a mutual process and have to deal with each other and with the different allegiances of the partners in the network. Realizing equivalence in the network and balancing power and interdependence is a central task in this dimension. We worked with three objectives during the workshop.

- (1) *Getting to know each other*
- (2) *Working as 'a community of practice'*
- (3) *Clarifying ideas about network structure*

- *A growth dimension: organizational or network development*

Although partners join a network out of organizational interest, the network can only succeed when it transcends the interests of single organizations. The task at hand is the balance between the network and the organizations. One learning objective was formulated for this dimension.

- (1) *Balancing network interests and organizational interests*

## Networking to learn

Of course, it is important that the network contributes to learning. The concept *community of practice*<sup>13</sup> is interesting for the educational network, because it makes *practice* the locus for learning. The educational network deals with the practice of each of its partners. We learn, in short, through our participation in a certain practice: by the things we do, what we experience, the way we belong to a certain community and the impact it has on our ideas of who we are. These aspects relate to what Wenger (1998) calls the dimensions *meaning (experience)*, *practice (doing)*, *community (belonging)* and *identity (becoming)*. Interesting in this framework is that learning isn't merely situated on the individual level, but takes it into account. From this follows that you can not really design learning, but you can try to design for learning. A design for learning consists of four dimensions, or central tensions that have to be addressed and balanced.

---

<sup>13</sup> Wenger, Etienne (1998) *Communities of practice. Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- *Participation/reification*: How to deal with *participation and experiencing* on one hand and *codifying* knowledge on the other hand? *This was during the workshop for instance translated in the discussion how the network would work on quality. It was decided that it was not (yet) the time to make guidelines and do peer-review (reification).*
- *Designed/emergent*: Learning takes place, often independent of the pedagogical intentions of the instruction, but still this doesn't make instruction or design completely redundant. The learning context is a resource for learning, like other contexts.
- *Local/global*: People learn from engagement in a practice, but practices are mostly local (i.e. they are specific and particular). The question is then how to relate to the more global level, without losing oneself in abstractions. *This dimension was particularly present during the workshop.*
- *Identification/negotiability*: How to create a place and a space learners can identify with and will not be silenced by the curriculum?

Moreover, learning must address different components of *modes of belonging*, i.e. for the different ways in which people are engaged in learning.

- *Engagement*: Supporting engagement is supporting the creation of communities of practice.
- *Imagination*: Engagement is crucial to learning, but can also be limiting. Learning does not always include broadening images, it takes imagination in order for learning to encompass and deal with a broader context.
- *Alignment*: Imagination can open up practices beyond engagement, but alignment is necessary to connect learning to broader enterprises. In order to have a broader impact, an infrastructure of alignment should include facilities of convergence, coordination and jurisdiction.



## ANNEX 4: METHODOLOGY OF THE WORKSHOP

The methodology was designed so that it would enable information exchange, presentation of cases (and contexts), discussion, learning. It was considered important that the methodology would make room for as an institutional perspectives as well as a network perspective. Moreover, learning had to be designed for on the level of content as on the level of the network.

This resulted in two main objectives for the workshop: networking to learn and learning to network. These main objectives were specified in more operational objectives.

1. Task dimension
  - 1.1. *Exploring the issue of 'education'*
  - 1.2. *Deciding – at least – about 'the next step'*
  - 1.3. *Finding common ground*
2. Relational dimension
  - 2.1. *Getting to know each other*
  - 2.2. *Working as 'a community of practice'*
  - 2.3. *Clarifying ideas about network structure*
3. Network growth dimension
  - 3.1. *Balancing network interests and organizational interests*

The objectives were addressed in a learning-by-doing approach and used methods of adult and cooperative learning. The table below gives an overview of which objectives were addressed by which type of session. Under the table, a brief description is given of the types of sessions.

<u>Type of Session</u>	<u>Objectives addressed</u>
<i>Case presentations</i>	<i>1.1, 1.3, 2.1</i>
<i>Small group work</i>	<i>1.3, 2.2</i>
<i>Feedback sessions</i>	<i>2.2</i>
<i>Discussion sessions – building the network</i>	<i>1.2, 1.3, 2.3, 3.1</i>
<i>Exploring sessions (context, themes and networking)</i>	<i>1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 3.1</i>
<i>Social activity</i>	<i>2.1</i>

### © *Thematic sessions*

The thematic sessions consisted of 3 consecutive content-related sessions and were finished with a discussion session aimed at network development.

#### (1) *Case presentations*

All workshop participants were asked to present a case about one of the proposed themes, which resulted in one presentation per partner institute. Each partner had 25 minutes for the case presentation. After the case presentations, questions for clarification could be asked. The case presentation sessions were open for interested ITM staff.

#### (2) *Small group work*

In small and heterogeneous groups of 4 to 5 people, workshop participants were asked to discuss some of the case presentations. The discussion had two goals; the first goal was to

discuss the commonalities and differences between the presentations, so that the group could prepare the discussion about the relevance of the theme for the network. The second goal was to prepare a thorough feedback for two case presentations, to be presented in the feedback sessions.

### (3) *Feedback sessions*

These sessions focused on giving feedback to the case presentations, after discussion among workshop participants. The feedback sessions were open for interested ITM staff.

### ⊙ *Network discussion*

Each theme was closed with a discussion about the relevance of the theme for the network and possible priorities for the network.

### ⊙ *Exploring sessions*

#### (1) *Exploring the different contexts: Carrousel (Monday 3 November)*

It was considered important to get an idea of the different contexts of the network-partners, but we wanted to avoid an extra series of powerpoint-presentations on the first morning. The method of the carrousel is an ice breaker and stimulates immediate and short interaction between the network-partners, while at the same time allowing for the exchange of some information.

#### (2) *Exploring the possible themes of interest: Educational Market (Tuesday 4 November)*

In this session, we want to take the time to explore more broadly the range of themes that could be of interest to the partners and to the educational network. This session is a way of mapping both the learning questions and the expertise of the partners on the different themes. A secondary goal is that the network participants interact with and talk to each other on the subject, educational networking.

5 thematic clusters were defined, and in the room 5 tables were separated to discuss on these clusters. The session started with the question to partners to sit together per institute to prepare the exercise. Participants visited each table for 15' in changing groups. The basic idea was that every participant preferably discusses with as many as possible other participants. Each table was staffed by a facilitator. The facilitator explained briefly the cluster and asked whether this theme was recognizable for the participants, how partners work with the theme or are otherwise confronted with it, whether they have questions on these themes, what kind of expertise they could add to the network. Core words or sentences can be written down on a poster. The facilitator had to be alert to the possibility that the theme doesn't appeal to the participants. The focus was on *brainstorming*.

After visiting each table, the participants returned to one table they already visited. There they had to formulate working questions or topics for the network, based on the results of the previous brainstorms. Both posters – the poster with the exploration and the poster with the topics – were attached to the panels, so that every participant could read it.

#### (3) *Exploring expectations towards the network, including making plans for the network: Scenario-building (Friday 7 November)*

This session was basically a consensus building exercise, the output that was required were scenarios for building the network. In these scenario's five dimensions needed to be taken into account and elaborated: *membership, power, leadership, communication, structure*.

The exercise was build up in 5 phases:

- Discussion and consultation per institute on themes of interests;

- A first discussion in mixed ‘scenario groups’. The group had to brainstorm on the question ‘what does networking mean for us’. Each group had to designate a moderator, a reporter, discussants and a spy; the spy was allowed to circulate and listen what was said in other groups on the different topic and report this back to her/his group.
- After 20 minutes the groups regrouped to so-called *expert groups*. Each of these expert groups discussed more in-depth about one of the 5 dimensions important for networking. The groups also had to think of some suggestions to deal with estimated problems.
- Afterwards people returned to their scenario groups, where they reported back about the discussions geared in the expert groups. Afterwards each scenario group had to set up a calendar or an agenda for the network for the following two years, with attention to a clear task and to the dimensions discussed in the expert groups.

This resulted in the presentation of the scenario’s and the fine-tuning to one common scenario.